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ST. PAUL'S CONCEPT OF JOY

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

Page
1
4
15
27
43
59
78
81

by

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June 1966

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. THE BACKGROUND OF NEW TESTAMENT JOY.	4
III. JOY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT (NON-PAULINE)	15
IV. ST. PAUL'S DEFINITION OF JOY	27
V. ST. PAUL'S PERSONAL JOY.	43
VI. ST. PAUL AND THE JOY OF OTHER CHRISTIANS	59
VII. ST. PAUL'S CONCEPT OF JOY: CONCLUSIONS	78
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	81

Testament concept had significance in his theology and thought as well as in his personal life, and this paper intends to seek that significance for St. Paul and for the church today.

No theological questions are treated in this study. The traditional authorship of the Pauline epistles is assumed. All writings customarily attributed to St. Paul by conservative scholars are considered to be his work. Should some of them not be strictly Pauline in authorship, as critics have suggested, they are assumed to reflect the Apostle's thought and meaning. In such a case, this paper might be titled, "Joy in Some New Testament Epistles."

The procedure followed is characteristic of many New Testament word studies. With the guidance of a Hebrew lexicon, the use of the Hebrew equivalents of *kaigw/kagin* has been traced through the

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is primarily a word study of *χαίρω* and *χαρά* in St. Paul's writings. While it is true that related words of similar meaning are used by St. Paul, such as *εὐφραίνω* or *ἀγαλλιάζω*, his most frequent and characteristic expression involves a form of *χαίρω/χαρά*. Forty-seven uses of these words appear in St. Paul's epistles (including the compound verb *συ-χαίρω*). This study seeks to discover some of the meaning and significance of "joy" for St. Paul and his readers. This basic New Testament concept had significance in his theology and thought as well as in his personal life, and this paper intends to seek that significance for St. Paul and for the church today.

No isagogical questions are treated in this study. The traditional authorship of the Pauline epistles is assumed. All writings customarily attributed to St. Paul by conservative scholars are considered to be his work. Should some of them not be strictly Pauline in authorship, as critics have suggested, they are assumed to reflect the Apostle's thought and meaning. In such a case, this paper might be titled, "Joy in Some New Testament Epistles."

The procedure followed is characteristic of many New Testament word studies. With the guidance of a Hebrew lexicon, the use of the Hebrew equivalents of *χαίρω/χαρά* has been traced through the

Old Testament. The Hatch-Redpath concordance to the Septuagint has been used for the same procedure in the Greek Old Testament. The Liddell-Scott classical Greek lexicon references have then been cited to show the use of *καίρω/καρά* in classical and Hellenistic Greek, prior to and apart from its New Testament usage. This background material to the New Testament writings comprises the second chapter of this thesis. In every case a summary statement is appended to each section to present the main emphasis of the material submitted.

The third chapter of the paper groups the New Testament examples of *καίρω/καρά* in the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the non-Pauline epistles and Revelation. Again, a short summary organizes the thoughts presented.

In chapter four the consideration of Pauline joy begins. This chapter presents certain verses in which St. Paul speaks of joy in a definitive manner, apart from any immediate involvement with particular individuals. Paul's definition is then briefly contrasted with definitions of joy suggested by his contemporaries in religious and philosophical spheres. Chapter five considers St. Paul's personal joy, according to his own citations. The joy of other Christians, as seen or urged by St. Paul, is the subject of chapter six. A chapter of conclusions and reflections completes the study.

In the Pauline chapters there is an implicit study of the character of St. Paul, which reflects how his personality illustrates

CHAPTER II

THE BACKGROUND OF NEW TESTAMENT JOY

The Old Testament

In the majority of instances, the Greek $\chiαίρω/\chiαρά$ is used to translate a form of the Hebrew $\piνψ$ (including $\piνψ$ and $\eta\piνψ$) or $לג$. Some other words are used less frequently, namely $לג$, $שש$, $\alpha\lambda\psi$, $\eta\psi\psi$, $\psi\psi\psi$, $\psi\psi\psi$, $\eta\psi\psi$, $\eta\psi\psi$, $\eta\psi\psi$, $\eta\psi\psi$, $\eta\psi\psi$, $\eta\psi\psi$, and $\eta\psi\psi$.

A form of $\piνψ$ is used in a general sense for Hezekiah's welcoming of messengers from Babylon (Is. 39:2). Negatively, buyers are forbidden to rejoice because the day of wrath is coming (Ezek. 7:12), and Israel is told not to rejoice because she has "played the harlot" and forsaken her God (Hos. 9:1). In the other instances of the use of $\piνψ$ God's people rejoice when Moses is called (Ex. 4:14), after David kills Goliath (I Sam. 19:5), as the temple is built (I Kings 5:21), when Jonah is given a plant for shade (Jon. 4:6), and when Zerubbabel rebuilds the temple (Zech. 4:10). When the people are restored to their homeland (Zech. 10:7) and when they see that God has redeemed His people (Jer. 38:13) they also rejoice. In addition, several weakly attested variants (which the better Greek manuscripts translate with a form of $\epsilon\upsilon\phiραίνω$

instead of $\chiαίρω$, which Bultmann refers to as "der theologisch bedeutsamer Begriff"¹ in contrast to $εὐφραίνω$) note the people's rejoicing at the return of the ark (I Sam. 6:13), when Solomon is made king (I Kings 1:40), when the Lord comes (Zech. 2:10), and at God's vengeance upon the wicked (Ps. 57:11).

$\pi\rho\psi$ is used for the joy of Judah and Israel (I Kings 3:20), also at the temple dedication (I Kings 8:66) and when Joash is made king (II Kings 11:14).

The noun form $\pi\rho\psi$ describes the mood when Solomon is made king (I Chron. 29:22), at the institution of the Purim festival when the Jews are permitted by decree to defend themselves against their attackers (Esther 8:17, 9:17, 9:18, 9:22), when God is present with the king (Ps. 20:6), when Jonah is shaded by his special plant (Jon. 4:6), and when the prophet eats God's words (Jer. 15:16).

A proverbial antithesis notes that "the end of joy is grief" for the unwise (Prov. 14:13); and God in his judgment on the wicked takes away the "voice of gladness" (Jer. 7:34). In each case joy is Israel's proper reaction to some specific and concrete deed of God's kindness; the wicked have no true and lasting joy.

A form of $\xi\lambda$ describes the wicked in their doing of evil

¹R. Bultmann, "Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament," edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 772.

(Prov. 2:14, Hab. 1:15), but it is more often used for the reaction of the righteous to some blessing: having a wise son (Prov. 23:25), being delivered by God (Joel 2:21), receiving the early rain (Joel 2:23), being a recipient of salvation (Hab. 3:18), at the coming of the king (Zech. 9:9), and in the future hope (Is. 66:10). This joy is taken away in times of doom when God is not with His people (Joel 1:16).

Other Hebrew words are occasionally translated with *καρά* :
 וִשְׁׁ comes to the wicked when God's people are troubled (Lam. 1:21) and before God metes out punishment (Lam. 4:21), but is the possession of Zion in her hope of God's presence (Is. 66:14). A weakly attested variant also notes the believer's joy in his God (Is. 61:10). Joy is equated with וִשְׁׁ, the possession of God's people (Is. 55:12) which is denied to the wicked (Is. 48:22, 57:21). וִשְׁׁ will be given to the house of Judah in the last days (Zech. 8:19), but will be taken away from the wicked in the doom and destruction of the Last Day (Jer. 16:9, 25:10; Joel 1:12). A similar form, וִשְׁׁ, is both the hope of Zion (Is. 66:10) and her loss when the wicked oppress her (Lam 5:15).

Once וִשְׁׁ is called joy, when the evil man is ensnared in his transgression and the righteous sings (Prov. 29:6). Negatively, וִשְׁׁ is the man who rejoices in sin and strife (Prov. 17:19). When God restores Zion He fills her mouth with וִשְׁׁ (Ps. 125:2). Creation breaks forth into joyful singing, וִשְׁׁ, when God's word

comes forth (Is. 55:12). Pharaoh is happy, $\text{יָיָהּ} \text{וַיִּשְׂמַח}$, when Joseph's brothers arrive (Gen. 45:16). When God comes in judgment the field exults, שִׂשְׂיָהּ (Ps. 95:12, but compare שִׂשְׂיָהּ in I Chron. 16:32). Babylon, as God's appointed agent, is שִׂשְׂיָהּ (Is. 13:3). יָיָהּ , a form of שִׂשְׂיָהּ , is exhorted of Israel when God delivers her from all evil (Zeph. 3:14).

In several questionable readings certain Hebrew words were apparently understood as equivalent to a form of καίρω/καρά by some Greek translators: שִׂשְׂיָהּ (Ps. 29:11), שִׂשְׂיָהּ and שִׂשְׂיָהּ (Is. 60:5, Origen only), שִׂשְׂיָהּ (Jer. 15:17, Symmachus only).

To summarize: the Hebrew equivalents of καίρω/καρά occasionally refer to emotional happiness alone, but are more frequently used to describe Israel's reaction to some general or specific activity of God which benefits Israel and displays God's presence and care for His people. When the wicked rejoice it is improper and temporary joy. God's delayed judgment gives them opportunity to imitate the joy of believers, but not to possess joy fully or permanently. It should be noted also that the Hebrew words listed in this section and translated by καίρω/καρά in the verses cited are translated in other Old Testament verses with forms of $\text{εὐφραίνεσθαι/εὐφροσύνη}$ and $\text{ἀγαλλιάζεσθαι/ἀγαλλίασις}$. No clear distinction can be noted in the meanings;

all may refer to secular, cultic or eschatological joy.²

The Septuagint

In addition to the passages cited in the previous section, which are translated by a form of *χαίρω/χαρά* in the Greek Old Testament, there are other verses in which *χαίρω/χαρά* is mentioned in the Septuagint but has no equivalent in the Massoretic text. After the call of Moses, the people not only bowed their heads and worshipped but also rejoiced (Ex. 4:31), according to the Septuagint. Likewise, the people (especially the old men) rejoiced at God's redemption promised for later days (Jer. 38:13). In the third instance the admonition, "Fret not yourself because of evildoers," becomes in the Septuagint, "Do not rejoice in evildoers" (Prov. 24:19).

