

there applied to the *worship of the creature*. As an adjective, it is used only as the title of the Roman Emperor himself, *Augustus*, Acts xxv. 25; or as an honorary distinction bestowed by him on a certain band of soldiers, called *Augustus' band*, Acts xxvii. 1. These references seem to indicate that there is a tacit allusion here to Cesar Augustus. It is well known that the Roman Emperors claimed, and received, divine honours from their subjects; and all this goes to strengthen our opinion that the Apostle alludes only to such Gods as were called Gods, and to persons that were worshipped, especially within the bounds of the Roman Empire.

There were many that were called Gods. In his first epistle to the Corinthians, this same writer employs the same term, and the same mode of expression, in speaking of the false Gods of the heathen; and that ought, we think, in all fairness, to decide the meaning of the expression in the text. *For though there are those that are called Gods, whether in heaven or on earth, as there are Gods many, and Lords many*. Now, it is never the practice of the inspired writers to include the true God in the same list with those who were called Gods, but rather to separate and distinguish him from them; as in the above passage in 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. He is not one that is merely called God, he is God, the living and the true God. Besides if we were to admit that the expression, *every one that is called God*, in the first clause of the verse, includes the true God, that would be to set it at variance with the concluding clause, *showing himself that he is God*, for here he does not exalt himself above God, but only aspires to equality with him.

In the Scriptures the name, God, is not unfrequently given to Magistrates, and other rulers, because of their authority and power; as, for example, in these well-known words of Christ, *if he called them Gods unto whom the word of God came; and the Scripture cannot be broken; that is, it cannot be set aside, it cannot be charged with mistake,*