

## The Article, Part II

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### **Introduction**

Here we will consider two constructions. One of these involves the non-use of the article and the other involves the use of the article: anarthrous pre-verbal predicate nominatives and the article-noun-*καί*-noun construction. They deserve their own extended treatment both because of rich theological implications (especially related to explicit NT affirmations of the deity of Christ) and because of common abuse in NT circles. The material is not all equally important; some of it may be glossed over quickly and merely used for reference. The chapter can be outlined as above (with the more immediately relevant sections for intermediate students highlighted in bold letters).

#### **A. Anarthrous Pre-Verbal Predicate Nominatives (Involving Colwell's Rule)**

##### **Introduction**

##### **1) Definition of Terms**

First, it would be helpful to review some basic terminology.

- anarthrous = without the article
- pre-verbal = *before* the equative verb

· predicate nominative (PN) = the noun in the nominative case which is the same as the subject (more or less)

Therefore, an anarthrous pre-verbal predicate nominative is a predicate nominative that does not have the article and occurs before the equative verb. This is the kind of construction Ernest Cadman Colwell investigated when he wrote his now well-known article in 1933. To economize on our verbiage, therefore, we will consider every anarthrous pre-verbal predicate nominative construction as a “Colwell’s *construction*” (though not necessarily fitting Colwell’s *rule*).

## 2) Predicate Nominatives in General

In general, a predicate nominative is anarthrous and it *follows* the copula. It is usually qualitative or indefinite.

### 1. Discovery of “Colwell’s Rule”

E. C. Colwell completed his doctor’s dissertation on “The Character of the Greek of John’s Gospel” in 1931. His intensive research into the grammar of John’s Gospel led to the discovery of his rule.

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In 1933 he published an article entitled, “A Definite Rule for the Use of the Article in the Greek New Testament,” in *JBL* 52 (1933) 12-21. Ever since, his rule has been known simply as “Colwell’s rule.”

### ⇒ 2. Statement of the Rule

Colwell’s rule is as follows: “Definite predicate nouns which precede the verb usually lack the article . . . a predicate nominative which precedes the verb cannot be translated as an indefinite or a ‘qualitative’ noun solely because of the absence of the article; if the context suggests that the predicate is definite, it should be translated as a definite noun. . . .”<sup>1</sup>

Colwell illustrated this principle with [John 1:49](#): ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ Ναθαναήλ ῥαββί, σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ , σὺ βασιλεὺς εἶ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ (Nathaneal answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God, you are the king of Israel”). Colwell observed that the structural parallels between the two statements differed at two points: (a) in the second statement, the PN is anarthrous while in the first it is articular; (b) in the second statement, the PN is before the verb, while in the first it is after the verb. Yet the grammatical sense was the same for both statements: the PN in each should be regarded as definite. From this, Colwell assumed that definiteness of the PN could be achieved either by the article or by a shift in word order. His essay dealt with the latter.

In other words, a PN that precedes the copula, and which is apparently definite *from the context*, usually lacks the article.

### 3. Misunderstanding of the Rule

#### a. By Scholars Since Colwell

Almost immediately many scholars (especially of a more conservative stripe) misunderstood Colwell’s rule. They saw the benefit of the rule for affirming the deity of Christ in [John 1:1](#). But what they thought Colwell was articulating was actually the *converse* of the rule, not the rule itself. That is, they thought that the rule was: An anarthrous predicate nominative that precedes the verb is usually definite. This is not the rule, nor can it be implied from the rule.

For the most part, they either quote Colwell without much interaction or they read *into* the rule what is not there. For example, Nigel Turner argued: “[In [John 1:1](#)] there need be no doctrinal significance in the dropping of the article, for it is simply a matter of word-order.”<sup>2</sup> This means that θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος meant the same thing as ὁ λόγος ἦν ὁ θεός.<sup>3</sup> Bruce Metzger summarizes: “As regards Jn 11,

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Colwell’s research casts the most serious doubts on the correctness of such translations as ‘and the Logos was divine’ (Moffatt, Strachan), ‘and the Word was divine’ (Goodspeed), and (worst of all) ‘and the Word was a god’ (. . . *New World Translation*).<sup>4</sup> Actually, Colwell’s rule does not address this issue at all.<sup>5</sup> Walter Martin goes so far as to say: “Colwell’s rule clearly states that a definite predicate nominative . . . *never* takes an article when it precedes the verb . . . as in [John 1:1](#).”<sup>6</sup> Although Martin states the rule rather than the converse (though too dogmatically, for Colwell did not say “never”), he assumes the converse of the rule in the very next breath!

Our point is that Colwell’s rule has been misunderstood and abused by scholars. By applying Colwell’s rule

to [John 1:1](#) they have jumped out of the frying pan of Arianism and into the fire of Sabellianism.

### b. By Colwell Himself

In his article Colwell overstates his case: “Loosely speaking, this study may be said to have increased the definiteness of a predicate noun before the verb without the article. . . .”<sup>7</sup> Shortly, I will explain how this is not a very accurate statement.<sup>8</sup>

Further, he was inconsistent elsewhere when he said: “[The data presented here] show that a predicate nominative which precedes the verb cannot be translated as an indefinite or a ‘qualitative’ noun solely because of the absence of the article; *if the context suggests* that the predicate is definite, it should be translated as a definite noun in spite of the absence of the article.”<sup>9</sup> This is an accurate statement in that he recognizes that contextual factors need to be brought in to argue for a definite PN. But this is followed on the next page with: “The absence of the article does *not* make the predicate [nominative] indefinite or qualitative when it precedes the verb; it is indefinite in

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this position *only* when the context *demands* it.”<sup>10</sup> In the first statement Colwell pointed out that the burden of proof rests with the definite PN view, but in the second statement he assumes the opposite: now the burden of proof rests with any view other than the definite PN! To make either statement, in reality, was to embrace a methodological error, for Colwell had stated at the outset of his study that he only examined definite predicate nominatives.

Even after his rule had become well-known and even abused by others, Colwell affirmed that the converse of the rule seemed to be as valid as the rule itself.<sup>11</sup> He stated that he felt his rule suggested that an anarthrous pre-verbal PN would *normally* be definite.

## ⇒ 4. Clarification of Colwell’s Rule

### a. By Harner

Forty years after Colwell’s article appeared in *JBL*, Philip B. Harner’s essay was published in the same journal. Harner pointed out that “Colwell was almost entirely concerned with the question whether anarthrous predicate nouns were definite or indefinite, and he did not discuss at any length the problem of their qualitative significance.”<sup>12</sup> This was probably due to the fact that many older grammarians saw *no* distinction between qualitative nouns and indefinite nouns.<sup>13</sup>

Second, Harner produced evidence that an anarthrous pre-verbal PN is usually *qualitative*—not definite nor indefinite. His findings, in general, were that 80% of Colwell’s constructions involved qualitative nouns and only 20% involved definite nouns.

### b. By Dixon

Paul Stephen Dixon<sup>14</sup> begins the third chapter of his thesis by quoting Colwell’s crucial statement of his rule: “A definite predicate nominative . . . does not have the article when it precedes the verb.” Dixon goes on, however, to point out an invalid inference which has been made from this rule:

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The rule does not say: an anarthrous predicate nominative which precedes the verb is definite. This is the converse of Colwell’s rule and as such is not a valid inference. (From the statement “A implies B,” it is not valid to infer “B implies A.” From the statement “Articular nouns are definite,” it is not valid to infer “Definite nouns are articular.” Likewise, from the statement “Definite predicate nominatives preceding the verb are anarthrous,” it is not valid to infer “Anarthrous predicate nominatives preceding the verb are definite.”)<sup>15</sup>

Dixon, too, suggests that the anarthrous pre-verbal predicate nominative (in John’s Gospel at least) is primarily qualitative in force.<sup>16</sup>

## ⇒ c. Summary

- 1) Colwell stated that a definite PN that precedes the verb is usually anarthrous. He did *not* say the *converse*, namely, an anarthrous PN that precedes the verb is usually definite. However, this is how the rule has been misunderstood by most scholars (including Colwell) since the article in *JBL* was written.
- 2) Colwell restricted his study to anarthrous pre-verbal predicate nominatives which were, as far as he could

tell, determined as definite *by the context*. He did not deal with *any* other anarthrous pre-verbal predicate nominatives. However, the misunderstanding has arisen because scholars have not recognized that Colwell only tested these constructions. In other words, Colwell started off with a *semantic* category rather than a *structural* category. He did *not* begin by asking the question, What does the anarthrous pre-verbal PN construction mean? Rather, he began by asking, Will a definite PN be articular or anarthrous? And will it follow or precede the verb? In his initial question, he *assumed* a particular meaning (i.e., definiteness) and sought the particular constructions involved.<sup>17</sup>

Colwell, therefore, did not do an exhaustive research on the construction under consideration. He assumed what many since have thought that he proved!<sup>18</sup>

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3) Colwell had a simplistic understanding of qualitative and indefinite nouns. He believed that the way we can tell whether a noun is indefinite or “qualitative” or definite is by its *translation*. But as was pointed out in Part I of this chapter, translation does not always bring out whether a word is qualitative or indefinite or definite. Apparently, if it seemed unnatural to put in the article “a/an” before the noun, Colwell assumed that the noun was *definite*. Greek and English are dissimilar enough, however, that we must argue from *sense*, not translation.

4) We can illustrate the faulty assumptions in two ways. (a) Suppose a study were made of the divorce rate of people married by a justice of the peace. And suppose that the findings were that 90% of the people married by a justice of the peace got divorced within five years. The findings then might support a “rule”: If you were married by a justice of the peace, you will probably (9 out of 10 chances) get divorced within five years. The *converse* of this rule, however, would *not* be true: If you are divorced, you probably got married by a justice of the peace. The reason the converse would not necessarily follow is that the study was made *only* of people who were married by a justice of the peace, *not* of all divorced people. Only when all divorcees are considered, can *any* statement be made about their probability of being married by a justice of the peace.

(b) A simpler illustration: Suppose a little boy were to examine as best he could the relationship of rain to clouds. Every time it rains, he runs outside and notices that there are clouds in the sky. He will conclude the following principle: *If it is raining, there must be clouds in the sky*. In such a statement the *only* time the sky is examined is when it is raining. The study is not exhaustive to include all occasions in which the sky is cloudy. If this boy were to formulate the *converse* of his rule, we could all see its logical fallacy: *If there are clouds in the sky, it must be raining*.

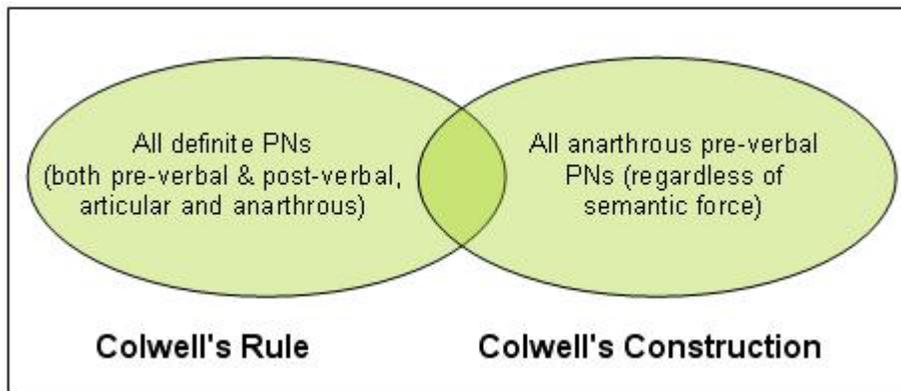
With reference to Colwell’s rule, only anarthrous pre-verbal predicate nominatives were studied which were previously determined by their contexts to be most probably definite. Not *all* anarthrous pre-verbal predicate nominatives were studied. But the *converse* of the rule, commonly embraced in NT scholarship, assumes that all such constructions have been examined. In Harner’s study, the net was cast wider. He examined all pre-verbal predicate nominatives. And his conclusion was that 80% were qualitative. Therefore, when one sees an anarthrous pre-verbal PN, he should consider its force to be *most likely* qualitative, and only to be definite if the context or other factors strongly suggest otherwise.