The other uses of *χαίρω/χαρά* in the Septuagint appear

²The alternation in translation and the combination with other verbs shows that *εὐφραίνεσθαι (εὐφροσύνη)* does not have a specific meaning sharply differentiated from other expressions for joy such as *ἀγαλλιάσθαι, καί-σειν*, etc." R. Bultmann, "εὐφραίνω," A Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), II, 773.

in apocryphal writings.³ The anniversary of the dedication of the temple was to be celebrated for eight days "with gladness and joy" (I Macc. 4:59). For God's people joy followed the destruction of Gilead (I Macc. 5:54), the intervention of God to prevent robbery (II Macc. 3:30), and the defeat of Nicanor (II Macc. 15:28). Joy also came at the decree of Ptolemaeus Philopator that the Jews could punish evildoers and defectors (III Macc. 7:13), and at the execution of the defectors (III Macc. 7:15).

The philosophical outlook of IV Maccabees suggests that joy follows pleasure, as desire precedes it (IV. Macc. 1:22). The same book notes the joy of the people at the report of the death of Antiochus (IV Macc. 4:22). The Book of Wisdom describes life with the personalized Wisdom as filled with gladness and joy (Wis. 8:16). The apocryphal additions to Esther record the joy of the people when Mordecai leaves the king's presence, having obtained a decree that allowed the Jews to defend themselves (Esther 8:15), and describes the day of the Purim celebration as one of "joy and gladness before God" (Esther 10:3).

³As defined by R. H. Charles, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), I, iv and vii: "the excess of the Vulgate over the Hebrew Old Testament, which excess was in turn borrowed from the Septuagint." III Maccabees is included since it is contained in many manuscripts of the Septuagint, and IV Ezra is excluded since it is essentially a Pseudepigrapha.

In the book of Baruch joy arises at the promise of God's mercy (Bar. 4:22), and at the homecoming of the exiles (Bar. 4:37, 5:5). Sirach notes that the fear of the Lord gives "gladness and joy and long life" (Sir. 1:12), and "there is no gladness above joy of heart" (Sir. 30:16). In I Esdras the joy of the people at Darius' decree to rebuild the temple (I Es. 4:63) and at the erection of it (I Es. 5:64) is recorded.

The latter chapters of the book of Tobit are filled with citations of joy. At Tobias' homecoming he is joyful (Tob. 10:14, Symmachus; 11:15), as are his father (Tob. 11:16) and his brethren in Nineveh (Tob. 11:17). The brethren likewise rejoice at the marriage of Tobias (Tob. 11:19). Tobit's prayer of thanksgiving asks for joy (Tob. 13:10) and urges all to rejoice for the sons of the righteous (Tob. 13:13), who will themselves rejoice in God's peace (Tob. 13:14) because of their glory (Tob. 13:14). Tobit notes that "all who love the Lord God in truth and righteousness will rejoice" (Tob. 14:7), and himself rejoices before his death in the destruction of Nineveh (Tob. 14:15).

Forms of *χαίρω* are also used in these apocryphal writings as a greeting (Tob. 5:9, 5:13, 7:1, 11:17) with the suggestion in Tobit 5:9 that the infinitive *χαίρειν* in a greeting is an abbreviated form of the fuller *χαίρειν σοι πολλά γένοιτο*. (Tobit here catalogs his weaknesses and infirmities of body which prevent him from rejoicing and enjoying the blessings

which should lead a man to rejoice, such as health and family). Similarly the Jews greet Aristobulus (II Macc. 1:10) and Ptolemy (III Macc. 1:8) with the infinitive *καίρειν*, which is also the regular literary form at the opening of a letter (Esther 8:13; I Es. 6:7, 8:9; I Macc. 10:18, 10:25, 10:26; 11:30, 11:32, 12:6, 12:20, 13:36, 14:20, 15:2, 15:16; II Macc. 1:1, 9:19, 11:16, 11:22, 11:27, 11:34; III Macc. 3:12, 7:1).

The wicked also experience joy. In the Septuagint reading, the wicked are told that joy is "cut off from your mouth" (Joel 1:5); the Hebrew of this verse has no explicit subject but "wine" rather than "joy" is the antecedent. Again, in a reading entirely different from the Hebrew, Prov. 6:16 speaks of the wicked man as rejoicing in all the things which the Lord hates. Israel's oppressor rejoices in her fall (Bar. 4:33), although this rejoicing is ended by the oppressor's destruction. The king rejoices and calls Baal great (Bel 17). The Egyptians rejoice in the order to punish the Jews (III Macc. 4:1, 4:16, 5:21, 6:34) and when one of the Jewish boys seems ready to deny his faith and eat forbidden foods (IV Macc. 12:9).

Several weakly attested variant readings speak of joy. Ps. 29:11 tells of mourning turned into dancing, *καρόν*, with a few manuscripts reading *καρᾶν*. The Sinaiticus manuscript adds joy to the good things which come to those who fear the Lord (Sir. 2:9). *καρᾶν* is read for *καίρειν* in a few manuscripts

concerning the wish for Tobias' wife that her sorrow may be turned into joy (Tob. 7:18).

In summary: in the Septuagint joy is the reaction to some good event or fortune; for the wicked it is joy when the righteous suffer; for the righteous joy comes in some blessing from God. In addition, the infinitive *χαίρειν* has now come to be used in literary form and personal greeting as a standard salutation.

Classical and Hellenistic Greek

χαίρω/χαρά in classical and Hellenistic Greek is the natural human response to some good thing. So, one rejoices *νίκη* (Il. 7.312), *φήμη* (Od. 2.35), *δύρω* (Hes., Op. 358). Only rarely does the preposition *ἐν* indicate the reason for the joy. With participles *χαίρω* has the meaning of "being glad" about something, *χαίρω . . . τὸν μῦθον ἀκούσας*, "I am glad to hear" (Il. 19.185). Its meaning also is "to be wont to do something," with a present participle, as *κρέωμενος χαίρουσι* (Herodotus 7.236). With negatives, especially in the future tense, its meaning is "you will not go unpunished, you will repent it," *ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὡς κυρὸς γε χαίρησιν* (Herodotus 1.128).

As an imperative *χαίρε* or *χαίρετε* is frequent in greetings (especially in the morning), with statements implying

acceptance or welcome, *καίρω, κήρυξ Ἀχαιῶν*. . . .
 Answer: *καίρω*, "I accept the greeting" (Aeschylus, Ag. 538);
 also, *καίρειν τ' ἄλλ' ἐγὼ σ' ἐφίεμαι*, "I bid thee
 have thy pleasure (Sophocles, Ajax, 112). The infinitive is at
 the beginning of letters for a greeting. *καίρει* is also used
 for leavetaking, and is found in the mouth of the dying
 (Sophocles, Ajax, 863) and on sepulchral inscriptions (Inscriptiones
Graeca, 7.203). From this use is derived the meaning of "have done
 with" or "away with," *καιρόντων πόνος* (Euripides, Hercules
Furens, 575). On other occasions, as in comforting, there is the
 meaning, "Be of good cheer" or "Good luck" (Od. 8.408, 11.248).

The participle conveys the idea of "glad, joyful" as a state
 of mind under certain circumstances: *καίρονται φίλην ἐς*
πατρίδ' ἔπειπον εἰς Ἰθάκη, Od. 19.461. Joined with
 another verb it means "safe and sound, with impunity": *καίροντα*
ἀπαλλάσσειν, (Herodotus, 69). The participle is also used at
 leavetaking, in the same sense as the imperative (Od. 15.128). A
 technical sense, in astrology, is to describe a planet occupying a
 position appropriate to another of its own *αἰρέσις* (Serapio,
Cat. Cod. Astr. 8(4).230).

The noun *καρά* is translated "joy, delight" first in
 Sappho, Supp. 1.6; it is used with the genitive and dative cases
 in most citations. Opposites are *λυπή* and *καθήφεια*.

Summarizing, most of the Biblical uses of *καίρω/καρά*

are likewise found in secular Greek. However, joy here is simply an emotion of gladness over someone or something in this life, and does not involve the Biblical setting of divine activity in the lives of men. Joy is seldom oriented to God, as it usually is in the Scriptures. The only citations involving the gods are

Od. 24.402: οὔτε τε, καὶ μάλα χαίρει, θεοὶ δὲ τοῦ
 ἄβια δοῖεν ; and Id., Hipp. 1340: τοὺς γὰρ εὐγεβεῖς
 θεοὶ δυνήσκοντας οὐχ.

CHAPTER III

JOY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT (NON-PAULINE)

The Gospels

"A striking point of similarity between Old Testament and New Testament joy is that, in both cases, God Himself is the object and ground of the believer's joy."¹ While somewhat over-simplified this statement is generally true. The amplification of the concept of joy in the New Testament is God's new revelation of Himself in the person of Jesus Christ; all joy is now related to Him explicitly. His presence produces joy, and He exhorts others to rejoice with His joy as He declares it in His person and in parabolic form.

Joy came to Zechariah and to "many" at the promised birth of the forerunner of the Christ, John the Baptizer (Luke 1:14, 1:58). The shepherds (Luke 2:14) and the wise men (Matt. 2:10) shared the joy of Christ's birth.² Jesus said that Abraham rejoiced to see His

¹"Joy," A Dictionary of the Bible, edited by James Hastings (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1901), II, 790.

²In a grammatical note on the associative dative, Funk notes that "If an attribute is added, the New Testament almost always substitutes the accusative of content: *καρὰ καρτεῖ*, John 3:29, but *ἔλαησον καρὰν μεγάλην*, Mt. 2:10. . . ." However, exceptions are noted. F. Blass and A. Debrunner, A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, translated and revised by Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 106.

Easter (Matt. 28:9), and by the disciples when they resurrected day (John 8:56).³ The people rejoiced when Christ healed the sick (Luke 13:17), the seventy returned from their missionary journey with joy (Luke 10:17), Zacchaeus received Jesus joyfully (Luke 19:6), and the disciples rejoiced when Jesus rode into Jerusalem (Luke 19:37). Jesus admonished the disciples for not rejoicing when He spoke to them of His departure (John 14:28), and promised that their sorrow "will turn into joy" (John 16:20). In His repetition of this promise Christ promised unending joy at His return (John 16:22); these words re-emphasized the basic connection of all their joy with His person.

Die entscheidende Wendung zur Groszen Freude ist der Sohn, Jes. 9:2; Lk. 2:10. Der Hirte in seiner Freude über das wiedergefundene Tier auf seiner Achsel, die Frau in ihrer Freude über die wiedergefundene Groschen sagen in gleichnishaften Selbstbildnissen, warum man Jesus die Freudensonne genannt hat, Lk. 15:6-9. Sein Weg zum Kreuz gilt der vollkommenen Freude.⁴

This full joy comes to believers as they pray in the name of Christ (John 16:24); it was experienced by the women at the empty tomb at

³Nestle comments on this verse: "Strange to say, the Revised Version with references does not refer in John 8:56 to Gen. 17:17, and no commentary of which I know notices the fact, that the Targum renders פִּיִּי, to laugh, in this verse not by לִיִּי laugh, as in 18:12,13,15; 19:14, but by לִיִּי, to rejoice, to be glad; likewise in 21:9." Eb. Nestle, "Abraham Rejoiced," Expository Times, XX (July 1909), 477.

