

Titus 2.13

^{NASB} “looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,”

^{NAB} “as we await the blessed hope, the appearance of the glory of the great God and of our savior Jesus Christ,”

This verse could be translated two different ways. The way the NASB translates it implies that Christ Jesus is “our great God and Savior.” Though this translation is very popular some scholars have criticized it and prefer the rendering found in the NAB and the KJV “...the glory of the great God and of our Savior Jesus Christ.”

Frances Young:

It is sometimes said that he [Jesus] is called God in Romans 9.5; 2 Thessalonians 1.12; and Titus 2.13; but it is more likely that the first is pious ejaculation unconnected with the syntax of the sentence;... that in the second and third, the Greek is rather loose and in fact refers (in the former) to the grace of God plus the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and (in the latter) to the glory of our great God and of our Savior Jesus Christ.¹

Jason David BeDuhn:

“Those who defend translations that read as if only Jesus is spoken of in both Titus 2.13 and 2 Peter 1.1 attempt to distinguish those two passages from the parallel examples I have given by something called “Sharp’s Rule.” In 1798, the amateur theologian Granville Sharp published a book in which he argued that when there are two nouns of the same form (“case”) joined by “and” (kai), only the first of which has the article, the nouns are identified as the same thing. Close examination of this much used “rule” shows it to be a fiction concocted by a man who had a theological agenda in creating it, namely to prove that the verses we are examining in this chapter call Jesus “God.””²

“We have no sure way to judge which translations correctly understand the verse and which ones do not. But with the long overdue dismissal of the phantom of “Sharp’s Rule,” the position of those who insist “God” and “Savior” must refer to the same being in this verse is decidedly weakened. There is no legitimate way to distinguish the grammar of Titus 2.13 from that of Titus 1.4 and 2 Thessalonians 1.12, just as there is no way to consider 2 Peter 1.1 different in its grammar from 2 Peter 1.2. This is a case where grammar alone will not settle the matter. All we can do is suggest, by analysis of context and comparable passages, the “more likely” and “less likely” translations, and leave the question open for further light.”³

¹ Frances Young, *The Myth of God Incarnate*, ed. by John Hick, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1977), p. 44 (fn. 21).

² Jason David BeDuhn, *Truth in Translation: Accuracy and Bias in English Translations of the New Testament*, (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2003), p. 92.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 94.