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In sum, Colwell’s rule proves nothing about definiteness. Its value is not for grammar per se, but for textual criticism: It proves something about articularity and word order.

The following chart displays the different databases that were examined by Colwell (“Colwell’s rule”) and Harner (“Colwell’s construction”).



**Chart 26 - The Different Databases for Colwell's Rule Vs. Colwell's Construction**

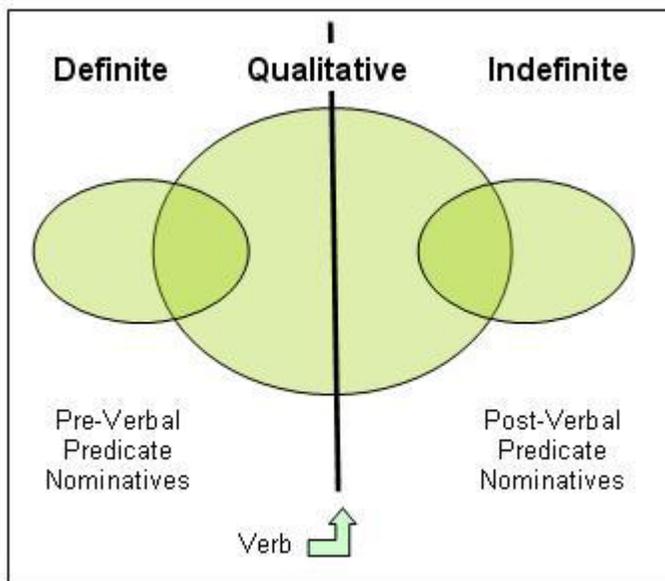
As can be seen from the chart, the databases were not the same. The fact of some overlap is what has given rise to the confusion over the rule.

#### ⇒ 5. Significance of Colwell's Construction for Exegesis

The studies by Dixon and especially Harner demonstrate that the anarthrous pre-verbal PN is still *closer* to definiteness than is the anarthrous *post-copulative* predicate nominative,<sup>19</sup> and that an anarthrous predicate nominative that *follows* the verb will usually be either qualitative or *indefinite*.<sup>20</sup>

A general rule about the construction can now be stated: *An anarthrous pre-verbal PN is normally qualitative, sometimes definite, and only rarely indefinite.* In neither of the two studies were any indefinite PNs found. We believe there may be some in the NT, but this is nevertheless the most poorly attested semantic force for such a construction.

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**Chart 27 - The Semantic Range of Anarthrous Predicate Nominatives**

The chart illustrates the fact that anarthrous *pre-verbal* predicate nominatives usually fall within the qualitative-*definite* range, while anarthrous *post-verbal* predicate nominatives usually fall within the qualitative-*indefinite* range. The presumption, therefore, when one faces an anarthrous pre-verbal PN is that it will be qualitative unless there are contextual or other considerations suggesting that it is definite or, less likely, indefinite.

#### a. Definite Predicate Nominatives

[Matt 27:42](#) ἄλλους ἔσωσεν, ἑαυτὸν οὐ δύναται σῶσαι βασιλεὺς Ἰσραὴλ ἐστιν, καταβάτω νῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ  
 He saved others, [but] he cannot save himself. He is **the king** of Israel; let him come down now

from the cross . . .

It is plain that the PN cannot be anything but definite here, for there is only one king of Israel at a time.<sup>21</sup>

[John 1:49](#) σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, σὺ βασιλεὺς εἶ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ<sup>22</sup>  
you are the Son of God, you are **the king** of Israel

Nathanael's response to Jesus is a twofold identification. In the first

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construction the PN follows the verb and has the article. In the second construction the PN precedes the verb and lacks the article. This text was Colwell's main illustration of his principle.<sup>23</sup>

[1 Cor 1:18](#) ὁ λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ τοῖς δὲ σωζομένοις ἡμῖν δύναμις θεοῦ ἐστίν  
the word of the cross to us who are being saved is **the power** of God

[Heb 1:10](#) ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου εἰσιν οἱ οὐρανοὶ  
the heavens are **the works** of your hands

Cf. also [Matt 4:3, 6; 5:34,35; 13:39; 14:33; John 3:29; 10:2; 11:51; Acts 13:33; Rom 1:16; 10:4; 1 Cor 4:4; 11:3; 2 Cor 6:16; Gal 3:25; Jas 2:23; 1 John 2:2.](#)

### b. Qualitative Predicate Nominatives<sup>24</sup>

[John 1:14](#) ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο  
the Word became **flesh**

The idea is not that the Word became "the flesh," nor "a flesh," but simply "flesh." That is, the Word partook of humanity. Many pre-1933 exegetes (i.e., before Colwell's rule was published) saw a parallel between this verse and [John 1:1](#), noting that both PNs were qualitative.

[John 5:10](#) ἔλεγον οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι τῷ τεθεραπευμένῳ, σάββατόν ἐστιν

Then the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is **Sabbath**"

Although this could be translated "it is **the Sabbath**" or, a bit less naturally, "**a Sabbath**," one must remember to argue from *sense* rather than from translation. The point the Pharisees were making had to do with the *kind* of day on which this man was working—hence, a qualitative noun.

[1 John 4:8](#) ὁ θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν  
God is **love**

The meaning is certainly not convertible: "love is God." The idea of a qualitative ἀγάπη is that God's essence or nature is love, or that he has the quality of love. Thus love is an attribute, not an identification, of God.

[Phil 2:13](#) θεὸς ἐστίν ὁ ἐνεργῶν  
the one working in you is **God**

Although it is certainly possible that θεός is definite,<sup>25</sup> the force in this context seems to be a bit more on what God does in the believer rather than who it is that does it. In the previous verse, the apostle exhorts his audience to work out their own salvation. Lest they think they are alone in this endeavor, he hastens to remind them that the one working in them has the ability to bring about their complete sanctification.

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Cf. also [Mark 14:70; Luke 22:59; 23:6; John 3:6; 9:27, 28; 10:33; 12:36, 50; 13:35; 18:35; Acts 7:26, 33; 16:21; Rom 14:23; 1 Cor 2:14; 3:19; 2 Cor 11:22, 23; 1 John 1:5.](#)

### c. Indefinite Predicate Nominatives

The following examples comprise potential indefinite predicate nominatives in Colwell's construction. None in the NT have been positively classified as belonging here either by Harner or Dixon (though a few predicate nouns almost certainly belong here). However, in other Hellenistic literature, this usage is established. An example outside the NT is given below.

[1 Tim 6:10](#) ῥίζα πάντων τῶν κακῶν ἐστίν ἡ φιλαργυρία

This is a difficult text to translate, having the following possibilities: (1) "the love of money is a root of all evils," (2) "the love of money is **the** root of all evils," (3) "the love of money motivates all evils," (4) "the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils," (5) "the love of money is **the** root of all kinds of evils," (6) "the love of money motivates all kinds of evils." The reason for these six possibilities is that first, it is difficult to tell whether ῥίζα is indefinite (options 1 &

4), definite (2 & 5), or qualitative (3 & 6), and secondly, πάντων may mean “all without exclusion” (1, 2, & 3) or “all without distinction” (4, 5, & 6).

Logically, it would be difficult to say that ῥίζα is definite, for then the text would be saying either (1) the *only* root of all evils is the love of money or that (2) the *greatest* root (*par excellence*) of all evils is the love of money. These are the options if πάντων means “all without exclusion.” However, the definite idea would fit if πάντων means “all without distinction.”

Grammatically, it would be difficult to take ῥίζα as indefinite, since this is the least attested meaning for the anarthrous pre-verbal PN in the NT. However, grammatically the most probable option is to see ῥίζα as qualitative. The idea would be either that all evils *can be* motivated or initiated by the love for money or that all kinds of evils *can be* motivated by the love for money. The qualitative idea makes no comment about anything else that might motivate or produce evil. It simply states that loving money does motivate/produce all (kinds of) evils.

#### [John 6:70](#)

ἐξ ὑμῶν εἷς διάβολός ἐστιν

one of you is **a/the devil**

This text has been discussed above (in greater detail) under “Monadic Nouns.” In sum, although the majority of translations treat διάβολος as indefinite (because of the English tradition of the KJV), there is only one devil. Hence, since it is a monadic noun, the meaning is “one of you is **the** devil.”

#### [John 4:19](#)

λέγει αὐτῷ ἡ γυνή, Κύριε, θεωρῶ ὅτι προφήτης εἶ σύ

The woman said to him, “Sir/Lord, I perceive that you are **a/the prophet**”

This is the most likely candidate of an indefinite pre-verbal PN in the NT. Yet there is some doubt about it. First, it is slightly possible that the evangelist is representing the Samaritan woman as thinking about the great prophet of Deut 18. This, however, is doubtful because of the verb θεωρῶ. Her *perception* would be that he was a prophet, but Jesus’ statement to her in v 18 is too insufficient a base to make her think of *the*

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prophet. Further, it is quite unnatural to “perceive” the identity of someone; perception belongs to class characteristics, not exact identity. In other words, we would expect her to say, “You’re the prophet!” or, perhaps, “Are you the prophet?” if indeed she was thinking of Deut 18. However, this is not to say that the PN must be indefinite. The woman seems to be focusing on the attributes of a prophet, rather than merely listing Jesus as a member of that class. Again, θεωρῶ contributes to this. Although the translation is most naturally “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet,” the sense may be better characterized as indefinite-qualitative. It could almost be translated, “I perceive that you are prophetic,” or “I perceive that you have the prophetic gift.” The focus of an indefinite noun is on a *member* of class, while the focus of a qualitative noun is on the *attributes* that the class members share.

#### Didache 11.8

οὐ πᾶς ὁ λαλῶν ἐν πνεύματι προφήτης ἐστίν

Not everyone who speaks in/by the Spirit is **a prophet**.

In Didache 11.3-12 προφήτης or ψευδοπροφήτης is an anarthrous PN five times. The focus on the passage is on anyone who claims to have membership in that elite group known as prophets. If a particular individual acts unbecoming of that group, he is called a false prophet (ψευδοπροφήτης). The focus of the pericope, then, is on any individual member without specifying which member is in view (apart from his own actions pointing him out). This is an indefinite PN.<sup>26</sup>

For other potential indefinite predicate nominatives (many of which might better be classified as indefinite-qualitative or qualitative-indefinite), cf. [Matt 14:26](#); [Luke 5:8](#); [John 8:34](#); [Acts 28:4](#); [Rom 13:6](#); [1 Cor 6:19](#).

#### ⇒ 6. Application of Colwell’s Construction to [John 1:1](#)<sup>27</sup>

[John 1:1](#) states: Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. In the last part of the verse, the clause καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος ([John 1:1c](#)), θεός is the PN. It is anarthrous and comes before the verb. Therefore, it fits Colwell’s *construction*, though it might not fit the rule (for the rule states that definiteness is determined or indicated by the context, not by the grammar). Whether it is indefinite, qualitative,

or definite is the issue at hand.

### a. Is Θεός in [John 1:1c](#) Indefinite?

If Θεός were indefinite, we would translate it “a god” (as is done in the *New World Translation* [NWT]). If so, the theological implication would be some form of polytheism, perhaps suggesting that the Word was merely a secondary god in a pantheon of deities.

The grammatical argument that the PN here is indefinite is weak. Often, those who argue for such a view (in particular, the translators

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of the NWT) do so on the sole basis that the term is anarthrous. Yet they are inconsistent, as R. H. Countess pointed out:

In the New Testament there are 282 occurrences of the anarthrous Θεός. At sixteen places NWT has either a god, god, gods, or godly. Sixteen out of 282 means that the translators were faithful to *their* translation principle only six percent of the time. . . .