⁴Johannes Hermann, "Freude," Calwer Bibellexikon, edited by Karl Gutbrod and Reinhold Kücklich (Fifth Edition; Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1959), p. 334.

Easter (Matt. 28:8), and by the disciples when the resurrected Lord appeared to them (John 20:20, Luke 24:41), and after His ascension from them (Luke 24:52).

Joy over the person of Christ then must reflect in the entire life of him who has come to know Christ. Jesus commanded His disciples to rejoice. The imperative was used by Christ in correcting the joy of the seventy disciples that devils were subject to them in His name, and to urge them rather to rejoice that their names were written in heaven (Luke 10:20). The disciples were exhorted to rejoice in time of persecution (Luke 6:23), when the expected mood would be depression and worry. "Against worry and anxiety, with their troop of discontent, friction, and strain, joy has to defend itself."⁵ In the parallel exhortation in Matthew 5:12⁶ the true joy of Old and New Testament believers is explicated.

The one real difference between Old Testament and New Testament attitudes toward joy is that the New Testament writers go onto the bold statement of joy in suffering as well as in salvation. The Old Testament makes clear that man's cause for rejoicing is in God and not in himself (Jer. 9:23-24). Joy is, however,

⁵James Moffat, "The History of Joy," Expository Times, IX (April 1898), p. 336. Cfr. Matt. 6:31.

⁶While Matthew uses the present imperative, Luke has the aorist because he adds "in that day." James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, A Vocabulary of New Testament Greek (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1929), III, 76. So also James Hope Moulton, A Grammar of New Testament Greek (Third Edition; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1949), I, 129.

related primarily to God's triumph over evil, as demonstrated in recovery of health, or in some other victory of national or personal existence. It is in the New Testament that we find the statement of joy in suffering itself, or in weakness seen in terms of a power of God "made perfect in weakness."⁷

(As exhibited in an earlier chapter, *Χαίρω/Χαρά* is not used in Job and only infrequently in the Psalms where the "joy in suffering" motif might be expected.)

Christ could exhort His disciples to rejoice because He Himself possessed joy. This is clearly shown in the Gospel according to St. John when it speaks of joy.

It, too, is conferred upon his own as "his" joy (15:11; 17:13), which makes it different from every joy of this World--it differs also in the fact that what this joy rejoices in is neither said nor can be said. . . . But this joy, although a gift of the Revealer, is never a definitely realized state, but always lies ahead of the believer as something to be realized. . . . Joy, being eschatological, can never become a static condition. But it can very well become real in occurring--a kinetic reality, so to speak. It does so in the act of faith which overcomes the "sorrow" (*λυπή*) that assails the believer in the world (16:20-22).⁸

Jesus had spoken to His followers so that "my joy may be in you," and this means "full joy" (John 15:11).

⁷D. Harvey, "Joy," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, edited by G. A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), I, 1000.

⁸Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, translated by Kendrick Grobel (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1951), II, 83f.

of a Noch mehr als das Alte Testament ist der Neue Bund auf Freude abgestimmt; sie quillt aus der Gemeinschaft mit Christus. Christus selbst spricht von seiner Freude, an der auch die Jünger teilhaben sollen.⁹

Christ prayed that His disciples may "have my joy fulfilled in themselves" by what He has spoken (John 17:13). So He was joyful even when Lazarus died (John 11:15).

Joy was an element in the parables Christ told concerning the kingdom of heaven, although it may be either the false and transitory joy of temporary believers who are like rocky ground upon which seed falls and quickly dies (Matt. 13:20, Mark 4:16, Luke 8:13), or the lasting joy of the man finding a treasure in a field (Matt. 13:44) and trading all else for the possession of it.¹⁰ There is joy for "sower and reaper together," Christ told His disciples (John 4:36) who reaped the harvest which others had labored to produce. When a shepherd recovers a lost sheep (Matt. 18:13, Luke 15:5f.) his joy is like the joy in heaven over a repentant sinner (Luke 15:7). This heavenly joy is also like that

⁹"Freude," Biblisches Reallexikon, edited by Edmund Kalt (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1931), I, 546.

¹⁰Robertson adds: "But it is not alone a form of agency that ἀπό comes to express. It may also be used for the idea of cause, an old usage of ἀπό." A. T. Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1914), p. 579.

of a woman who finds a lost coin (Luke 15:9f.) or of a father whose prodigal son has returned (Luke 15:32). The joy of a mother in childbirth is like the joy Christ gives, compensating for all suffering before (John 16:21). Those faithful with the investment of five or two talents "enter into the joy" of their master (Matt. 25:21,23).

The meaning of this parable is obviously that the servant should be the partaker in the richer and fuller joy that is His Lord's portion, which may probably be the joy that comes from the exercise of higher responsibilities, and the opportunities of greater usefulness.¹¹

In the cryptic or parabolic saying of John the Baptizer that he is the "friend of the bridegroom" (John 3:29) he notes that his joy is now full since he has heard the voice of the groom. This is indicated by the cognate construction *καὶ καίρει*; "it is called 'Hebraic' by some of the grammarians. . . . 'it indicates that the action is to be understood as taking place in the fullest sense.'¹²

There are several references in the Gospels to the joy of the wicked, although such joy is limited to the priests at Judas'

¹¹"Joy," A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, edited by James Hastings (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1906), I, 903.

¹²Robertson, p. 531. The same construction has been noted in the Oxyrhynchus Papyrus by Moulton and Milligan, p. 683.

agreement to betray Christ (Mark 14:11, Luke 22:5) and Herod's unsatisfied expectation to see Christ perform some miracle (Luke 23:8).

Χαίρε and *Χαίρετε* greetings are used in traditional style by Gabriel to Mary (Luke 1:28), Judas (Matt. 26:49) and the soldiers to Christ (Mark 15:18, John 19:3, Matt. 27:29), and Christ to the women at the tomb (Matt. 28:9). While the last citation might be translated, "Good morning" in line with classical usage,¹³ the greetings of Judas and probably the soldiers were not spoken in the early part of the day.

In the Gospels' use of *Χαίρω/Χαρά* we see clear references to Messianic joy; this joy focuses upon the person of Christ as revealed in His work and message. He is the Source and Giver of joy, as well as joy incarnate for the disciples.

The Acts of the Apostles

The joy of Christ and His disciples noted in the Gospels continued as the possession of the Church in its post-Ascension history.

Throughout the opening chapters of the Book of Acts we catch a note of joyful expectation; "with gladness and singleness of heart praising God" (2:46f.); the "boldness" (*Παρησία*, 4:13,29,31) of the Apostles,

¹³Edgar J. Goodspeed, Problems of New Testament Translation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945), p. 46.

the "great power" of their witness (4:33), their rejoicing at suffering (5:41), Stephen "full of grace and power" (6:8), or spirit and wisdom (6:10), his face "as it had been the face of an angel" (6:15), his enthusiasm in the face of death (7:55f.). . . . Unless one can understand this constant mood of victorious, jubilant happiness and confidence, he simply will not understand primitive Christianity. This is the feature that marked it off completely from Judaism.¹⁴

Their hope sustained the early Christians in the midst of persecutions; they rejoiced to be counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ (Acts 5:41), for His name and person were the key to their life.

The Apostles, both in their conduct and teaching, followed Christ as their exemplar. When they were put on trial for teaching in the name of Jesus, and were flogged and forbidden to speak further in His name, they departed from the presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they were considered worthy to be treated with indignity for the name of Jesus. They encouraged the faithful to serve the Lord in a joyful spirit even amidst persecutions, pointing out to them their own example.¹⁵

When Philip preached and healed in Samaria, there was much joy there (Acts 8:8); so also when he baptized the eunuch of Ethiopia (Acts 8:39). Barnabas saw the faith of the Greeks in Antioch and rejoiced (Acts 11:23). The maid Rhoda was so joyful

¹⁴Johannes Weiss and Rudolf Knopf, The History of Primitive Christianity, edited by Frederick C. Grant, translated by four friends (New York: Wilson-Erickson, 1937), I, 40f.

¹⁵"Joy," Catholic Biblical Encyclopedia, New Testament, edited by John E. Steinmueller and Kathryn Sullivan (New York: Jos. F. Wagner, Inc., 1950), p. 361.

when Peter was miraculously returned from prison that she ran to tell the others before opening the door to him (Acts 12:14). When Barnabas showed the Gentiles the promise of their salvation from the Old Testament they were joyful (Acts 13:48). The disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:52), and their conversion of the Gentiles gave great joy to all the brethren (Acts 15:3), as did the letter received from the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:31).

In the dark days of disappointment that succeeded the crucifixion, the joy of the disciples passed under a cloud, but at the resurrection and still more on the day of Pentecost it emerged into light, and afterwards remained a marked characteristic of the early church. . . . In Christ, the Christian "rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (I Peter 1:8) in spite of his temporary afflictions. Christian joy is no mere gaiety that knows no gloom, but is the result of the triumph of faith over adverse and trying circumstances which, instead of hindering, actually enhance it.¹⁶

This confidence and joy in Christ sustained the followers of Christ in the most desperate circumstances, even in prison (Acts 17). The prayers and praise of Paul and Silas were the result of the Spirit of God directing their lives. "The concomitants of the Spirit's presence are 'power,' 'joy,' and 'faith.'"¹⁷

¹⁶"Joy," The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, edited by James Orr (Chicago: Howard-Severance Co., 1915), III, 1755.

¹⁷A. M. Hunter, Paul and His Predecessors (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1961), p. 92.

The infinitive *καίρειν*, it should be noted, is also used two times in Acts as the greeting of a letter from the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:23) and a letter concerning Paul's trial which was sent to Felix (Acts 23:26). This is called a very common construction in A Vocabulary of New Testament Greek¹⁸ and Moulton also notes that "the use of the infinitive for imperative was familiar in Greek, especially in laws and maxims."¹⁹

The Non-Pauline Epistles and Revelation

The powerful joy of the early Church depicted in the Acts of the Apostles is to be found also in the remainder of the non-Pauline New Testament writings. In the Epistle to the Hebrews the author calls for the joyful acceptance of the "plundering of your property" (10:34) as Christ accepted His cross for "the joy that was set before him" (12:2). Hebrews call all discipline "painful rather than pleasant (*καρὰς*)" for the moment (12:11), but as yielding fruits of righteousness. Christians are urged to cooperate with their rulers so these rulers may give account joyfully (13:17).

The Epistle of St. James, other than containing the only example of a New Testament canonical Epistle using the infinitive

¹⁸Moulton and Milligan, p. 682.

¹⁹Moulton, p. 179.

χαίρειν greeting (1:1),²⁰ speaks of the joy of enduring trials as a step toward steadfastness (1:2).

I Peter calls upon Christians to rejoice in trials as they share Christ's sufferings, so they may rejoice in His glory when it is revealed (4:13). Faith in Christ results in unutterable and exalted joy (1:8).

St. John wrote his epistle, he says, to complete his joy (I John 1:4), since his readers' lives of truth had given the author great joy (II John 4, III John 3f.)²¹ which will be completed by a face to face meeting (II John 12).

In the Revelation of St. John the Divine the marriage feast of the Lamb (sometimes interpreted as Freudenfest) is a time for the exhortation, "Let us rejoice and exult" (19:7).²²

²⁰"When the infinitive indicates a direct command, which is rare in the New Testament, . . . the tense is always present. . . ." Moulton and Milligan, p. 78.

²¹*διὰν ἔχαρον* is noted as an epistolary formula by Adolf Deisman, Light From the Ancient East, translated by Lionel R. M. Strachan (Fourth Edition; London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1927), p. 185, n. 6.

²²While discussing *ἡγαλλώμεν*, which is paired in this verse with *χαίρωμεν* Bultmann says: "It is indeed the eschatological act of divine salvation which is supremely the theme of rejoicing. . . ." R. Bultmann, A Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, edited by G. Kittel, translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), I, 20.

Two examples of improper rejoicing by the wicked are James 4:9, where the unfaithful, proud and world-loving unbelievers are enjoined from rejoicing; and Rev. 11:10, where "those who dwell on the earth" rejoiced when the two prophets who had been a torment to them were put to death.

The fundamental reasons for the joy reflected in the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles and Revelation are summarized in A Dictionary of the Apostolic Church:

the first place must be given to (a) the vivid consciousness of salvation which is present in the Apostolic Age. . . . A second cause may be found in (b) the highly pneumatic character of the religious experience in the Apostolic Age. . . . This leads to the observation that in the third place (c) the joyfulness of the early Christian consciousness must be explained in the light of the fact that the Christian state is felt to be semi-eschatological, i.e., in many important respects an anticipation of the consummated life of the kingdom of God. On this principle is to be explained the paradoxical character which the Christian joy assumes through entering into contrast with the tribulations and afflictions of this present life. It even makes out of the latter a cause for rejoicing, inasmuch as the believer, from the power of faith which sustains, receives the assurance of his "approvedness" (*δοκιμή*) with God, and thus the strongest conceivable hope in the eschatological salvation.²³

²³"Joy," A Dictionary of the Apostolic Church, edited by James Hastings (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1915), I, 654.

CHAPTER IV

ST. PAUL'S DEFINITION OF JOY

The meaning of *καίρω/καρά* for St. Paul can be seen, to begin with, in those verses in his writings in which he speaks definitively on the subject, as he does in Romans 14:17. Here he defines the kingdom of God as consisting not of "food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, *καρὰ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ*." Paul has been discussing the offences and judgments connected with eating certain foods, since some Romans apparently considered dietary practices essential to the nature of God's kingdom. In verse 17 he sets forth the basic elements of that kingdom. The dative *πνεύματι ἁγίῳ* is a dative of cause which shows the source of the joy,¹ and is to be construed with all three nouns.² This joy is not a human emotion, self-induced, but a divinely-produced element of the Christian life; joy is never of the man alone, for St. Paul, "but he expressly

¹The reason can also be indicated by a preposition . . . ; it is the rule with verbs of emotion where the dative appears only in a more refined style. . . ." F. Blass and A. Debrunner, A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, translated and revised by Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 105.

²So also John Knox, The Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1954), IX, 628.

associates this joy with the Holy Ghost."³

The relationship of peace and joy to righteousness is expressed by Matthew Henry in his commentary on this verse when he says, "There and only there we may expect peace and joy in the Holy Ghost when the foundation is laid in righteousness."⁴ This righteousness is the perfect righteousness of Christ, the possession of the Christian by faith in His person and work. Where there is this righteousness there is also peace with God and joy in Him.

By connecting peace and joy together, he seems to me to express the character of this joy; for however torpid the reprobate may be, or however they may elevate themselves, yet the conscience is not rendered calm and joyful, except when it feels God to be pacified and propitious to it; and there is no solid joy but what proceeds from this peace.⁵

Joy is therefore part of the Christian's total experience in his life as a member of God's kingdom. Such joy comes through being "crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2:20) in the conversion and faith experience.

³A. M. Hunter, Paul and His Predecessors (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1961), p. 94.

⁴Matthew Henry, Commentary on the Whole Bible (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., n.d.), pages unnumbered.

⁵John Calvin, Commentaries on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, translated and edited by John Owen (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947), p. 507.

It is part of the process of redemption that instead of being anxious and desperate about ourselves, there is a point in the relationship between man and God where the uneasy conscience so overwhelms the old self that the old self is destroyed and there emerges a new self which has a certain freedom, a certain nonchalance about life. The nonchalance and joy which comes out of the pain of repentance belongs to the good life. It is part of the Gospel that a new life comes out of the death of the old life.⁶

St. Paul's joy is not the pleasurable experience after an act of his but the spiritual happiness which impels the acts of the Christian as surely as do the righteousness imputed to him and the peace which only God gives.

At first sight "joy" seems to have little or no connection with ethics. But joy that has a religious basis is a very different thing from what commonly bears the name. Such joy is not mere mirth. . . . Nor is it mere joie de vivre. . . . Nor again is it the joy derived from highly privileged circumstances (εὐδαιμονία) or mere pleasure (ἡδονή), "the word joy implies the presence of an objective reality which claims the self in its entirety and gives the self total satisfaction."⁷

Joy is the response and acknowledgment of the Christian's entire life to the goodness of God, a "steadfast assurance of God's fatherly goodness that makes life radiant under all conditions and

⁶ Reinhold Niebuhr, "Sorrow and Joy According to the Christian Faith," Current Religious Thought, XIII (January-February 1953), 9.

⁷ L. H. Marshall, The Challenge of New Testament Ethics (New York: Macmillan Co., 1947), pp. 293f. εὐδαιμονία and ἡδονή are not used in the New Testament.

experiences. It is the glad gratification of being 'in Christ.'⁸

Another key passage for St. Paul's definition of joy is Gal. 5:22, where he lists the "fruit of the Spirit" as "love, joy, *ἡγάπη*, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness." This verse follows a list of vices, "works of the flesh," which are against the Spirit and which disqualify a man from inheriting the kingdom of God. The opposite state is to "walk by the Spirit" (v. 16). As indicated in Rom. 14:17 there is a parallelism in the work of the Spirit and the work of Christ.

For it is the presence of the Holy Spirit within us which produces the fruits of joy and peace, and the charismatic gifts which characterize the life of the Christian; and we are in the Spirit because He has been communicated to us. But these same fruits of the Christian life have been won for us by Christ's work of redemption, and on this account they are his.

There is also a connection between the love and joy mentioned in Gal. 5:22. "Where love is, joy must follow. A joyless life in Christ is to him inconceivable. Human life is not complete until it is crowned with joy."¹⁰ God's love in Christ fills the Christian

⁸Chester Warren Quimby, Paul for Everyone (New York: Macmillan Co., 1944), p. 171.

⁹L. Cervaux, Christ in the Theology of St. Paul, translated by Geoffrey Webb and Adrian Walker (New York: Herder and Herder, 1959), pp. 291f.

¹⁰Charles Edward Jefferson, The Character of Paul (New York: Macmillan Co., 1923), p. 286.

with the love of God as the Spirit communicates the benefits of Christ to him, and joy has its place in the resulting Christian life.

In I Cor. 13:6, where Paul is delineating Christian love, he has occasion to speak in terms of joy. He says that love "does not rejoice at wrong, but he rejoices in the right, οὐ χαίρει ἐπὶ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ, βουχαίρει δὲ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ."

To "rejoice at iniquity" when seeing it in others, is a sign of deep debasement (Romans 1:32); Love, on the contrary, finds her joy in the joy of "the Truth" --she rejoices in the progress and vindication of the Gospel, which is "the truth" of God . . . ; ἀδικία and ἀλήθεια are similarly contrasted in 2 Thess. 2:10,12.¹¹

Chadwick suggests a distinction in the verb forms which cannot be substantiated grammatically but involves a possible deduction to be drawn from the verse. "It may not be over-refinement to see a contrast in χαίρει and βουχαίρει, the first being personal and selfish, the second the feeling of true, social joy."¹² Although in this case the compound really does not indicate such a distinction but has the same meaning as the simple verb,¹³

¹¹G. G. Findlay, The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder and Stoughton, n.d.), III, 899.

¹²W. Edward Chadwick, The Pastoral Teaching of St. Paul (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1907), p. 260.

¹³Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, translated by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich (Fourth Revised and Augmented Edition; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), p. 782.

Christian joy is never selfish and completely personal but always connected with Jesus and related to other Christians. It is the mark of the love which is from God and which is the characteristic of true discipleship.

χαρά, joy, for the Christian is inseparable from love and impossible without it. *χάρις* and *χαρά*, "grace" and "joy" grew from the same Greek root.

The joy that was the fruit of the Spirit sprang from a life that was gracious and kind, full of good will, generous to impart itself to others, glad when they accepted and rejoiced with it, but forgiving, and still singing, when men rejected and persecuted it.¹⁴

To return to Gal. 5:22 Bultmann says:

The combination of "joy" and "peace" occurring here and elsewhere permits us to recognize "joy" too, as an eschatological phenomenon. . . . Indeed, this joy, which is not a joy over anything within this world, is itself the Christian's relatedness to the future, insofar as it is consciously realized. And he should be conscious of it; hence, Paul's exhortations to be joyful. . . . Such eschatological joy actualizes itself furthermore in the fellowship and mutual helpfulness to those whom it binds together.¹⁵

Joy is not only a characteristic of the Christian faith, but as Paul defines it is exclusively Christian in nature. "Die wahre Freude eignet nur dem Christen, denn sie ist die Frucht des

¹⁴Raymond T. Stamm, The Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1954), X, 566.

¹⁵Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, translated by Kendrick Grobel (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1951), I, 339f.

Geistes,' eine Wirkung des Heiligen Geistes."¹⁶ This joy cannot be separated from authentic Christian existence. Joy is an essential part of the entire picture of Christian life, and to omit it is to fracture the unity of Christian with Christian, and Christian with God.