The first section of John—1:1-18—furnishes a lucid example of NWT arbitrary dogmatism. Θεός occurs eight times—verses 1, 2, 6, 12, 13, 18—and has the article only twice—verses 1, 2. Yet NWT six times translated “God,” once “a god,” and once “the god.”<sup>28</sup>

If we expand the discussion to other anarthrous terms in the Johannine Prologue, we notice other inconsistencies in the NWT: It is interesting that the *New World Translation* renders Θεός as “a god” on the simplistic grounds that it lacks the article. This is surely an insufficient basis. Following the “anarthrous = indefinite” principle would mean that ἀρχή should be “a beginning” (1:1, 2), ζωή should be “a life” (1:4), παρὰ Θεοῦ should be “from a god” (1:6), Ἰωάννης should be “a John” (1:6), Θεόν should be “a god” (1:18), etc. Yet none of these other anarthrous nouns is rendered with an indefinite article. One can only suspect strong theological bias in such a translation.

According to Dixon’s study, if Θεός were *indefinite* in [John 1:1](#), it would be the only anarthrous pre-verbal PN in John’s Gospel to be so. Although we have argued that this is somewhat overstated, the general point is valid: The indefinite notion is the most poorly attested for anarthrous pre-verbal predicate nominatives. Thus, grammatically such a meaning is improbable. Also, the context suggests that such is not likely, for the Word already existed in the beginning. Thus, contextually and grammatically, it is highly improbable that the Logos could be “a god” according to John. Finally, the evangelist’s own theology militates against this view, for there is an exalted Christology in the Fourth Gospel, to the point that Jesus Christ is identified as God (cf. 5:23; 8:58; 10:30; 20:28, etc.).

### b. Is Θεός in [John 1:1c](#) Definite?

Grammarians and exegetes since Colwell have taken Θεός as definite in [John 1:1c](#). However, their basis has *usually* been a misunderstanding of Colwell’s rule. They have understood the rule to say that an anarthrous pre-verbal PN will usually be definite (rather than the converse). But Colwell’s rule states that a PN which is probably definite as determined from the *context* which precedes a verb will

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usually be anarthrous. If we check the rule to see if it applies here, we would say that the previous mention of Θεός (in 1:1b) is articular. Therefore, if the same person being referred to there is called Θεός in 1:1c, then in both places it is definite. Although certainly possible grammatically (though not nearly as likely as qualitative), the evidence is not very compelling. The vast majority of *definite* anarthrous pre-verbal predicate nominatives are monadic, in genitive constructions, or are proper names, none of which is true here, diminishing the likelihood of a definite Θεός in [John 1:1c](#).

Further, calling Θεός in 1:1c definite is the same as saying that if it had followed the verb it would have had the article. Thus it would be a convertible proposition with λόγος (i.e., “the Word” = “God” and “God” = “the Word”). The problem of this argument is that the Θεός in 1:1b is the Father. Thus to say that the Θεός in 1:1c is the same person is to say that “the Word was the *Father*.”<sup>29</sup> This, as the older grammarians and exegetes pointed out, is embryonic Sabellianism or modalism.<sup>30</sup> The Fourth Gospel is about the least likely place to find modalism in the NT.

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### c. Is Θεός in [John 1:1c](#) Qualitative?

The most likely candidate for θεός is qualitative. This is true both grammatically (for the largest proportion of pre-verbal anarthrous predicate nominatives fall into this category) and theologically (both the theology of the Fourth Gospel and of the NT as a whole). There is a balance between the Word's deity, which was already present in the beginning (ἐν ἀρχῇ . . . θεός ἦν [1:1], and his humanity, which was added later (σὰρξ ἐγένετο [1:14]). The grammatical structure of these two statements mirrors each other; both emphasize the nature of the Word, rather than his identity. But θεός was his nature from eternity (hence, εἰμί is used), while σὰρξ was added at the incarnation (hence, γίνομαι is used).

Such an option does not at all impugn the deity of Christ. Rather, it stresses that, although the person of Christ is not the person of the Father, their *essence* is identical. Possible translations are as follows: "What God was, the Word was" (NEB), or "the Word was divine" (a modified Moffatt). In this second translation, "divine" is acceptable only if it is a term that can be applied *only* to true deity. However, in modern English, we use it with reference to angels, theologians, even a meal! Thus "divine" could be misleading in an English translation. The *idea* of a qualitative θεός here is that the Word had all the attributes and qualities that "the God" (of 1:1b) had. In other words, he shared the *essence* of the Father, though they differed in person. *The construction the evangelist chose to express this idea was the most concise way he could have stated that the Word was God and yet was distinct from the Father.*<sup>31</sup>

## 7. Appendix to Colwell's "Construction": When the Verb is Absent

When there is no verb, a PN, of course, cannot properly be called *pre-verbal*. However, there is one construction in which an *a-copulative* (that is, no verb) PN will have the same semantic value as the pre-verbal PN, viz., when the PN precedes the *subject*. Thus, although there are several passages in which the copula is lacking, the force of such texts can be determined by the word order of the PN and the subject.<sup>32</sup>

When the anarthrous PN stands before the subject, it will either be qualitative or definite. This is due to the fact that (1) had the verb been present, it more than likely would have come after the PN, and (2) by

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placing the PN before the subject, an author is making the PN emphatic and if emphatic, then either qualitative or definite (since it is not normal to conceive of an *indefinite* PN being emphasized, though not entirely impossible).

In [John 4:24](#) Jesus says to the woman at the well, πνεῦμα ὁ θεός. The anarthrous PN comes before the subject and there is no verb. Here, πνεῦμα is qualitative—stressing the nature or essence of God (the KJV incorrectly renders this, "God is a spirit").

In [Phil 2:11](#) Paul proclaims that κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός ("Jesus Christ is Lord"). Here, as in [John 4:24](#), there is no copula and the anarthrous PN comes before the subject. The PN in this instance is apparently definite; Jesus Christ is *the* Lord. Cf. also [Phil 1:8](#) (with [Rom 1:9](#)).

In summary, when an anarthrous PN precedes a verbless subject, it will either be qualitative or definite just as would a pre-verbal anarthrous PN.

## ***B. The Article with Multiple Substantives Connected by Καί (Granville Sharp Rule and Related Constructions)***<sup>33</sup>

### Introduction

In Greek, when two nouns are connected by καί and the article precedes only the first noun, there is a close connection between the two. That connection always indicates at least some sort of *unity*. At a higher level, it may connote *equality*. At the highest level it may indicate *identity*. When the construction meets three specific demands, then the two nouns *always* refer to the same person. When the construction does not meet these requirements, the nouns may or may not refer to the same person(s)/object(s).

### 1. Discovery of "Granville Sharp's Rule"

Granville Sharp, son of an archdeacon and grandson of an archbishop, was an English philanthropist and abolitionist (1735-1813). He is known to students of history as "the Abraham Lincoln of England" for his key role in the abolition of slavery there. Though untrained theologically, he was a student of the scriptures. His strong belief in Christ's deity led him to study the Bible in the original in order to defend more ably that belief. Through such motivation he became a relatively good linguist, able to handle both the Greek and Hebrew

texts.<sup>34</sup> As he studied the scriptures in the original, he noticed a certain pattern, viz., when the construction article-substantive-καί-substantive (TSKS) involved personal nouns

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which were singular and not proper names, they always referred to the same person. He noticed further that such a rule applied, in several texts<sup>35</sup> to the deity of Jesus Christ. So in 1798 he published a short volume entitled, *Remarks on the Definitive Article in the Greek Text of the New Testament, Containing Many New Proofs of the Divinity of Christ, from Passages Which Are Wrongly Translated in the Common English Version [KJV]*.<sup>36</sup> The volume went through four editions (three English and one American).<sup>37</sup>

## ⇒2. Statement of the Rule

Sharp actually penned six rules on the use of the article, but the first of these is what has become known as Sharp's rule because of its import for texts dealing with the deity of Christ. Hence, "it is of much more consequence than the rest. . . ."<sup>38</sup> The rule is as follows:

*When the copulative και connects two nouns of the same case, [viz. nouns (either substantive or adjective, or participles) of personal description, respecting office, dignity, affinity, or connexion, and attributes, properties, or qualities, good or ill], if the article ὁ, or any of its cases, precedes the first of the said nouns or participles, and is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always relates to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle: i.e. it denotes a farther description of the first-named person . . . .*<sup>39</sup>

Although Sharp discusses here only personal substantives in the singular, it is not clear from this statement whether he intended to restrict his rule to such. However, a perusal of his monograph reveals that he felt the rule could be applied absolutely only to personal, singular, non-proper nouns.<sup>40</sup>

In other words, in the TSKS construction, the second noun<sup>41</sup> refers to the *same* person mentioned with the first noun when:

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- (1) neither is *impersonal*;
- (2) neither is *plural*;
- (3) neither is a *proper name*.<sup>42</sup>

Therefore, according to Sharp, the rule applied absolutely *only* with personal, singular, and non-proper nouns. The significance of these requirements can hardly be overestimated, for those who have misunderstood Sharp's principle have done so almost without exception because they were unaware of the restrictions that Sharp set forth.

## 3. The Neglect and Abuse of Sharp's Rule

One of the interesting ironies in the history of biblical studies is that Sharp's rule, which early on found massive and well-documented support among classical grammarians and patristic scholars, was almost felled by one unsubstantiated footnote. G. B. Winer, the great NT grammarian of the nineteenth century, wrote:

In Tit. ii. 13. . . considerations derived from Paul's system of doctrine lead me to believe that σωτήρ is not a second predicate, co-ordinate with θεοῦ.

\* \* \* \* \*  
 [In n 2 at the bottom of the same page] In the above remarks it was not my intention to deny that, in point of *grammar*, σωτήρ ἡμῶν may be regarded as a second predicate, jointly depending on the article τοῦ; but the dogmatic conviction derived from Paul's writings that this apostle cannot have called Christ *the great God* induced me to show that there is no grammatical obstacle to our taking the clause καὶ σωτ. . . Χριστοῦ by itself, as referring to a second subject.<sup>43</sup>

Although he advances no real grammatical arguments, because he was a highly regarded grammarian Winer was able to cancel out, by the intimidation of his own opinion, the use of Sharp's rule in passages such as [Titus 2:13](#) and [2 Pet 1:1](#). This statement virtually sounded the death knell to Sharp's rule.<sup>44</sup> From this point on, scholars were either tentative about the validity of Sharp's rule or else were unsure about its requirements.<sup>45</sup> For example, Moulton flatly states: "We cannot discuss here the problem of [Tit 2:13](#), for we must, as *grammarians*, leave the matter open:

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see WM [Winer-Moulton] 162, 156n.<sup>46</sup> And Dana and Mantey—on whose grammar many American students have been weaned—actually reproduce (almost) verbatim Sharp's rule, but neglect to specify more clearly the limitations.<sup>47</sup>

The upshot of the imprecise knowledge of Sharp's limitations is that those who invoke his canon on behalf of the argument for Christ's deity in [Titus 2:13](#), etc., since they place plurals and impersonals under the rubric of the rule, are unable to regard the rule as absolute. In other words, the exceptions they find to the rule are actually outside the scope of the rule and are thus not exceptions at all.<sup>48</sup>

#### ⇒4. Validity of the Rule Within the New Testament

We have not established the validity of Sharp's canon thus far, but we have argued that it has been widely misunderstood. In this section our goal is to demonstrate its validity within the pages of the NT.

##### ⇒a. In General

Not counting the christologically significant passages, there are 80 constructions in the NT which fit the *requirements* for Sharp's rule.<sup>49</sup> But do they all fit the *semantics* of the rule—that is, do the substantives always refer to one and the same person? In a word, yes. Even Sharp's opponents could not find any exceptions; all had to admit that the rule was valid in the NT.<sup>50</sup>

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Below are listed several representative passages of Sharp's rule, including nouns, participles, adjectives, and mixed constructions.

#### 1) Nouns in the TSKS Personal Construction

[Mark 6:3](#) οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τέκτων, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς Μαρίας καὶ ἀδελφὸς Ἰακώβου<sup>51</sup>

this is the carpenter, **the son of Mary and brother of James**

[John 20:17](#) τὸν πατέρα μου καὶ πατέρα ὑμῶν καὶ θεὸν μου καὶ θεὸν ὑμῶν

my **Father and your Father and my God and your God**

The construction here is unusual in that it involves four nouns. The possessive pronouns are used to show the differences in how Jesus and his disciples relate to God, but they do not imply that a different person is in view: the first person of the Trinity is the referent for all four nouns.