This joy, which was not a pious wish but a permanent, all-pervasive characteristic of the Christian, was irrepressibly active, fraught with inward satisfaction, and outgoing benediction. But it was not a possession of the individual Christian in isolation from the body of Christ. The production of this fruit of the Spirit was a mutual process involving Paul, his Lord, and his fellow Christians.¹⁷

The distinction proposed by Calvin is irrelevant when he defines joy in this verse as simply "that cheerful behavior toward our fellow-men which is the opposite of moroseness," and something different than the joy in Rom. 14:17.¹⁸ The Christian is joyful although his situation may not be; he is cheerful despite the contrary inclinations of his flesh for he is now a man "in the Spirit" and "in Christ," possessing all the fruit of that new life.

¹⁶"Freude," Biblisches Reallexikon, edited by Edmund Kalt (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1931), I, 546.

¹⁷Stamm, p. 567.

¹⁸John Calvin, Commentaries on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians, translated by Wm. Pringle (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), pp. 167f.

The use of the singular, fruit, is suggestive. Dealing here with the central, ethical-spiritual aspect of the Spirit's work, Paul transcends the idea of particular gifts, or powers, separately or more or less externally bestowed. There is one life of the Spirit given us, and the various qualities are but the expression (the fruit) of that one life and its essential nature.¹⁹

I Cor. 12:26 continues the thought that unity and brotherhood in the Spirit of God accompany the joy of which St. Paul speaks. Paul has declared that all Christians are impelled by the same Spirit (v. 4) and the same Lord (v. 5) and the same God (v. 6). In verses 12-25 he presents all Christians as the one body of Christ, with mutual sharing of all experiences in the faith. In verse 26 he declares, "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together,

συχαίρετε πάντα τὰ μέλη." Moffat says:

As "the Lord" is to Paul Jesus risen and reigning, to rejoice in Him is simply to appropriate and rest upon the Christian facts of freedom and redemption won by Him for all men. Hence this enjoyment is (a) Common . . . (b) Complete. Joy, like faith and love a relation, calls for two. In its highest terms it lifts a life out of itself into another to be absorbed and satisfied. Its perfectness is through union (*ἐν κυρίῳ*). To have joy in Christ practically means to be satisfied with Him, that is, to allow Him to be enough for oneself.²⁰

¹⁹Harris Franklin Rall, According to Paul (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1945), p. 139.

²⁰James Moffat, "The History of Joy," The Expository Times, IX (July 1898), 335.

Being satisfied with Christ and His gifts the Christian then rejoices in the manifestations of that same Christ and His gifts in his fellow saints. It is because of what God has done and is doing in and for the life of a Christian that joy continually arises in his heart. Seeing the good in another's life stirs up joy in the Christian, regardless of the outward appearance of the good or any direct connection with himself. The *60Y*-prefix here indicates that all parts of the body are united in sorrow or in joy in the unity of the Spirit which is their common possession; this is the basic meaning of the compound verb although not always clearly observed.²¹ J. B. Phillips paraphrases the latter half of I Cor. 12:26, "All the members share a common joy."²²

The combination of these four definitive verses with one another indicates that joy is to Paul a fundamental and undeniable characteristic of life in the kingdom of God. Such joy is not joy in material things or earthly life, but is joy in Christ and in the Spirit. Joy is the result of faith in Christ and its

²¹Bauer, p. 782, lists "to rejoice with someone" as the first meaning. The classical definition is the same as stated in A Greek-English Lexicon, edited by Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, revised by Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 1668.

²²J. B. Phillips, The New Testament in Modern English (New York: Macmillan Co., 1958).

resultant expression in the "fruit" or benefits which come to the believer. Like love or peace joy is a one-word summary of the condition of the Christian who delights himself in God and shares his deep contentment with fellow-Christians in day to day living. Such joy is beyond the human and rational concept of happiness, however, measured or sought after.

Therefore the divine nature of joy for St. Paul is grossly underestimated when it is said:

Paul the Apostle was a changed man in a great many ways; not the least of which was his ability to enjoy life as he never had before. His Christian personality was by no means distorted or unbalanced. It was fully and richly developed on all sides. And in the many varied activities and pressing cares of his life, he was able to maintain his poise and keep his head because he knew the meaning of wholesome pleasure and could find recreation and happiness in a wide range of interests.²³

Such an analysis of Paul's joy misses the mark by attributing what Paul calls a godly gift, "fruit of the Spirit," to some "ability to enjoy life." Where Paul had linked righteousness, love and peace with joy the author substitutes pleasure, recreation, happiness, and a "wide range of interests." St. Paul's joy was not a "happy-go-lucky" attitude he had developed, but a feature of the transformation (Rom. 12:2) and "new creation" (II Cor. 5:17) God had wrought

James Westworth DeWitt, *St. Paul and Episcopacy* (Minneapolis: Minnesota Press, 1974), p. 136.

²³Dubose Murphy, "The Lighter Side of Paul's Personality," Anglican Theological Review, XI (January 1929), 250.

in him. The same writer adds that Christ had taught Paul how to smile! This is not joy for Paul.

In opposing such a shallow concept of joy Niebuhr comments correctly, "In the Bible there is a great deal about joy and about sorrow but very little about happiness."²⁴ Paul does not concern himself with the cultivation of some philosophy of life or outlook that man may devise to satisfy himself, and in this respect he differs from his contemporary writers.

A brief comparison with the attitudes toward joy exhibited by some other writers will illustrate Paul's unique and Christian outlook. For example, both Paul and Epicurus employ *χαρά* in their writings but the term has a different meaning for the two men.

To the one it signified the joy that comes of fullness of life in the flesh and the hope of it; to the other it signified the fullness of life in the Spirit and the hope of it. A philosophy of hope was stimulating the growth of a religion of hope.²⁵

For Paul joy is more than Epicurean sensualism even when raised to its highest degree.²⁶ Paul spoke of joy in the same language as

²⁴Niebuhr, p. 10.

²⁵Norman Wentworth DeWitt, St. Paul and Epicurus (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1954), p. 136.

²⁶A. T. Robertson, Paul's Joy in Christ (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1917), p. 101.

Epicurus but with an eye to turning men from seeking joy by their own devices to finding joy as it is bestowed through the works and promises of God.

Therefore, his "Rejoice in the Lord always" may be taken as a substitute for the words of his competitor, "It is to continuous pleasure that I invite you." Yet how completely the motivation has changed! In the logic of Epicurus pleasure is continuous because it can no more be separated from living than sweetness from honey; even the invalid can subtract the pain from the pleasure, leaving a balance of pleasure. The reason for the Christian's rejoicing, on the contrary, is the imminence of the second coming: "The Lord is at hand."²⁷

Likewise Paul's joy is contrary to the philosophy of Stoicism with its quality of *ἀταρξεία*. Paul did not speak in favor of the detached and unemotional attitude sought by the Stoics. Joy for him was not detachment from feeling but involvement and deep feeling.

Seneca has written, "A poor soldier is he who follows his commander with groans;" in this brief word the temper of his thought stands revealed--uncomplaining steadfastness, complete tranquility of mind through freedom from outside distractions. In contrast to this teaching comes the more positive note of Paul. . . . One's whole life must be a constant expression of joyful thanksgiving to God for His unspeakable gift.²⁸

²⁷DeWitt, p. 28.

²⁸Morton Scott Enslin, The Ethics of Paul (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), pp. 295f.

³¹W. Margen, The Religion and Theology of Paul (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1923), p. 174.

"Stoicism, worked out to its logical conclusion, is a religion of despair,"²⁹ and was fading from the scene as Paul appeared. Paul renewed men with the good news of life and salvation through faith in Christ Jesus, which he knew as "tidings of comfort and joy."

Neither could the mystery religions offer the joy that Paul presented to his hearers.

There is no vague absorption in the supra-sensible Reality. It is a personal relationship established by adoring trust and devotion to Him in whom Paul has reached the possibility of a life which shall be "right" with God.³⁰

Christ was the "Reality" for Paul, the Reality who had confronted him in this world of people and events and not in some impersonal relationship of thought with thought. Morgan explains:

And the Apostle's experience conducts us back to a second great reality in which his gnosis is anchored-- the Person of Jesus Christ. In the Hermetic writings vous or Mind plays substantially the same part as the risen Christ in the gnosis of Paul. But compared with the latter what a pale and empty abstraction it is! Paul's Christ is no abstraction, but the embodiment of what is most central in the supreme revelation of His character and will which God has given to our race.³¹

²⁹James S. Stewart, A Man in Christ (New York: Harper and Bros., n.d.), p. 64.

³⁰H. A. A. Kennedy, St. Paul and the Mystery-Religions (New York: Hodder and Stoughton, n.d.), p. 223.

³¹W. Morgan, The Religion and Theology of Paul (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1923), p. 174.

Such revelation, Paul knew, meant personal involvement to the fullest degree. It was God as his central joy that Paul proclaimed: this joy was the kingdom, the fruit of the Spirit, and discipleship for him. Experience, for adherents of the mystery religions, was a souring reality, and life was an experience to be escaped. The feeling of the mystery religions was negative.

In the main it was one of the transitoriness and worthlessness of man's earthly existence and of an ecstatic and ascetic liberation from the fetters of sense. If these elements are not altogether foreign to the piety of the Apostle they are far from constituting its pith and marrow. Into his experience there entered something infinitely greater--a feeling for the guilt and tyranny of sin, a discovery of the sin-forgiving grace of God, an inward revolution that made the doing of God's will the law and impulse of his being.³²

This mention of "God's will" and "law" should not be construed as advocating the Judaistic concept of "joy in the Torah." This Law was not the source or reason for Paul's joy either.

In the Epistle to the Galatians he deals in detail with the problems of attempting to find joy and satisfaction before God by keeping the Law. Paul's conclusion might be phrased as follows:

³²Ibid., p. 173.

Theoretically, no doubt, the Law might be a joy. So it would be in fact, if it could be observed. . . . Instead of a privilege, it is a burden; instead of a joy, it is sorrow and gloom; instead of leading to sanctification and life, it leads to iniquity and death.³³

The Talmud uses the expression $\pi\tau\sigma\iota\sigma\iota\sigma\iota$ $\pi\tau\sigma\iota\sigma\iota\sigma\iota$,
 $\pi\tau\sigma\iota\sigma\iota\sigma\iota$ $\pi\tau\sigma\iota\sigma\iota\sigma\iota$,

defined as "the joy expended on, and experienced in the performing of a divine precept."³⁴ In Judaism the possessor of the Torah "rejoices in his portion" and is "so contented that worry does not interfere with his further study."³⁵ The antidote for gloom is the Law with its attendant blessing of the Divine Presence which comes "through a matter of joy in connection with a precept."³⁶ Paul had tried this method of finding joy in his pre-conversion days and none had been more diligent in the pursuit of Torah-joy (Acts 22:3), but through his confrontation with Jesus on the road to Damascus (Acts 9) and the revelation of the Spirit he had found that true joy is given, not earned. And so

³³Irwin Edman, The Mind of Paul (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1935), p. 60.