It is also significant that one of the substantives is θεός. This is a good illustration of the fact that θεός is not a proper noun (from the Greek perspective), for whenever a proper name occurs in Sharp's construction two persons are in view. Yet, whenever θεός is in this construction, one person is in view.

[Eph 6:21](#) Τυχικός ὁ ἀγαπητὸς ἀδελφὸς καὶ πιστὸς διάκονος

Tychicus, **the beloved brother and faithful servant**

[Heb 3:1](#) τὸν ἀπόστολον καὶ ἀρχιερέα τῆς ὁμολογίας ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν

Jesus, **the apostle and high priest** of our confession

[1 Pet 1:3](#) ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

**the God and Father** of our Lord Jesus Christ

[Rev 1:9](#) ἐγὼ Ἰωάννης, ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὑμῶν καὶ συγκοινωνός ἐν τῇ θλίψει καὶ βασιλείᾳ

I, John, your **brother and fellow-partaker** in the tribulation and kingdom

This text involves two TSKS constructions, one personal and one impersonal. It is obvious that the personal construction fits the rule (John is both brother of and fellow-participant with his readers), while the impersonal construction just as obviously does not (the tribulation is not identical with the kingdom).

Cf. also [Luke 20:37](#); [Rom 15:6](#); [2 Cor 1:3](#); [11:31](#); [Gal 1:4](#); [Eph 1:3](#); [5:20](#); [Phil 4:20](#); [Col 4:7](#); [1 Thess 1:3](#); [3:11](#), [13](#); [1 Tim 6:15](#); [Heb 12:2](#); [Jas 1:27](#); [3:9](#); [1 Pet 2:25](#); [5:1](#); [2 Pet 1:11](#); [2:20](#); [3:2](#), [18](#); [Rev 1:6](#).

#### 2) Participles in the TSKS Personal Construction

[Matt 27:40](#) ὁ καταλύων τὸν ναὸν καὶ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις οἰκοδομῶν, σῶσον σεαυτὸν

[you,] **the one who would destroy** the temple **and** in three days **build** [it up], save yourself

[John 6:33](#) ὁ καταβαίνων ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ζωὴν διδοῦς

**the one who comes down** from heaven **and who gives life**

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- [Acts 15:38](#) τὸν ἀποστάντα ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀπὸ Παμφυλίας καὶ μὴ συνελθόντα αὐτοῖς  
**the one who had withdrawn** from them in Pamphilia **and had not gone on** with them
- [Eph 2:14](#) ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφοτέρωθεν ἐν καὶ τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας  
**the one who made** both into one **and who destroyed** the middle wall of partition  
 This text well illustrates that even when there are several intervening words, the construction is not thereby invalidated.
- [Jas 1:25](#) ὁ δὲ παρακύψας εἰς νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας καὶ παραμείνας . . . οὗτος μακάριος ἐν τῇ ποιήσει αὐτοῦ ἔσται  
 but **the one who looks** into [the] perfect law, the law of liberty, **and perseveres** . . . he shall be blessed in what he does
- [Rev 22:8](#) κἀγὼ Ἰωάννης ὁ ἀκούων καὶ βλέπων ταῦτα  
 And I, John, **the one who hears and sees** these things

Cf. also [Matt 7:26](#); [13:20](#); [Mark 15:29](#); [Luke 6:47](#); [16:18](#); [John 5:24](#); [6:54](#); [9:8](#); [Acts 10:35](#); [1 Cor 11:29](#); [2 Cor 1:21, 22](#); [Gal 1:15](#); [2 Thess 2:4](#); [Heb 7:1](#); [1 John 2:4, 9](#); [2 John 9](#); [Rev 1:5](#); [16:15](#).

### 3) Adjectives in the TSKS Personal Construction

- [Acts 3:14](#) ὑμεῖς δὲ τὸν ἅγιον καὶ δίκαιον ἠρνήσασθε  
 you have denied **the holy and righteous one**
- [Rev 3:17](#) σὺ εἶ ὁ ταλαίπωρος καὶ ἐλεεινὸς καὶ πτωχὸς καὶ τυφλὸς καὶ γυμνός<sup>52</sup>  
 you are **the wretched and pitiable and poor and blind and naked one!**  
 Cf. also Phlm 1.

### 4) Mixed Elements in the TSKS Personal Construction

- [Phil 2:25](#) Ἐπαφρόδιτον τὸν ἀδελφὸν καὶ συνεργὸν καὶ συστρατιώτην μου  
 Eparphroditus, my **brother and fellow-worker and fellow-soldier**  
 This passage illustrates the fact that a possessive pronoun added to one of the nouns does not invalidate the rule.
- [1 Tim 5:5](#) ἡ ὄντως χήρα καὶ μεμονωμένη  
**the one who is really a widow and left alone**<sup>53</sup>  
 Cf. also [1 Thess 3:2](#).

The monotonous pattern of personal singular substantives in the TSKS construction indicating an identical referent immediately places such substantives in a different category from proper names, impersonal nouns, or plural nouns. The statistics accentuate this difference: In the TSKS construction there are about a dozen personal proper names in the NT (none having an identical referent); close to

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fifty impersonal nouns (only one unambiguously having the same referent); more than seventy plural substantives (little more than a third having an identical referent); and *eighty* TSKS constructions fitting the structural requirements of the rule (the christologically significant texts excepted), *all* of which apparently having an identical referent. It is evident that Sharp's limitation to personal singular substantives does indeed have substance.

#### ⇒ b. For Christologically Significant Texts

Granville Sharp believed that several christologically significant texts involved the TSKS construction.<sup>54</sup> However, several of these involved dubious textual variants (e.g., [Acts 20:28](#); [Jude 4](#)), and others had proper names ([Eph 5:5](#); [2 Thess 1:12](#); [1 Tim 5:21](#); [2 Tim 4:1](#)).<sup>55</sup>

This leaves two passages, [Titus 2:13](#) and [2 Pet 1:1](#).

- [Titus 2:13](#) τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ  
 our great **God and Savior**, Jesus Christ  
 It has frequently been alleged that θεός is a proper name and, hence, that Sharp's rule cannot apply to constructions in which it is employed. We have already argued that θεός is not a proper name in Greek.<sup>56</sup> We simply wish to point out here that in the TSKS construction θεός is used over a dozen times in the NT (e.g., [Luke 20:37](#); [John 20:27](#); [Rom 15:6](#); [2 Cor](#)

1:3; [Gal 1:4](#); [Jas 1:27](#)) and always (if we exclude the christologically significant texts) in reference to one person. This phenomenon is not true of any other proper name in said construction (every instance involving true proper names always points to two individuals). Since that argument carries no weight, there is no good reason to reject [Titus 2:13](#) as an explicit affirmation of the deity of Christ.

[2 Pet 1:1](#) τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ<sup>57</sup>

**our God and Savior, Jesus Christ**

Some grammarians have objected that since ἡμῶν is connected with θεοῦ, two persons are in view.<sup>58</sup> The pronoun seems to “bracket” the

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noun, effectively isolating the trailing noun. However in v 11 of this same chapter (as well as in 2:20 and 3:18), the author writes τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, an expression which refers to one person, Jesus Christ: “Why refuse to apply the same rule to 2 Peter i. 1, that all admit . . . to be true of 2 Peter i. 11 [not to mention 2:20 and 3:18]?”<sup>59</sup> Further, more than half of the NT texts that fit Sharp’s rule involve some intervening word between the two substantives. Several of them have an intervening possessive pronoun or other gen. modifier.<sup>60</sup> Yet, in all of these constructions only one person is clearly in view.<sup>61</sup> In all such instances the intervening term had no effect on breaking the construction. This being the case, there is no good reason for rejecting [2 Pet 1:1](#) as an explicit affirmation of the deity of Christ.<sup>62</sup>

## ⇒ 5. Constructions Involving Impersonal, Plural, and Proper Nouns

### a. Proper Names

Always in the NT, whenever proper names are in the equation, distinct individuals are in view. For example, we read of “Peter and James and John” (τὸν Πέτρον καὶ Ἰάκωβον καὶ Ἰωάννην) in [Matt 17:1](#); “Mary Magdalene and Mary . . .” (ἡ δὲ Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ καὶ Μαρία) in [Mark 15:47](#); “Martha and Mary” (τὴν Μάρθαν καὶ Μαριάμ) in [John 11:19](#); “Barnabas and Saul” (τὸν Βαρναβάν καὶ Σαῦλον) in [Acts 13:2](#). Yet at the same time they are united under one article for the purposes at hand. Peter and James and John were the inner circle of disciples ([Matt 17:1](#)), Martha and Mary were sisters ([John 11:19](#)),

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Barnabas and Saul had been set apart for a particular task ([Acts 13:2](#)). There is a reason for the lone article in every instance, viz., to conceptualize a contextually-defined coherent group. But because the nouns are proper, the article does not identify one with the other.

### ⇒ b. Plural Personal Constructions<sup>63</sup>

#### 1) Semantics and the NT Data

Several NT scholars who embraced Sharp’s rule have assumed without warrant that it applied to plural substantives. Others who have understood Sharp’s requirement of singular substantives have nevertheless assumed that plural substantives either must have the same referent or entirely discrete referents. Their semantic approach is inadequate in that the only question they raise is: Are the two groups identical or distinct? Such a question for the singular, personal construction is of course adequate; either the first-named person is identical with the second-named person or he is distinct. But the very nature of a *plural* construction demands that several other questions be asked if we are to see its full semantic range. That is, since the plural construction deals with *groups*, there may be other possibilities besides absolute distinction and absolute identity.

Theoretically, in fact, there are five semantic possibilities for the plural TSKS construction: (1) distinct groups, though united; (2) overlapping groups; (3) first group subset of second; (4) second group subset of first; and (5) both groups identical. In the NT all groups are represented, though they are not evenly distributed. We will discuss the statistics after a brief look at some examples.

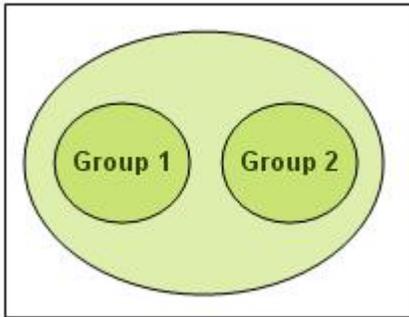
#### 2) Unambiguous Illustrations

##### a) Distinct Groups, though United

At all times the lone article in the TSKS construction suggests some sort of unity. A large number of instances in

the NT imply nothing more. We can readily see this in English. In the sentence “the Democrats and Republicans approved the bill unanimously,” the two political parties, though distinct, are united on a particular issue.<sup>64</sup>

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**Chart 28 - Distinct Groups, though United**<sup>65</sup>

[Matt 3:7](#) τῶν Φαρισαίων καὶ Σαδδουκαίων  
**the Pharisees and Sadducees**

Although these two parties were distinct, the article unites them for the purposes at hand.

This is the first mention of either Pharisees or Sadducees in Matthew’s Gospel, and it may be significant that the evangelist presents these two parties which were historically opposed to one another as united in their opposition to the Messiah’s forerunner. The Pharisees and the Sadducees are listed together only four other times in Matthew; in each instance the structure is TSKS and the two groups are set in opposition to Jesus.<sup>66</sup>

[Matt 16:21](#) τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ ἀρχιερέων καὶ γραμματέων  
**the elders and chief priests and scribes**

These were the three distinct parties which comprised the Sanhedrin. (Some have erroneously insisted that this construction fits Sharp’s rule because these three groups all refer to the Sanhedrin. However, to say that  $A + B + C = D$  is not the same as saying  $A = B = C$ , the latter equation being what Sharp’s rule asserts.<sup>67</sup>)

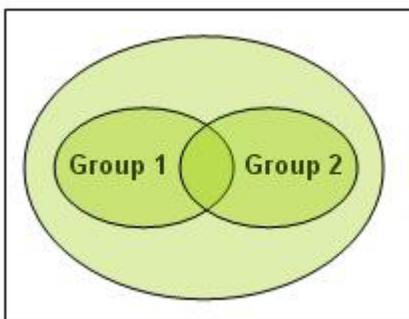
[Acts 17:12](#) τῶν . . . γυναικῶν . . . καὶ ἀνδρῶν  
**the . . . women . . . and men**

Cf. also [Matt 2:4](#); [Mark 15:1](#); [Luke 9:22](#).