³⁴Seder Nezikin, v. 8, "Aboth," Sanhedrin, translated by J. Israelstam, The Babylonian Talmud, edited by I. Epstein (London: The Soncino Press, 1935), II, 84.

³⁵Ibid., p. 85.

³⁶Shabbath, translated by H. Freedman, The Babylonian Talmud, edited by I. Epstein (London: The Soncino Press, 1935), I, 136.

Even when Paul gives evidence of his respect for the Law, he lacks altogether "the joy of the commandments-- that simple happiness in performing any particular injunction of the Law--(which) seems to be a special and peculiar feature of Rabbinic Judaism."³⁷

Paul's definition of joy, in summary, is not philosophical or rabbinic in nature; it is centered not in his own mind or plan, nor in his obedience to God's Torah, nor in escape from the sorrows of this world. Paul's joy was in essence the new life in Christ, by Whom he had been given joy as a divine grace.

Paul describes himself as one of the best of Christians who live with such paradoxes. The paradox was that they were "so sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, *ὡς ἠμώμενοι ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες*" (II Cor. 6:10), "despite the afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, assaults, labors, watchings and hunger" (vs. 4f.) that were necessary in the work of ministry (v. 3). In afflictions that would seem to demand sorrow Paul had "learned to be content" (Phil. 4:11); "in him who strengthens us" (Phil. 4:13).

The lyric strain of grief and joy that one is heard as an undertone in his writing, and now bursts forth in his utterance, is very marked. Here is a man whose every longing and need Jesus has satisfied, and whose cup runneth over. His is the joy of victory.

³⁷C. Harold Dodd, The Meaning of Paul for Today (New York: George S. Doran Co., n.d.), p. 21.

³⁷Wey Strachen, The Individuality of St. Paul (New York: George S. Doran Co., n.d.), p. 239.

³⁷Edman, p. 72.

CHAPTER V

ST. PAUL'S PERSONAL JOY

St. Paul was a man of joy supreme. Joy is always a subject in his writings. "With this went a strong humanity, and a longing that others should enter into the free and joyous life he had found."¹ St. Paul's joy was limitless, so that even the sorrows and sufferings which he experienced could not diminish his joy. He could describe himself as one of the band of Christians who live with many paradoxes. One paradox was that they were "as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, *ὡς λυπούμενοι ἀλλ' ὅμως χαίροντες* (II Cor. 6:10)," despite the "afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, watching and hunger" (vv. 4f.) that were necessary in the work of ministry (v. 3). In situations that would seem to demand sorrow Paul had "learned to be content" (Phil. 4:11) "in him who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13).

The lyric strain of praise and joy that now is heard as an undertone in his writing, and now bursts forth into utterance, is very marked. Here is a man whose every longing and need Jesus has satisfied, and whose cup runs over. His is the joy of victory.²

¹C. Harold Dodd, The Meaning of Paul for Today (New York: George H. Doran Co., n.d.), p. 27.

²Robert Harvey Strachan, The Individuality of St. Paul (London: James Clarke and Co., n.d.), p. 289.

This idea is presented even more forcibly in Col. 1:24, where Paul says, "I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, ^{Νῦν} ^{καίρω ἐν τοῖς παθήμασιν.}" The ^{νῦν} means "as things now stand." He knew that God was for him so none could be against him. The ^{ἐν} preposition indicates that in this situation as a reality, with all that "sufferings" involved for him, he rejoiced. Paul was no masochist, delighting in misfortune; the sufferings did not occasion his joy, for this meaning would be expressed with ^{ἐπι} rather than ^{ἐν}. Rather he means that even while suffering, or although he is suffering, he rejoices.

He possessed the joy of feeling that he was working with God. God has far-reaching plans and Paul is helping him to carry them out. When he suffers he still is joyful because his sufferings, like the sufferings of Jesus, are helping to work out the purpose of the Eternal.³

The whole string of God's activities for him and others had made ✓ Paul a joyous man. His attention was riveted upon his God revealed in Christ whatever the circumstances might be, and the result was joy for him.

His joy "was the joy of Redemption: of emancipation ✓ from the servitude of Sin, from the bondage of the Law, from the tyranny of Death, from the dominion of Satan and his hordes of sinister spirits. It was the joy of hope--the thrilling hope of the Parousia, the

³Charles Edward Jefferson, The Character of Paul (New York: Macmillan Co., 1923), p. 285.

coming-again of Christ. It was the joy of Forgiveness and Reconciliation with God; of Fellowship with Him through the Spirit; of fellowship with Christ, and with one another through Christ."⁴

He can repeat this statement to the Corinthians, "With all our affliction I am overjoyed, ὑπερπεριβέβουμαι τῇ χαρᾷ ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ θλίψει ἡμῶν" (II Cor. 7:4). The instrumental dative is linked with the "overflowing," "superabounding" verb. The emphasis of the verb is upon the joy as present in overwhelming measure. "He was so full of joy that even in jail in a foreign land, when he was too miserable to sleep, he could break into song,"⁵ as demonstrated in Acts 16:25. We have previously noted that joy in Paul's definition is impervious to outward circumstances, and we now see that Paul is the greatest example of his own definition. His joy was not rooted in the lofty spiritual gifts which he possessed but rather he glories in the depths of suffering and affliction he underwent. His joy

manifests itself in constant strength amid all weaknesses, in patience and hope amid all afflictions-- in short, in the overcoming of the world. For afflictions are so powerless to restrain the joyfulness of the Christian, founded as it is in the certainty of the love of God, that, on the contrary, he is able to glory in them, being persuaded that they, like all other things, are destined to contribute to his true

⁴Paul Seiver Minear, An Introduction to Paul (New York: Abingdon Press, 1937), p. 68.

⁵Jefferson, p. 289.

good and to be helpful to him. . . . It is in grateful joy over the inwardly experienced salvation, and in courageous hope of God's victory in the world and of one's blessedness with the Lord, that the Christian attitude, as the apostle exemplifies it for us in his own person, essentially consists.⁶

His joy carried him to the threshold of death. "Even if I am to be poured out as a libation upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all, χαίρω καὶ συχαίρω πάντιν ὑμῖν" (Phil. 2:17). Here he speaks of joy which is "primarily the joy of willing martyrdom."⁷ The **συ**-prefix governing the following dative draws the Philippians into his joy that he may share the moment with them.⁸ The Expositor's Greek Testament paraphrases: "I rejoice on my own account because I have been the instrument of your salvation. I also share in the joy which you experience in the new life you have received."⁹ Polycarp has a similar construction in his writing

⁶Otto Pflleiderer, Primitive Christianity, translated by W. Montgomery, edited by W. D. Morrison (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1906), I, 392f.

⁷W. K. L. Clarke, Concise Bible Commentary (London: SPCK, 1952), p. 878.

⁸James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, A Vocabulary of New Testament Greek (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1929), III, 616.

⁹H. A. A. Kennedy, The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., n.d.), III, 443.

to the Philippians, and *εὐχαίρω* may also take on the meaning of "congratulate."¹⁰ What is death to him or to them when they know the Lord of life and death? So they are to rejoice with him "in his obtaining the martyr's crown."¹¹

He knew the joy of victory. He conquered every form of bodily opposition, and every form of mental suffering, too. When he gazes into the valley of the shadow, he shouts--"O death, where is thy sting--O grave, where is thy victory?" It makes no difference to him whether he lives or dies, because he has put death under his feet.¹²

Paul was not bitter or misanthropic; his joy was great, but it was a joy created by the narrow focus of his life upon the one fact of Christ crucified and proclaimed. Even when Christ was preached by false teachers he could say, "Christ is proclaimed; and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I shall rejoice, *καὶ ἐν τούτῳ χαίρω, ἀλλὰ καὶ χαρήσομαι*" (Phil. 1:18f.). The *ἀλλὰ καὶ* is ascensive and introduces the additional point in an emphatic manner. With echoes of Job 13:16 in his following words ("this will turn out for my deliverance;" compare Job, "This will be my salvation") Paul speaks the confidence of his vindication in death

¹⁰"Polycarp: *εὐεχαίρων ὑμῶν μετὰ θάνατος.*" Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, translated by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich (Fourth Revised and Augmented Edition; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), p. 782.

¹¹Kennedy, p. 443.

¹²Jefferson, p. 285.

and of the greater joy he knew through Christ proclaimed.

By the repetition he makes it clear that he is not merely uttering a magnanimous sentiment, but has fixed on the line of conduct which he will follow. So long as he remains in prison he will allow friends and enemies to say what they will about him without any protest.¹³

This he says while in prison awaiting a trial and facing imminent death, "because this one thing contented him--if he saw the Kingdom of Christ increasing."¹⁴ Christ alone was his joy, and Paul "shall not be at all ashamed" for "Christ will be honored" (v. 20). "Must not *ταύτω* mean 'the fact that, in spite of my imprisonment, Christ is preached'? It seems far-fetched to refer it to his imprisonment."¹⁵ Paul did not "enjoy" being in prison, as the word is normally used, but he could rejoice in Christ even while in prison and prison could not take his joy from him.

Paul knew that his joy should be the property of all Christians, and he worked and wrote as he did so they might more fully know such joy, "for I felt sure of all of you, that my joy would be the joy of you all, *πεποιθώς ἐπὶ πάντας ὑμᾶς ὅτι ἡ ἐμὴ χαρὰ πάντων ὑμῶν ἐστίν*" (II Cor. 2:3). This he says while referring

¹³Ernest F. Scott, The Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1954), XI, 33.

¹⁴John Calvin, Commentaries on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians, translated by Wm. Pringle (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), p. 39.

¹⁵Kennedy, p. 426.

to the letter he had written to them "out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears" (v. 4). Jefferson says:

His letters give us strength and cheer because they come out of a triumphant heart. They are so pervaded by the spirit of joy, that our own heart catches it, and we become joyful, too. He was Paul the unconquered and the unconquerable. The secret of his joy is always escaping him in such exclamations as these: "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory."¹⁶
 "Thanks be unto God who always leadeth us in triumph."¹⁶

His joy in Christ was what he sought to communicate in his epistles. ✓

Even when these Corinthian Christians had erred and St. Paul had been compelled to rebuke them he could find a cause for his own rejoicing, because they had accepted his admonition as a Spirit-prompted warning. So he says to them, "As it is I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting, *ὡν χαίρω. . . ὅτι ἐλυτῆθήτε*" (II Cor. 7:9).