### b) Overlapping Groups

English illustrations suggesting overlapping groups are easily produced: “the poor and sick,” “the blind and elderly,” etc. In the NT, however, this is a scantily attested category, with only three examples.

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**Chart 29 - Overlapping Groups**

[Rev 21:8](#) τοῖς δὲ δειλοῖς καὶ ἀπίστοις καὶ ἐβδελυγμένοις καὶ φονεῦσιν καὶ πόρνοις καὶ φαρμάκοις καὶ εἰδωλολάτραις . . . τὸ μέρος αὐτῶν ἐν τῇ λίμνῃ τῇ καιομένῃ πυρὶ καὶ θείῳ  
now as for **the cowardly and unfaithful and abominable and murderers and fornicators and**

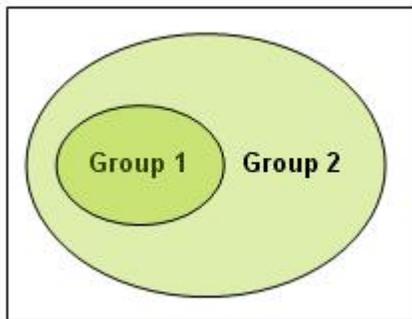
**sorcerers and idolaters** . . . their portion shall be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur

It is obvious here that the Lake of Fire is not reserved *only* for those who meet *all* of the “qualifications,” nor for those meeting only one requirement. Overlapping groups is the intended meaning.

Cf. also [Matt 4:24](#); [Luke 14:21](#).

### c) First Group Subset of Second

When we say that the first group is a subset of the second, we mean that it is entirely subsumed within the second-named group. The idea would be “the X and [other] Y.” For example, “the deaf and handicapped,” “the angels and created beings,” “the citizens and residents.”



**Chart 30**

#### **First Group Subset of Second**

[Matt 9:11](#) τῶν τελωνῶν καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν

**the tax-collectors and [other] sinners**

[Luke 14:3](#) ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν πρὸς τοὺς νομικοὺς καὶ Φαρισαίους

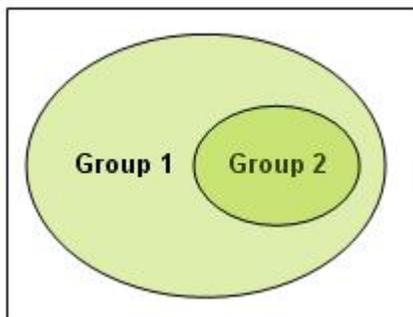
Jesus spoke to **the lawyers and [other] Pharisees**

Cf. also [Matt 5:20](#); 12:38; [Mark 2:16](#); [Luke 5:30](#); 6:35.

### d) Second Group Subset of First

Sometimes the order between the elements is reversed from “first subset of second.” The terms in the illustrations above can be flip-flopped: “the created beings and angels,” “the handicapped and deaf,” etc. The idea is “the X and [in particular] Y.”

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**Chart 31 - Second Group Subset of First**

[Mark 2:16](#) ἰδόντες ὅτι ἐσθίει μετὰ τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν καὶ τελωνῶν ἔλεγον τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ ὅτι μετὰ τῶν τελωνῶν καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν ἐσθίει; <sup>68</sup>

when they saw that he was eating with **the sinners and tax-collectors** they said to his disciples, “Why does he eat with the tax-collectors and sinners?”

There are two plural TSKS constructions in this verse, both using the same wording but in different order. The first instance is that of second group subset of first; the second instance is first subset of second.

[1 Cor 5:10](#) τοῖς πλεονέκταις καὶ ἄρπαξι<sup>69</sup>

the greedy and swindlers

Although one could be greedy without being branded a swindler, it is doubtful that the reverse could be true. The idea, then, is “the greedy and [especially] swindlers.”

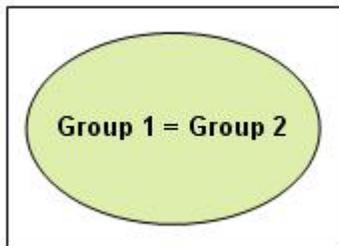
Cf. also [1 Tim 5:8](#); [3 John 5](#).

### e) Both Groups Identical

The idea of identical groups is “the X who are Y.” The second substantive functions either in a descriptive or restrictive manner. For example, “the San Francisco Forty-Niners and world champions of football,” “those eating well and exercising will get strong.” This category has greater attestation than any of the others in the NT, though it is not

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at all found among noun+noun TSKS plural constructions.<sup>70</sup>



**Chart 32 - Both Groups Identical**

[John 20:29](#) μακάριοι οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες

blessed are **those who have not seen and [yet] believe**

The negative stipulation of not seeing the risen Lord is inadequate to procure a blessing. And, in this context, the Lord is pronouncing a blessing on those who believe apart from seeing him, in contrast to Thomas.

[Eph 1:1](#) τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς οὖσιν ἑ ἐν Ἐφέσω# καὶ πιστοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ

**to the saints** who are [in Ephesus] **and who are faithful** in Christ Jesus

A. T. Lincoln, who regards Ephesians as a pseudonymous work, still can argue that in light of the detectable fingerprints of Pauline theology, it is doubtful that the author would be specifying two groups which could be distinguished in any way.<sup>71</sup> And M. Barth, who embraces Pauline authorship of Ephesians, makes a good case that it is unlikely that Paul wanted to distinguish two classes among the Christians, i.e. a “faithful” group from another larger or smaller group that is “holy.” Such a distinction would be unparalleled in the Pauline letters. Even the wild Corinthians are called “sanctified” and “perfect” ([1 Cor 1:2](#); 2:6). While occasionally Paul presupposes a sharp division between “those outside” and “those inside,” between “the unbelieving” and “the faithful,” he has no room for half- or three-quarter Christians. It is probable that here the Greek conjunction “and” has the meaning of “namely.” It serves the purpose of explication and may therefore occasionally be omitted in translation if its intent is preserved.<sup>72</sup>

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[Rev 1:3](#) μακάριος ὁ ἀναγινώσκων καὶ οἱ ἀκούοντες τοὺς λόγους τῆς προφητείας καὶ τηροῦντες τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ γεγραμμένα<sup>73</sup>

blessed is the one who reads and **those who hear** the words of this prophecy **and keep** the things written in it

It is evident that the one who only hears the prophecy and does not obey it falls short of the blessing. The twofold response of hearing and keeping is necessary if one is to be counted

among the μακάριοι.

Cf. also [Matt 5:6](#); [Mark 12:40](#); [Luke 7:32](#); [John 1:20](#); [2 Cor 12:21](#); [Phil 3:3](#); [1 Thess 5:12](#); [2 Pet 2:10](#); [2 John 9](#); [Rev 18:9](#).

#### f) Summary

There are 62 unambiguous passages out of 73; the breakdown is as follows:

<b>Distinct</b>	26% of total; 31% of clearly marked constructions
<b>Overlap</b>	4% and 5%
<b>First subset</b>	10% and 11%
<b>Second subset</b>	5.5% and 6.5%
<b>Identical</b>	40% and 47%

**Table 3 - Semantics of Plural Personal TSKS Constructions**

With reference to the types of substantives used (counting only the unambiguous passages), the following table reveals some interesting patterns:

	Distinct	Overlap	1st Subset of 2nd	2nd Subset of 1st	Identical	Totals
Noun + Noun	11		2			13
Adjective + Adjective		1	1	1	2	5
Participle + Participle					24	24
Mixed: Non-Participial	8		4	3	2	17
Mixed: With Participle		2			1	3
<b>Totals</b>	19	3	7	4	29	62

**Table 4 - Types of Substantives Used in the Plural Personal Construction**

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### 3) Exegetically and Theologically Significant Texts

There are several ambiguous plural TSKS constructions, two of which have particular exegetical value.<sup>74</sup>

[Eph 4:11](#) αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους, τοὺς δὲ προφῆτας, τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστάς, τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους  
he gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, **some [as] pastors and teachers**

This text discusses the gifted leaders whom Christ has given to the Church for her maturity. The debate over this text has focused on the issue of whether one gift or two are mentioned. Most commentators have seen only one gift here, but primarily because they erroneously thought that the Granville Sharp rule absolutely applied to plural constructions. Also, against the “one gift” view, there are no clear examples of *nouns* being used in a plural TSKS construction to specify one group. However, we are not shut up to the “entirely distinct groups” option only.

The uniting of these two groups by one article sets them apart from the other gifted leaders. Absolute distinction, then, is probably not in view. In light of the fact that elders and pastors had similar functions in the NT,<sup>75</sup> since elders were to be teachers,<sup>76</sup> the

pastors were also to be teachers.<sup>77</sup> Further, presumably not all teachers were elders or pastors.<sup>78</sup> This evidence seems to suggest that the ποιμέναις were a part of the διδασκάλους in [Eph 4:11](#). This likelihood is in keeping with the semantics of the plural noun construction, for the first-subset-of-second category is well-attested in both the clear and ambiguous texts in the NT. Thus, [Eph 4:11](#) seems to affirm that all pastors were to be teachers, though not all teachers were to be pastors.<sup>79</sup>

[Eph 2:20](#) ἐποικοδομηθέντες ἐπὶ τῷ θεμελίῳ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν  
having been built upon the foundation **of the apostles and prophets**

This text has become something of a theological lightning rod in conservative circles in America in the past several years, largely due to the work of Wayne Grudem.<sup>80</sup> Grudem argues that the apostles and prophets are identical here. This is important to his view of NT prophecy: on the one hand, he holds to a high view of scripture, viz., that the autographs are inerrant; on the other hand, he believes that *non-apostolic*

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prophets both in the early church and today mixed error with truth. If in [Eph 2:20](#) the Church is built on the foundation of apostles and *other* prophets, then it would seem that Grudem either has to deny inerrancy or affirm that non-apostolic prophets only spoke truth (and were thus on par with OT prophets). Hence, he spends much ink arguing that *in this text* the prophets are identical with the apostles, while elsewhere in the NT the prophets are a separate class of individuals. This distinction allows him the luxury of embracing an inerrant NT while admitting that today's prophets (as well as first century non-apostolic prophets) can commit error in their predictions.

We must refrain from entering into the larger issues of charismata and fallible prophecy in our treatment of this text.<sup>81</sup> Our point is simply that the syntactical evidence is very much against the "identical" view, even though syntax has been the primary grounds used in behalf of it. As we have seen, there are no clear examples of plural *nouns* in TSKS fitting the "identical" group in the NT, rendering such a possibility here less likely on grammatical grounds.<sup>82</sup>

The strongest possibilities are either that two distinct groups are in view or the apostles are seen as a subset of the prophets. If the OT prophets are in view, then obviously two distinct groups are meant. But if NT prophets are in view, this would favor the apostles as being a subset of the prophets. In favor of this second view: (1) If OT prophets were

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in view, it seems unnatural that they would be mentioned second. (2) Whenever apostles are in a TSKS plural construction they always come first and the semantic value of the construction involves the first group as a subset of the second. (3) Since the picture of a building which apparently consists of the true Church is what is being described here, and since the apostles and prophets are viewed as foundational to this building, it seems hardly conceivable that OT prophets would be in the author's mind here. (4) The same construction occurs in 3:5 in which it is declared that the mystery has *now* been revealed "to his holy apostles and prophets"; thus, the NT prophets are clearly in view there. Since the context is still about the foundation and beginning of the Church, it would be consistent for the reference to be about the same group of prophets in both 2:20 and 3:5. Our conclusion, then, is that [Eph 2:20](#) speaks of "the apostles and [other] prophets."