He means that he feels no pleasure whatever in their sorrow--nay more, he has his choice, he would endeavour to promote equally their welfare and their joy, by the same means; but that he could not do otherwise, their welfare was of such much importance in his view, that he rejoiced that they had been made sorry unto repentance. . . . Paul declares, that he is not such a disposition as to employ harsh cures, when not constrained by necessity.¹⁷

¹⁶Jefferson, p. 289.

¹⁷John Calvin, Commentaries on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, translated and edited by John Owen (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), II, 278.

By their preoccupation with sin, the Corinthians had forsaken their joy "in the Lord;" Paul called them back to this true joy, back to Christ.

The experience of God's love in the cross, of the Saviour who lived in him was an exuberant experience of liberation and joy, and an experience in which all human beings could share; his life-work was to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ--Christ in you Gentiles, as well as in me, the hope of Glory.¹⁸

Upon their repentance the Corinthians are addressed by Paul with a renewed contentment. "I rejoice, because I have perfect confidence in you, *χαίρω ὅτι ἐν παντί ἠαροῦ ἐν ὑμῖν*"

(II Cor. 7:16). The matter is settled for him: his admonition, their repentance, and the constant presence of the Spirit of Christ among them prompted his joy. He was "able to depend on" them (*ἠαροῦ*); of this he speaks with certainty (*ἐν παντί*).

"He concludes with renewed assurance of the joy that the successful mission of Titus to Corinth had brought him; five times in this chapter an expression of joy occurs."¹⁹ How strange to human minds that his frequent references to his joy should come while dealing with the topic of back-sliding and infidelity to Christ!

¹⁸J. Ernest Rattenbury, The Religious Experience of St. Paul (Nashville, Tenn.: Cokesbury Press, 1931), p. 140.

¹⁹Floyd V. Filson, The Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1954), X, 363.

Paul was concerned with the Corinthians, not with himself, so he could declare, "We are glad when we are weak and you are strong, *χαίρομεν γὰρ ὅταν . . .*" (II Cor. 13:9). For "in all weakness of his he repeatedly declares his contentment, if it minister in any way to their edification."²⁰ Wrede perhaps overstates the matter but correctly underlines the radical distinction for Paul in seeing the world by itself apart from Christ and seeing it anew with the eyes of faith (II Cor. 5:16).

But in the world in general and in its life he sees only the nothingness, the sickness, the ruin wrought by sin. The gloom of his view would be even more marked, if the joy of redemption did not shed so bright a gleam over his letters.²¹

In speaking from prison Paul recognized that his situation had given an opportunity to the Philipians to express their love in Christ to him. "I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me, *ἔχαρην*²² *δὲ ἐν κυρίῳ μεγάλης*" (Phil. 4:10). They had shared his want (v. 11) and his trouble (v. 14) and while he rejoices "in the Lord,"

²⁰J. H. Bernard, The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder and Stroughton Ltd., n.d.), III, 117.

²¹Wilhelm Wrede, Paul, translated by Edward Lummis (Lexington, Kentucky: American Theological Library Association Committee on Reprinting, 1962), p. 26.

²²The passive idea in *ἔχαρην* is imperceptible. James Hope Moulton, A Grammar of New Testament Greek (Third Edition; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1949), I, 161.

as always, his joy is prompted and spurred by their action (^{ει} ὅτι).

Here is his satisfaction with the response of these Christians.²³

Chrysostom commented, "οὐ κοσμικῶς ἔχαρην, φησὶν, οὐδὲ βιωτικῶς."²⁴ Scott paraphrases Paul to say, "My joy is not

so much in the gift as in the Christian love which inspired it."²⁵

The repetition of the note of joy in this epistle is appropriate under the circumstances of writing, when Paul was uncertain how such time remained to him in this world.

He begins by telling his friends what a sense of joy he feels when he mentions them in his prayers. . . .

It may be that he must soon die, but that is no cause for gloom. . . . After a word of praise for Timothy and Epaphroditus he urges his readers to rejoice. He says it does not tire him to write the word, and it is a good thing for them to have him write it again and again. . . . And thus does he sum up his letter with--"Rejoice in the Lord all the time. Let me say it again, rejoice."²⁶

In a similar vein he commends the Romans because "your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, ^{ει} ἐφ' ὑμῶν

²³Henry G. Meecham, Light from Ancient Letters (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1923), p. 125.

²⁴Quoted in Marvin R. Vincent, Epistle to the Philippians and to Philemon (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1950), p. 142.

²⁵Scott, p. 19.

²⁶Jefferson, pp. 287f.

οὖν χαίρω" (Rom. 16:19). Their obedience to the will of God as expressed in the gospel was in sharp contrast to the disturbances caused by deceivers, to which he refers in verses 17-18. Because of their conduct he rejoices ἐφ' ὑμῖν, that is, they occasion the joy which he feels by their demonstration of "such everyday, unspectacular virtues as joy, and peace, and love"²⁷ to which he had directed them by his own example.

As he was with the Romans, so he was with the Colossians; he was constantly "rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ, χαίρων καὶ βλέπων ὑμῶν τὴν τάξιν καὶ τὸ βτερέωμα" (Col. 2:5). This is hendiadys and could be translated, "I rejoice because I see" or "when I see" the τάξιν and βτερέωμα. As he was with the Romans and Colossians, so he was with the Thessalonians, speaking to them of his thanksgiving to God "and all the joy which we feel for your sake before our God, ἐπὶ πασῇ τῇ καρῇ ἣ χαίρομεν δι' ὑμᾶς" (I Thess. 3:9). His joy was joy in Christ but he rejoiced δι' ὑμᾶς, "on account of, because of you" as their conduct had been reported to him. Verse 6 speaks of their faith and love, verse 8 reports them standing fast in the Lord.

²⁷A. M. Hunter, Paul and His Predecessors (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1961), p. 97.

Such a glowing account filled the apostle with joy and caused his heart to pour out a canticle of thanksgiving and a flood of tenderness in the document we know as the First Epistle to the Thessalonians.²⁸

Similarly he can write to individual Christians who have exhibited the same Christian virtues. To Philemon he said, "I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, *χαρὰν γὰρ πολλήν ἔσχον*²⁹ καὶ παράκλησιν ἐπὶ τῇ ἀγάπῃ σου ὅτι . . ." (Philemon 7).

The joy of Christian meeting together with Christian was part of St. Paul's personal joy. Again and again we read that it was his joy to be physically present with other Christians, to share more intimately the joy in the Spirit which is the bond of believers.

For the Spirit of Christ is not simply that which is, in so far as he is truly alive, the life of the believer. It is all believers, and all believers constitute his Being and are the same time his Church.³⁰

He urges the Roman congregation to pray "so that by God's will I may come to you with joy, *ἵνα ἐν χαρᾷ ἔλθω*" (Rom. 15:32).

²⁸Justo Perez de Urbel, St. Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, translated by Paul Barrett (Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1956), p. 223.

²⁹"The aorist expresses forcibly the moment of joy which St. Paul experienced when he heard this good news. . . ." W. E. Oesterley, The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder and Stoughton, n.d.), IV, 213.

³⁰Irwin Edman, The Mind of Paul (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1935), p. 172.

The phrase **ἐν χαρᾷ** is used adverbially. When Titus comes to him with a report of the Corinthian congregation's longing for him, and their zeal and mourning for him, he says, "I rejoiced still more, **ὥστε με μᾶλλον χαρῆσαι**" (II Cor. 7:7), more than at just the coming of Titus, more than ever. Titus' visit with the Corinthians had given joy to him (Titus) and St. Paul can now rejoice over the joy of Titus in this fact that they had set his mind at ease: **περιβοτέρως ἐχάρημεν ἐπὶ τῇ χαρᾷ Τίτου ὅτι ἀναπέπαιται τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ πάντων ὑμῶν** (II Cor. 7:13). The strengthened comparative **περιβοτέρως** may be translated "even much more."

In writing to Timothy St. Paul speaks of desiring to see him again, "that I may be filled with joy, **εἶνα χαρᾶς πληρωθῶ**" (II Tim. 1:4). A variant reading in II Cor. 1:15 of **χαρᾶν** for **χάρην** indicates the closeness in meaning of the two words (**εἶνα δευτέραν χάρην ἔχητε**), although the textual evidence is confined mainly to the Vaticanus manuscript. The lexicon notes:

It seems that **χάρης** is not always clearly differentiated in meaning from **χαρᾶ**; Appolodorus (II B.C.): 244 fgm. 90 Jac. says in the second book **περὶ θεῶν: κληθῆναι δὲ αὐτὰς ἀπὸ μὲν τ. χαρᾶς χάριτας; καὶ γὰρ πολλάκις οὐ ποιεῖται τ. χάρην χάρην κκλοῦσθαι** ³¹

³¹Bauer, p. 885.

II Cor. 1:15 might be translated as speaking of a double "pleasure" or "joy" which would be the result of seeing the Corinthians both going to and coming from Macedonia. Calvin comments here that

the second (benefit) was their being confirmed, by means of his coming to them, in the faith which they had once received, and being stirred up by his sacred admonitions to make favorable progress.³²

Regardless of the translation of this word, then, his visit would be a "joy" that St. Paul could share with the church at Corinth.

The presence of other Christians led to joy for Paul, e.g.,

Stephanas, Fortunatus, Achaïus, of whom he said, "χαίρω δὲ ἐπὶ τῇ παρουσίᾳ" (I Cor. 16:17).

This brings us to a use of *χαρά* which is unique with St. Paul: the use of the noun as a term of endearment applied to other people. Not only do fellow-Christians share Paul's joy, receive his joy and give him joy, but to both the Philippians and the Thessalonians he gives the title of "joy." They are "my joy and crown, *χαρὰ καὶ στεφανίος μου*" (Phil. 4:1) and "our glory and joy, *ἡ δόξα ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ χαρά*," in answer to the question, "What is our hope or our joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming?, *εἰς γὰρ ἡμῶν ἐπίτις ἡ χαρά*" (I Thess. 2:19).

³²Calvin, Corinthians, p. 131.

This joy in ministering coalesces with the prospective eschatological joy, inasmuch as in the day of the Lord the results of one's ministry will be made manifest and become for the servant of Christ a special "joy" or "crown of glorying."³³

How else could Paul therefore pray for these people who are so named by him, but "with joy, *μετὰ χαρᾶς*" (Phil. 1:4)? One commentator notes in connection with this sentence in which Paul is expressing his thankfulness for their "partnership in the gospel" (v. 5):

The sentence is loosely constructed, and it is hard to say whether he states, in the words that follow, the reason for his thanksgiving or his joy. Presumably he speaks of his thanksgiving, since this is the main subject of the passage, but a reference to his joy is also implied.³⁴

Calvin suggests that

Joy refers to the past; prayer to the future. For he rejoiced in their conspicuous beginnings, and was desirous of their perfection. Thus it becomes us always to rejoice in the blessings received in such a manner as to remember to ask from him those things that we are still in need of.³⁵

In summarizing Paul's personal joy reference must be made to his basic definition of joy as proceeding from the works of God in

³³"Joy," A Dictionary of the Apostolic Church, edited by James Hastings (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1915), I, 654f.