### ⇒c. Impersonal Constructions

There are about 50 impersonal TSKS constructions in the NT.<sup>83</sup> Theoretically, such constructions can have the same semantic range as plural personal constructions (i.e., distinct, overlapping, first subset of second, second subset of first, and identical [see figures above]). However, the "identical" category is quite rare, with only one clear example. Far more common is the distinct category and the overlapping groups (especially first subset of second).

#### 1) Unambiguous Examples

##### a) Distinct Entities, though United

[Luke 21:12](#) διώξουσιν, παραδιδόντες εἰς τὰς συναγωγὰς καὶ φυλακάς<sup>84</sup>  
they will persecute [you], handing [you] over to **the synagogues and prisons**

The reason for the single article is that both groups are hostile to the disciples.

[Eph 3:12](#) ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ προσαγωγὴν

in whom we have **the boldness and access**

There is a very close relationship between boldness and access, one being the internal attitude which corresponds to the external reality.

[Eph 3:18](#) τὸ πλάτος καὶ μῆκος καὶ ὕψος καὶ βάθος

**the breadth and length and height and depth**

The author is speaking about God's love in figurative language, as if he were using a spiritual plumb-line. Although each term refers to God's love, each refers to a different aspect of it and thus the terms are *not* identical.<sup>85</sup>

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[Rev 1:9](#) ἐγὼ Ἰωάννης, ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὑμῶν καὶ συγκοινωνὸς ἐν τῇ θλίψει καὶ βασιλείᾳ

I John, your brother and fellow-partaker in **the tribulation and kingdom**

There are two TSKS constructions in this, one personal and one impersonal. The personal construction involves an identical referent; the impersonal referent obviously does not (the tribulation and kingdom are not the same). The article shows that John and his readers are *united* in both suffering and glory.

Cf. also [Luke 24:44](#); [Acts 10:12](#); [21:25](#); [2 Cor 6:7](#); [Col 2:19](#); [Rev 20:10](#).

### b) Overlapping Entities

[2 Cor 12:21](#) τῶν προημαρτηκότων καὶ μὴ μετανοησάντων ἐπὶ τῇ ἀκαθαρσίᾳ καὶ πορνείᾳ καὶ ἀσελείᾳ

those who have previously sinned and not repented over **the impurity and immorality and licentiousness**

This is the only clear instance in the NT,<sup>86</sup> and even here the overlap is partial: immorality and licentiousness are kinds of impurity.

### c) First Entity Subset of Second

[Col 2:22](#) τὰ ἐντάλματα καὶ διδασκαλίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων

**the commandments and teachings** of men

Not all teachings are commandments, but all commandments would seem to be teachings.

[Rev 9:15](#) ἐλύθησαν οἱ τέσσαρες ἄγγελοι οἱ ἠτοιμασμένοι εἰς τὴν ὥραν καὶ ἡμέραν καὶ μῆνα καὶ ἔνιαυτόν

the four angels who had been prepared for **the hour and day and month and year** were released

Cf. also [Mark 12:33](#); [Luke 1:6](#); [9:12](#); [Rom 1:20](#); [16:18](#); [Phil 1:7](#).

### d) Second Group Subset of First

[Matt 24:36](#) Περὶ δὲ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης καὶ ὥρας οὐδεὶς οἶδεν

Now concerning that **day and hour**, no one knows

[Luke 6:17](#) πάσης τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ Ἱερουσαλήμ

all Judea and Jerusalem

Cf. also [Mark 6:36](#); [Luke 5:17](#); [Heb 13:16](#); [Rev 14:7](#).

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### e) Both Entities Identical

There is only one clear example of this in the NT.

[Acts 1:25](#) ἀνάδειξον ὃν ἐξελέξω . . . (25) λαβεῖν τὸν τόπον τῆς διακονίας ταύτης καὶ ἀποστολῆς

Show [us] which one you have chosen . . . (25) to take the place of this **ministry and apostleship**

The presence of the demonstrative ταύτης seems to restrict διακονία in the context so that the noun phrase "this ministry" becomes, in the discourse, the exact equivalent of ἀποστολή.

## 2) Exegetically and Theologically Significant Texts

There are several ambiguous impersonal TSKS constructions, some of which are exegetically significant.<sup>87</sup> Three of them will be taken up here.

[Acts 2:23](#) τοῦτον τῇ ὠρισμένη βουλῇ καὶ προγνώσει τοῦ θεοῦ  
this [Jesus, having been delivered up] by **the predetermined plan and foreknowledge** of God  
If “foreknowledge” defines “predetermination,” this opens the door that (according to one definition of πρόγνωσις) God’s decree is dependent on his omniscience. But if the terms are distinguishable, the relationship may be reversed, viz., omniscience is dependent on the eternal decree. Without attempting to resolve this theological issue entirely, it can nevertheless be argued that the “identical” view is unlikely: the least attested meaning of impersonal constructions is referential identity.<sup>88</sup> The relationship between the two terms here may be one of distinctness or the subsumption of one under the other. In the context of [Acts 2](#) and in light of Luke’s christological argument “from prophecy and pattern,”<sup>89</sup> the most likely option is that the πρόγνωσις is grounded in the ὠρισμένη βουλή (thus “foreknowledge” is a part of the “predetermined plan”), for one of the foci of the chapter is on the divine *plan* in relation to the Messiah’s death and resurrection.<sup>90</sup> Thus, God’s decrees are not based on him simply foreknowing what human beings will do; rather, humanity’s actions are based on God’s foreknowledge and predetermined plan.

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[Acts 20:21](#) διαμαρτυρόμενος Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἑλλῆσιν τὴν εἰς θεὸν μετάνοιαν καὶ πίστιν εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν  
testifying to both Jews and Greeks of **the repentance toward God and faith** in our Lord Jesus Christ

One major exegetical problem of the text relates to the Pauline kerygma and the use of μετάνοια here. Two of the most commonly-held views are at odds with each other. On the one hand, some scholars regard the construction as a chiasmus: Jews were to have faith and Greeks were to repent.<sup>91</sup> Although it is true that turning toward God is a typical component in Paul’s gospel presentation to Gentiles (cf. [Gal 4:8](#); [1 Thess 1:9](#)),<sup>92</sup> it is hardly atypical of the message he addressed to the Jews.<sup>93</sup> Nor is it atypical of Luke’s theology.<sup>94</sup> Further, the TSKS construction in the least implies some sort of unity between μετάνοια and πίστις. Those who embrace the chiasmic view do not address this problem. On the other hand, several scholars argue that the two terms have an identical, or nearly identical referent, being persuaded apparently by the supposed force of the TSKS construction.<sup>95</sup> Although this second view takes into account the structure in Greek, it does not reckon with the impersonal nature of this construction.

The evidence suggests that, in Luke’s usage, saving faith *includes* repentance. In those texts which speak simply of faith, a “theological shorthand” seems to be employed: Luke envisions repentance as the inceptive act of which the entirety may be called πίστις.<sup>96</sup> Thus, for Luke, conversion is not a two-step process, but one step, faith—but the kind of faith that *includes* repentance. This, of course, fits well with the frequent idiom of first subset of second for impersonal TSKS constructions.

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[2 Thess 2:1](#) Ἐρωτῶμεν δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, ὑπὲρ τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἡμῶν ἐπισυναγωγῆς ἐπ’ αὐτόν  
Now we ask you, brothers, concerning **the coming** of our Lord Jesus Christ **and our gathering together** with him

This text impacts the discussion in some American evangelical circles over the time of the rapture. Many posttribulationists/non-dispensationalists have considered the two to have the same referent precisely because of their misunderstanding of Sharp’s rule and its specific requirements.<sup>97</sup>

Since the TSKS construction involves impersonal substantives, the highest degree of doubt is cast upon the probability of the terms referring to the same event. This is especially the case since the terms look to concrete temporal referents (the parousia and the gathering of the saints), for the identical category is unattested for *concrete* impersonals in the NT.

This is not to say that one could not see a posttribulation rapture in the text, for even if the words do not have an identical referent, they could have simultaneous ones. Our only point is that because of the misuse of syntax by some scholars, certain approaches to the theology of the NT have often been jettisoned without a fair hearing.

## 7. Conclusion

As has been demonstrated, the TSKS construction is used in several texts which have to do with some rich theological issues (e.g., our Lord's deity, ecclesiology, the biblical concepts of election and foreknowledge, eschatology, etc.). Although this section has been disproportionately long, since Greek grammar has been improperly invoked in support of various positions, a detailed corrective was in order.

## C. Conclusion of The Article, Part II

The history of NT studies involves many ironies. One has to do with the syntax of the article: On the one hand, Colwell's rule, as applied to [John 1:1](#), has been played as a trump card by Trinitarians in many christological debates, even though the rule really says nothing about the definiteness of  $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ . Indeed, an examination both of pre-verbal anarthrous predicate nominatives and of the Christology of the Fourth Gospel strongly suggests a *qualitative* force to  $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$  (a view which affirms the deity of Christ just as strongly but for different reasons).

On the other hand, Sharp's rule has also been misunderstood, the net effect being to lessen certainty as to its value in christologically pregnant texts. It has been applied only with great hesitation to [Titus 2:13](#) and [2 Pet 1:1](#) by Trinitarians in the past two centuries. However, a proper understanding of the rule shows it to have the highest degree of validity within the NT. Consequently, these two passages are as secure as any in the canon when it comes to identifying Christ as  $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ .

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## Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Colwell, "A Definite Rule," 20.

<sup>2</sup> Turner, *Grammatical Insights into the New Testament*, 17.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. also Zerwick, *Biblical Greek*, 56; L. Cignelli, and G. C. Bottini, "L'Articolo nel Greco Biblico," *Studium Biblicum Franciscanum Liber Annuus* 41 (1991) 187.

<sup>4</sup> B. M. Metzger, "On the Translation of John i. 1," *ExpTim* 63 (1951-52) 125-26.

<sup>5</sup> We will contend later that, in fact, Moffatt's, Strachan's, and Goodspeed's translations are (1) not at all to be lumped in with the *New World Translation*, and (2) this is probably the most satisfactory translation of the passage.

<sup>6</sup> Walter Martin, *The Kingdom of the Cults: An Analysis of the Major Cult Systems in the Present Christian Era*, rev. ed. (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1968) 75, n. 31. For others who have misunderstood the rule, note, e.g., Moule, *Idiom Book*, 116; C. Kuehne, "The Greek Article and the Doctrine of Christ's Deity: II. Colwell's Rule and [John 1:1](#)," *Journal of Theology* 15.1 (1975) 12-14; L. Morris, *The Gospel According to John* (NICNT) 77, n. 15.

<sup>7</sup> Colwell, "A Definite Rule," 21.

<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, from one perspective it is quite acceptable. Colwell brought to NT students' attention that anarthrous pre-verbal PNs were frequently definite. He provided many undisputed examples of this and thus established a clear category of usage. This allowed NT students to see definiteness in many such constructions where they might not have otherwise.

<sup>9</sup> Colwell, "A Definite Rule," 20 (italics mine).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 21 (italics mine).

<sup>11</sup> This was learned second-hand from my first Greek professor, Dr. Harry A. Sturz. He was a student of Colwell's at Claremont and pointedly asked him, toward the end of Colwell's life, whether the converse of the rule was as valid as the rule itself.

<sup>12</sup> Philip B. Harner, "Qualitative Anarthrous Predicate Nouns: [Mark 15:39](#) and [John 1:1](#)," *JBL* 92 (1973) 76. The entire essay is on 75-87.

<sup>13</sup> Even Kuehne, who is more recent, thinks qualitative = indefinite (C. Kuehne, "A Postscript to Colwell's Rule and [John 1:1](#)," *Journal of Theology* 15 [1975] 22).

<sup>14</sup> Paul Stephen Dixon, "The Significance of the Anarthrous Predicate Nominative in John" (Th.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1975).

<sup>15</sup> Dixon, "Anarthrous Predicate Nominative," 11-12.

<sup>16</sup> He concluded that 94% of these predicate nominatives in John were qualitative, while only 6% were definite.

<sup>17</sup> "It is obvious that the significance of these figures rests upon the accuracy with which definite predicate nouns without the article have been identified" (Colwell, "A Definite Rule," 17).

<sup>18</sup> This is not to say that his rule is invalid. Rather, it is to say that its validity is for *textual criticism* rather than for grammar. Textual criticism was Colwell's real love anyway (he is frequently regarded as the father of modern

American NT textual criticism). The rule's validity for textual criticism is as follows: If it is obvious that a pre-verbal PN is definite, the MSS that lack the article are more likely to support the original reading. The issue of *meaning* is not in view; rather, the presence or absence of the article is.

<sup>19</sup> Dixon himself denies its significance for exegesis, stating, "Obviously, this rule has very little exegetical value" (14). This is true for the rule, but not for the construction. Specifically, of the 53 Colwell's constructions Dixon found in John, not one was considered *indefinite*.

<sup>20</sup> That is, of course, unless there is some other ground for considering it to be definite (such as a monadic noun).

<sup>21</sup> Still, it is to be observed that the PN has a genitive adjunct. What is most interesting about many of Colwell's constructions is that those very PNs that are to be considered to be definite frequently have some other feature (e.g., monadic noun, genitive modifier, proper name) that suggests definiteness independently of Colwell's construction.

<sup>22</sup> Several MSS place the βασιλεύς after the verb and add an article before it (e.g., Ɔ 66 ΝΧΓ Δ Θ 063 1241 f<sup>13</sup> Byz). Colwell noted such variants as evidence for the validity of his rule: either a definite PN preceded the verb and was without the article or followed the verb with the article.

<sup>23</sup> "It was a study of these passages, especially [John 1:1-49](#), that suggested the rule which is advocated in this study. . . . When the passage is scrutinized, it appears at once that the variable quantum is not definiteness but word-order" (Colwell, "A Definite Rule," 13).

<sup>24</sup> One of the ways to test whether a PN is qualitative or definite is to swap the S with the PN. If the sentence makes the same sense, then the PN is definite since the construction involves a convertible proposition. For a more detailed discussion, see the chapter on the "Nominative Case" under "Predicate Nominative."

<sup>25</sup> To clarify this, the majority of MSS added an article before θεός (so Dc E L Ψ 1 69 104 326 1739c Byz *et alii*).

<sup>26</sup> It is nevertheless difficult to distinguish indefinite from qualitative nouns at times (just as at other times it is difficult to distinguish qualitative from definite nouns). The very fact that any member of a class is mentioned highlights to some degree that particular class—hence, making some kind of qualitative statement.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. also [Mark 15:39](#) (and Harner's article) for a similar theologically significant text.

<sup>28</sup> R. H. Countess, *The Jehovah's Witnesses' New Testament: A Critical Analysis of the New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* (Philipsburg, N. J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1982) 54-55.

<sup>29</sup> This is not to say that in a given context Jesus could not be identified with ὁ θεός. In [John 20:28](#), for example, where the crescendo of the Gospel comes in Thomas' confession, Jesus is called ὁ θεός. But there is nothing in that context that would identify him with the Father.

<sup>30</sup> Before 1933 NT commentators saw θεός as qualitative. For example, in Westcott's commentary on John: "It is necessarily without the article (θεός not ὁ θεός) inasmuch as it describes the nature of the Word and does not identify His Person. It would be pure Sabellianism to say 'the Word was ὁ θεός.'"

Robertson, *Grammar*, 767-68: "ὁ θεός ἦν ὁ λόγος (convertible terms) would have been pure Sabellianism . . . . The absence of the article here is on purpose and essential to the true idea."

Lange's commentary on John: "Θεός without the article signifies divine essence, or the generic idea of God in distinction from man and angel; as σάρξ, ver. 14, signifies the human essence or nature of the Logos. The article before θεός would here destroy the distinction of personality and confound the Son with the Father."

Chemnitz says: "θεός sine artic. essentialiter, cum artic. personaliter."

Alford points out: "The omission of the article before θεός is not *mere usage*; it could not have been here expressed, whatever place the words might hold in the sentence. ὁ λόγος ἦν ὁ θεός would destroy the idea of the λόγος altogether. θεός must then be taken as implying **God, in substance and essence**, —not ὁ θεός, 'the Father,' *in Person* . . . . as in σὰρξ ἐγένετο [[John 1:14](#)], σάρξ expresses that *state* into which the Divine Word entered by a definite act, so in θεός ἦν, θεός expresses that *essence* which was His ἐν ἀρχῇ: —that He was *very God*. So that this first verse might be connected thus: the Logos was from eternity, —was with God (the Father), —and was Himself God."

Luther states it succinctly: "'the Word was God' is against Arius; 'the Word was with God' against Sabellius."

<sup>31</sup> Although I believe that θεός in 1:1c is qualitative, I think the simplest and most straightforward translation is, "and the Word was God." It may be better to clearly affirm the NT teaching of the deity of Christ and then explain that he is *not* the Father, than to *sound* ambiguous on his deity and explain that he is God but is not the Father.

<sup>32</sup> The reason this is so is that whenever a word is thrown forward in the sentence it tends to be emphasized. Thus an anarthrous pre-verbal PN, by this word order shift, tends toward definiteness. So also an anarthrous a-verbal pre-subject PN.

<sup>33</sup> For a comprehensive treatment of this subject, see D. B. Wallace, “The Article with Multiple Substantives Connected by *καί* in the New Testament: Semantics and Significance” (Ph.D. dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1995), to be published by Peter Lang Publishers, c. 1997.

<sup>34</sup> Among the nearly 70 volumes that Sharp wrote (most of which had to do with social issues, especially slavery) were 16 works in biblical studies. One of his first books, in fact, dealt with the textual criticism of the OT and was a critique of the work of the great Oxford Hebrew scholar, Benjamin Kennicott. Sharp also penned a volume on Hebrew pronunciation as well as one on Hebrew syntax in which he formulated rules about the *waw*-consecutive still considered valid today.

<sup>35</sup> He had more than the two we here consider to be legitimate. His other texts involved either textual variants which we do not regard as original or items which do not meet Sharp’s basic criteria as he has laid them down.

<sup>36</sup> Published in Durham by L. Pennington.

<sup>37</sup> For a more detailed life of Granville Sharp, see Wallace, “The Article with Multiple Substantives,” 30-42. All citations of Sharp’s monograph are from the latest edition, the first American edition (Philadelphia: B. B. Hopkins, 1807).

<sup>38</sup> Sharp, *Remarks on the Uses of the Definitive Article*, 2.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 (italics in the original).

<sup>40</sup> See Wallace, “The Article with Multiple Substantives,” 47-48, for documentation.

<sup>41</sup> By “noun” we mean what Sharp meant: substantival adjective, substantival participle, or noun.

<sup>42</sup> A *proper* noun is defined as a noun which *cannot* be “pluralized”—thus it does *not* include titles. A person’s name, therefore, is proper and consequently does not fit the rule. But *θεός* is not proper because it can be pluralized—thus, when *θεός* is in a TSKS construction in which both nouns are singular and personal, it fits Sharp’s rule. Since *θεοί* is possible (cf. [John 10:34](#)), *θεός* is not a proper name. For a detailed discussion on the grammatical use of *θεός* in the NT, cf. B. Weiss, “Der Gebrauch des Artikels bei den Gottesnamen,” *TSK* 84 (1911) 319-92, 503-38; R. W. Funk, “The Syntax of the Greek Article: Its Importance for Critical Pauline Problems” (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1953) 46, 154-67; Wallace, “The Article with Multiple Substantives,” 260-63.

<sup>43</sup> Winer-Moulton, 162.

<sup>44</sup> Today, scholars tend either to reject Pauline authorship of the pastorals or an affirmation of Christ’s deity in them. One cannot have both Paul and Christ, it seems.

<sup>45</sup> For documentation, see Wallace, “The Article with Multiple Substantives,” 53-80, esp. 66-80.

<sup>46</sup> Moulton, *Prolegomena*, 84 (italics added).

<sup>47</sup> Dana-Mantey, 147.

<sup>48</sup> The list of those who have misunderstood the rule include such notable scholars as J. H. Moulton, A. T. Robertson, Dana-Mantey, M. J. Harris, F. F. Bruce, C. F. D. Moule, et al.

<sup>49</sup> This number is disputed by some, either due to textual variants, inclusion of impersonal nouns and/or plural nouns, or a different interpretation on certain participles (*viz.*, those which I consider to be adjectival are sometimes regarded as substantival by others and hence included in the count by them).

<sup>50</sup> The most formidable foe to Sharp’s rule was Calvin Winstanley (*A Vindication of Certain Passages in the Common English Version of the New Testament: Addressed to Granville Sharp, Esq.*, 2d ed. [Cambridge: University Press—Hilliard and Metcalf, 1819]). Yet even he agreed that Sharp’s principle was generally valid, going so far as to say, “your first rule has a real foundation in the idiom of the language . . .” (36). And further, within the pages of the NT, Winstanley conceded “There are, you say, no exceptions, in the New Testament, to your rule; that is, I suppose, unless these particular texts [*i.e.*, the ones Sharp used to adduce Christ’s deity] be such. . . . it is nothing surprising to find all these particular texts in question appearing as exceptions to your rule, and the sole exceptions . . . in the New Testament . . .” (39-40)—an obvious concession that he could find no exceptions save for the ones he supposed to exist in the christologically pregnant texts.

On the other side of the ledger, in C. Kuehne’s lengthy study, “The Greek Article and the Doctrine of Christ’s Deity,” *Journal of Theology* 13 (September 1973) 12-28; 13 (December 1973) 14-30; 14 (March 1974) 11-20; 14 (June 1974) 16-25; 14 (September 1974) 21-33; 14 (December 1974) 8-19, the Lutheran scholar summarizes his findings: “. . . we have seen that in the New Testament there are no exceptions at all to the rule!” (*Journal of Theology* 14.4 [1974] 10).

<sup>51</sup> *ND* L 892\* add *ὁ* before *ἀδελφός*; (Θ) 565 700 892c omit the *καί*, thus retaining the apposition.

<sup>52</sup> An article before *ἐλεεινός* is added by A 1006 1611 1841 2329 2351 *et alii*.

<sup>53</sup> Although it is possible that *μεμωμένη* is a predicate participle, its linkage to *χίρα* by *καί* suggests that it, too, is substantival.

<sup>54</sup> One text that Sharp did not deal with is [1 John 5:20](#). Whether this even fits Sharp’s rule is debatable. For a discussion, see Wallace, “The Article with Multiple Substantives,” 271-77.

<sup>55</sup> It is somewhat surprising that many scholars (most notably, R. Bultmann) have embraced [2 Thess 1:12](#) as an explicit affirmation of Christ's deity. Only by detaching κυρίου from Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ could one apply Sharp's rule to this construction. But significantly, Middleton, whose *Doctrine of the Greek Article* was the first major work to support Sharp's rule, rejects [2 Thess 1:12](#), arguing that (1) κυρίου should not be detached from Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, since the whole forms a common title in the epistles, thus partaking of the properties of a proper name; and (2) although Greek patristic writers employed the wording of [Titus 2:13](#) and [2 Pet 1:1](#) on numerous occasions to affirm the deity of Christ, they have hardly noticed this passage (*Doctrine of the Greek Article*, 379-82). Cf. also Matthews, *Syntax*, 228-29, for modern linguistic arguments related to gradations of apposition (in 2 Thess 1:12 most exegetes would see "Lord Jesus Christ" as constituting a "close apposition").

<sup>56</sup> See earlier discussion under "Statement of the Rule."

<sup>57</sup> ⲢⲰ *et pauci* have κυρίου instead of θεοῦ.

<sup>58</sup> E.g., E. Stauffer, θεός, *TDNT* 3.106.

<sup>59</sup> A. T. Robertson, "The Greek Article and the Deity of Christ," *The Expositor*, 8th Series, vol 21 (1921) 185.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. [John 20:17](#); [2 Cor 1:3](#); [1 Thess 3:2](#); [1 Tim 6:15](#); [Heb 12:2](#); [Rev 1:9](#).

<sup>61</sup> In a sampling of the non-literary papyri, I have found the same phenomenon, and, once again, the genitive attached to the first noun *never* broke the force of Sharp's principle. For example, P. Lond. 417.1 reads "to my master and beloved brother" (τῷ δεσπότῃ μου καὶ ἀγαπητῷ ἀδελφῷ); P. Oxy. 2106. 24-25 addresses "my lord and brother" (τῷ κυρίῳ μου καὶ ἀδελφῷ).

<sup>62</sup> There is some interesting confirmation of Sharp's rule, as applied to the christologically pregnant texts, in patristic literature. In 1802 a fellow (and later, master) of Trinity College in Cambridge, Christopher Wordsworth, published his *Six Letters to Granville Sharp, Esq. Respecting his Remarks on the Uses of the Definitive Article, in the Greek Text of the New Testament* (London: F. and C. Rivington, 1802). Wordsworth tested Sharp's principle in the patristic literature. He felt that if the principle was valid, then the Greek fathers would certainly have understood the christologically significant texts in the same way that Sharp had. At one point he gushed, "I fully believe, that there is no one exception to your first rule in the whole New Testament: and the assertion might be extended infinitely further" (*ibid.*, 103). After an exhaustive investigation, from Greek Christian literature covering a span of over 1000 years, Wordsworth was able to make the astounding comment, "I have observed . . . some hundreds of instances of the ὁ μέγας θεος καὶ σωτηρ (Tit. ii. 13); and not fewer than several thousands of the form ὁ θεος καὶ σωτηρ (2 Pet. i. 1).[,], while in no single case, have I seen (where the sense could be determined) any of them used, but only of *one* person" (*ibid.*, 132). Therefore, as far as Wordsworth was concerned, the TSKS constructions which involve the deity of Christ, both in the NT and in the Greek church fathers, were never ambiguous, but fully supported Sharp's proposition.

<sup>63</sup> For a detailed discussion, see Wallace, "The Article with Multiple Substantives," 136-63, 219-44. In more embryonic form, though with largely the same conclusions, see D. B. Wallace, "The Semantic Range of the Article-Noun-Καί-Noun Plural Construction in the New Testament," *GJ* 4 (1983) 59-84.

<sup>64</sup> Perhaps this illustration is not as true to life as intended!

<sup>65</sup> In this and the following figures, the article before the first substantive and the καί between the substantives are omitted because the figures are intended to depict the *semantics*, not the structure, of the TSKS construction.

<sup>66</sup> See [Matt 16:1](#), [6](#), [11](#), [12](#). See also [Acts 23:7](#) for the only other instance of those two groups in this construction.

<sup>67</sup> The difference between the two formulae is the difference between equality of status and identity of referent. Only if the scribes referred to the same group as the elders could Sharp's principle be invoked.

<sup>68</sup> ⲢⲀ C *f*<sup>1, 13</sup> *Byz et alii* have τῶν τελωνῶν καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν for τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν καὶ τελωνῶν.

<sup>69</sup> ἦ is read for καί in Ⲡ<sup>46</sup> Ⲣ<sup>2</sup> D<sup>2</sup> Ψ *Byz*, nullifying the construction in a large (though admittedly inferior) portion of the Greek witnesses to this text. The Chester Beatty papyrus, though early, is hardly a carefully copied MS. Unless it is found in company with other early and reliable witnesses, its voice needs to be somewhat discounted. See the magisterial study by Günther Zuntz on this codex (*The Text of the Epistles: A Disquisition on the Corpus Paulinum* [London: Oxford University Press, 1953]). From my preliminary research, I have noticed that the second corrector of codex Claromontanus almost always assimilates to the Byzantine text. Thus, this reading is not as formidable as it at first appears.

<sup>70</sup> That is, of those texts that are unambiguous. A basic reason that participles (and occasionally adjectives) fit this "identical" category, but not nouns, is that nouns tend to focus on innate, stable, or permanent qualities, while participles tend to focus on activities within an (often unstated) time-frame which may or may not be characteristic. Thus one who is presently telling the truth is not necessarily an honest person, one playing baseball is not necessarily a baseball player, those who study are not necessarily students. However, when an activity marks a person in such a way that it becomes characteristic, the descriptions of such a person sometimes

metamorphose from participles into nouns.

<sup>71</sup> Lincoln, *Ephesians* (WBC) 3-7.

<sup>72</sup> Barth, *Ephesians* (AB) 1.68.

<sup>73</sup> 2053 2062 *et pauci* read ἀκούων instead of οἱ ἀκούοντες.

<sup>74</sup> For a detailed discussion of these texts, as well as the other ambiguous passages (e.g., [Matt 21:12](#); [Acts 15:2](#); [Eph 3:5](#); [Heb 5:2](#)), see Wallace, "The Article with Multiple Substantives," 219-44.

<sup>75</sup> See A. M. Malphurs, "The Relationship of Pastors and Teachers in [Ephesians 4:11](#)" (Th.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1978) 46-53.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 52-53.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 41-46.

<sup>78</sup> This is difficult to assess since only in [Eph 4:11](#) are pastors and teachers mentioned together. But a few texts mention teachers without any hint that they must also be pastors. Cf. [Rom 12:7](#); [1 Cor 12:28-29](#); [Heb 5:12](#); [Jas 3:1](#); perhaps also [2 Tim 2:2](#).

<sup>79</sup> Cf. also F. Rienecker, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Epheser* (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus, 1961) 146; [J.] Calvin, *The Epistles of Paul to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965) 179, for a similar conclusion (though neither one bases his views on syntactical considerations).

<sup>80</sup> Grudem has written a number of books and articles on the subject of NT prophecy, growing out of his doctoral dissertation, "The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians 12-14," Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge University, 1978). Cf. also his *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982) where he devotes 24 pages (82-105) to a discussion of [Eph 2:20](#).

<sup>81</sup> Others have argued against Grudem's thesis on this point. Note the following: D. G. McCartney, review of Wayne A. Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians*, in *WTJ* 45 (1983) 191-97; R. A. Pyne, "The Cessation of Special Revelation as Related to the Pentecostal Movement" (Th.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1985) 36-39; M. Turner, "Spiritual Gifts Then and Now," *VE* 15 (1985) 15-17; K. L. Gentry, *The Charismatic Gift of Prophecy: A Reformed Response to Wayne Grudem* (Memphis: Footstool, 1986); F. D. Farnell, "The New Testament Prophetic Gift: Its Nature and Duration" (Ph.D. dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1990) 7-8, 102-111, 189-309 (especially 243-53), 382-85, and *passim*; idem, "Fallible New Testament Prophecy/Prophets? A Critique of Wayne Grudem's Hypothesis," *Master's Seminary Journal* 2.2 (1991) 157-79; idem, "Is the Gift of Prophecy for Today? The Current Debate about New Testament Prophecy," *BSac* 149 (1992) 277-303; idem, "Is the Gift of Prophecy for Today? The Gift of Prophecy in the Old and New Testaments," *BSac* 149 (1992) 387-410; idem, "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" *BSac* 150 (1993) 62-88; idem, "When Will the Gift of Prophecy Cease?" *BSac* 150 (1993) 171-202; R. F. White, "Gaffin and Grudem on [Eph 2:20](#): In Defense of Gaffin's Cessationist Exegesis," *WTJ* 54 (1992) 303-20; R. L. Thomas, "Prophecy Rediscovered? A Review of *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*," *BSac* 149 (1992) 83-96; D. B. McWilliams, "Something New Under the Sun?" [review of Wayne A. Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*], *WTJ* 54 (1992) 321-330.

<sup>82</sup> In Grudem's study he mixed singular TSKS constructions and plural *participial* TSKS constructions in with [Eph 2:20](#). But the semantic patterns of each of these constructions do not match noun+noun plural TSKS constructions: There are no clear examples of plural nouns displaying identity, while all singular and virtually all plural participles fit this category.

For a more detailed discussion, see Wallace, "The Article with Multiple Substantives," 223-40.

<sup>83</sup> Impersonal substantives present special problems that are beyond the scope of a non-specialized study. For discussion, see Wallace, "The Article with Multiple Substantives," 167-84.

<sup>84</sup> Α Λ Ψ Χ Γ Δ Θ Λ Ψ 0102 33 *f*<sup>1, 13</sup> Byz omit τάζ.

<sup>85</sup> Some have been confused over this text, assuming that it fits Sharp's rule. Generally this confusion is exacerbated because (1) all of the terms do apparently refer to God's love, yet even here it would not be appropriate to say that the length is identical with the height; (2) the figurative language compounds the problem because the imagery and its referent are both somewhat elusive; and (3) there is a widespread confusion about what Sharp's rule actually addresses: it is not mere equality, but identity that is in view.

<sup>86</sup> Other potential candidates include [1 Cor 7:35](#); [2 Cor 10:1](#); [Heb 7:18](#); [Rev 17:13](#).

<sup>87</sup> Cf. [Matt 24:3](#); [Acts 2:23](#); 20:21; [2 Thess 2:1](#); [Titus 2:13](#); [1 Pet 1:21](#); [2 Pet 1:10](#). For a discussion, see Wallace, "The Article with Multiple Substantives," 188-219.

<sup>88</sup> If referential identity were implied, the second term would define and clarify the first. Yet ὠρισμένη βουλή, *prima facie*, is less ambiguous than πρόγνωσις due to (1) the clarifying participle and (2) the lack of exegetical debate over ὀρίζω in comparison with πρόγνωσις (cf. R. Bultmann on πρόγνωσις in *TDNT* 1.715-16, and K. L. Schmidt on ὀρίζω in *TDNT* 5.452-53).

<sup>89</sup> To borrow the phrase and theme of D. L. Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern: Lucan Old Testament Christology* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1987).

<sup>90</sup> See Bock, *ibid.*, 155-87, for a discussion of the use of the OT in [Acts 2](#) in support of this theme.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. J. Roloff, *Die Apostelgeschichte: Übersetzt und Erklärt* (NTD; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981) 303; R. Pesch, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (EKKNT; Zürich: Benziger, 1986) 2.202.

<sup>92</sup> It is equally true that *μετάνοια* is hardly a characteristic word used in the *corpus Paulinum* to describe this gospel. (The *μετανο-* word-group is used only five times in the letters attributed to Paul, principally in 2 Corinthians and mostly with reference to believers [[Rom 2:4](#); [2 Cor 7:9, 10](#); [12:21](#); [2 Tim 2:25](#)].) While one must not make the linguistic mistake of verbal-conceptual equations, it is nevertheless the case that Luke's representation of Paul's speech in [Acts 20](#) has many parallels with the verbiage found in Paul's letters.

<sup>93</sup> Repeatedly in the Pauline letters the apostle addresses the Jews' unrepentant attitude not only toward Christ, but also toward God and their own sin (cf. [Rom 2:17-29](#); [3:1-8](#); [9:1-3](#); [10:1-3](#), [18-21](#); [11:11-32](#); [1 Thess 2:13-16](#)). Luke's portrayal of Paul's kerygma also includes the need for Jews to repent ([Acts 13:44-47](#); [18:5-6](#); [19:8-9](#); [26:20](#); [28:24-28](#)).

<sup>94</sup> The programmatic statement is found in the dominical saying in [Luke 24:47](#), where repentance is to be preached to all people, starting with the Jews. Cf. also [Acts 2:38](#); 3:19; 5:31.

<sup>95</sup> Cf., e.g., F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary*, 3d ed. rev. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990) 431; S. D. Toussaint, "Acts," *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty: New Testament Edition* (J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, editors; Wheaton: Victor, 1983) 413.

<sup>96</sup> See Wallace, "The Article with Multiple Substantives," 210-13, for a discussion.

<sup>97</sup> Cf., e.g., F. F. Bruce, *1 & 2 Thessalonians* (WBC; Waco, TX: Word, 1982) 163; L. Morris, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959) 214.