³⁴Scott, p. 19.

³⁵Calvin, Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians, p. 25.

Christ, an all-consuming and completely satisfying delight in his knowledge of and life in Christ. This joy may be stirred up in any spiritual situation by the activities or presence of fellow-Christians and by the numerous reminders God gives daily of His goodness. A review of the verses cited in this chapter will show that St. Paul's most frequent constructions are with the preposition ² **ἐπὶ** or the conjunction ² **ὅτι** (once, ² **ὅταν**) which indicate the person or event which stimulates his joy.³⁶ (II Cor. 7:4, an apparent exception, is not really so since the verb is ² **ὑπερπερλεβέουμαι** and not **χαίρω**). Phil. 4:10 with ² **ἐν κυρίῳ** reminds us that his joy is always due to his life "in Christ," as Phil. 1:18f. notes that his joy is in Christ proclaimed. In another situation of life, as suffering, Christ still dominates his thought and mood and joy remains for him. The ² **μετὰ** of Phil. 1:4 shows the accompaniment of joy to his prayer as it was a factor in all he did. We conclude with Wahlstrom: "Joy and praise are the fitting responses to the free grace of God which has been given in Christ."³⁷ Paul received this grace and responded with joy.

³⁶Bauer, p. 287: ² **ἐπὶ** shows that "upon which a state of being, an action, or a result is based."

³⁷Eric H. Wahlstrom, The New Life in Christ (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1950), p. 204.

CHAPTER VI

ST. PAUL AND THE JOY OF OTHER CHRISTIANS

The consideration of "joy" in other Christians as noted or urged by St. Paul begins with a set of references in which forms of *χαίρω* are used with the meaning of the human emotion of gladness. The two verses, Rom. 12:15 and I Cor. 7:30, might seem also to be contradictory to one another. In Rom. 12:15 Paul urges the Romans to "rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep, *χαίρειν μετὰ χαίρόντων.*" The omission of the article suggests the type of persons rather than specific individuals, whom Paul had in mind and the infinitive gives Paul's expression the character of a watchword. Paul is writing to men who "take earthly sorrows and joys more lightly than they once did,"¹ for as Christians their sense of values has been changed. Rejoicing with a "this life" orientation is not the same as the rejoicing in Christ of which St. Paul regularly speaks.

The context of this verse may help in understanding Paul's meaning. In verse 14 he speaks of a charitable attitude toward persecutors; in verse 15 he refers to all men, not only opponents, as deserving consideration and empathy. Verse 16 continues the

¹A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1953), p. 1090.

idea of love and kindness with specific application to believers, "live in harmony with one another." (Romans 15:5 repeats this last injunction in a prayer form in a clear setting of relations with fellow-Christians.) Paul in verse 15 is stating his desire for them to "live peaceably with all" (v. 18) and to "overcome evil with good" (v. 21) so that like Paul others might become "all things to all men" and save them. Sharing a moment of happiness with an unbeliever will bring peace and perhaps an opportunity to share the real joy in Christ.

In a different setting, however, Christians may be called upon to forego such earthly rejoicing. In another passage where he speaks of the transitory nature of this life and the imminent return of the Lord, Paul calls for the action of "those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, *καὶ οἱ χαίροντες ὡς μὴ χαίροντες*" (I. Cor. 7:30). This is said within the framework of earthly emotions, which the heart may express in *χαίρειν* (rejoicing), *λυπεῖσθαι* (sorrowing), or *κλαίειν* (weeping). "All these verbs describe human conduct as such, not as either good or bad."² In verse 29 Paul notes that the "appointed time has grown very short" and all human plans, desires, and emotions are

²Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, translated by Kendrick Grobel (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1951), I, 226.

being upset. "Paul is not thinking of the maintenance of an unruffled composure at all times. He is concerned with single-minded devotion to the interests of the Lord."³ Paul intends for his hyperbole to heighten his readers' concern for the day of the Lord; apathy and inaction would result from a literal observance of his words. He is leading to his grand conclusion: "For the form of this world is passing away" (v. 31b). Everything in this life is relatively unimportant at this point. "He cannot conceive that anything really matters except devotion to the joy of belonging to the Lord and being at his disposal."⁴ In his commentary on I Cor. 7:30 Goudge adds:

The sorrow and joy of which St. Paul here speaks are those caused by incidents of life in the world; they do not include spiritual sorrow or joy. St. Paul does not recommend the Stoic apathy; we are no more bound to avoid sorrow and joy than to avoid marriage; but all alike must lose their enthralling interest to those who recognize that they are soon to pass away.⁵

Rom. 12:15 and I Cor. 7:30 may thus be considered as directives by Paul for believers' conduct while in the world. It is significant that Paul never speaks of his own joy as either empathetic understanding of unbelievers' emotions or as unrelated to Christ and

³Clarence T. Craig, The Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1954), X, 85.

⁴James Moffat, The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians (New York: Harper and Bros., n.d.), p. 93.

⁵H. L. Goudge, The First Epistle to the Corinthians (London: Methuen and Co., 1903), p. 61.

therefore in possible need of restraint. We see evidence that Paul was the teacher and his readers were the taught, and the meaning of real joy was one of the subjects of his presentations.

St. Paul regularly speaks of Christian joy as a result of Christian faith, even as his joy was the product of his faith in Christ. He wrote to the Romans on the matter of God's Old Testament promises that the Gentiles would be saved, and concluded, "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that . . . you may abound in hope, πληρώσατε ὑμᾶς πάσης χαρᾶς καὶ εἰρήνης ἐν τῷ πιστεύειν" (Rom. 15:13).

The **ἐν** indicates that their faith is instrumental in producing joy for them.

The joy and peace which He imparts rest on faith. Hence they are the joy and peace specially flowing from justification and acceptance with God, and the more we have of these, the more we abound in the Christian hope itself.⁶

Believing leads to joy, and peace to hope. As in his own life Paul knew joy despite suffering, so he comments that the Romans will have joy in the face of the many problems which he deals with in chapters twelve to fifteen. He implies that joy is "never freedom from outward difficulty; it is the superiority to hardship that

⁶James Denney, The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder and Stoughton, n.d.), II, 711.

faith gives. . . ."⁷ Joy is not an automatic or easy benefit of belief in Christ but proceeds from a meaningful apprehension of Christ's salvation in each daily life situation.

It is a fallacy to construe this relationship of crown and resurrection in such a way that cognitive understanding of the past atonement on the cross "as substitutionary" makes available a continuous array of positive powers for Christian life. Such a view of the atonement depicts the cross in a false light, since it lifts it out of the present. Indeed, the Christian life is a life of joy, but profoundly so because it is joy in the midst of suffering.⁸

The same writer continues:

But because it is the power of Christ's resurrection as well, those who have the Spirit as down-payment may suffer joyfully and in hope, knowing that the cross and resurrection are God's final victory over His world.⁹

Paul discusses his attitude toward life and death with the Philippians and speaks of continuing in the flesh "for your progress and joy in the faith, *εἰς τὴν ὑμῶν προκοπὴν καὶ χαρὰν τῆς πίστεως*" (Phil. 1:25). The adnominal genitive *τῆς πίστεως* is used to denote a relationship between joy and

⁷Floyd V. Filson, The Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1954), X, 364.

⁸J. Christiaan Beker, "Aspects of the Holy Spirit in Paul," Union Seminary Quarterly Review, XIV, 1 (November 1958), 10.

⁹Ibid., p. 16.

faith. "The measure of progress in Christianity is the ever deeper joy one finds in it."¹⁰

Paul reminded the saints at Thessalonica that they were imitators of him and of the Lord, "for you received the word in much affliction with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, *μετὰ χαρᾶς πνεύματος ἁγίου*" (I Thess. 1:6). They anticipated the "full salvation of which the Spirit at present was the pledge and foretaste."¹¹ Paul emphasized to the Thessalonians the need for God's Spirit in the creation of joy "that we may know that it is not prompted by the instigation of the flesh or by the promptings of their own nature. . . ." ¹² Paul's own experience had been that he felt "unexpectedly a spring of joy and confidence"¹³ where others might have been depressed, and he calls his fellow-Christians to that same God-given experience.

¹⁰Ernest F. Scott, The Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1954), XI, 38.

¹¹James Moffat, The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder and Stoughton, n.d.), IV, 24.

¹²John Calvin, Commentaries on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians, translated by Wm. Pringle (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), p. 243. So also John W. Bailey, The Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1954), XI, 262.

¹³Johannes Weiss and Rudolf Knopf, The History of Primitive Christianity, edited by Frederick C. Grant, translated by four friends (New York: Wilson-Erickson, 1937), I, 41.

It was Paul's whole purpose among those whom he served to create and increase the joy which results from personal and meaningful acknowledgment of Christ as Lord. He says to the Corinthians: "Not that we lord it over your faith; we work with you for your joy, *βουεργόι ἐγμεν τῆς χαρᾶς ὑμῶν*" (II Cor. 1:24). Calvin notes that Paul speaks of "joy as opposed to the tenor which tyrants awaken through means of their cruelty, and also false prophets resembling tyrants"¹⁴ as the product he desires. This joy of faith was to persist among his converts despite all the problems connected with Christian living.

Traurigkeit ist als Erziehungsmittel der Gnade etwas Vorübergehendes. Freude ist dagegen ein Lebenselement dieser und der zukünftigen Welt. Alle wahre Freude ist ein Anteilnehmen an der unendlichen himmlischen Freude. . . . Auch die Apostel wollten nichts anders als Gehilfen unserer Freude sein. . . . Nur wenn wir vor Gott stehen, verliert die Erde ihre Anziehungskraft: Es wird uns eine Freude, an den Leiden Christi teilzunehmen.¹⁵

With St. Paul's definition of joy before them, his converts would be better prepared to live a joyful Christian existence. Furthermore, he had showed them what joy was by his own example. Now he called

¹⁴John Calvin, Commentaries on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, translated by Wm. Pringle (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), II, 144.

¹⁵"Freude," Lexikon zur Bibel, edited by Fritz Rienecker (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus Verlag, 1959), pp. 414f.

upon them to share such joy with him in their own lives. Such a response on their part is imperative.

The opposite of joy is not sorrow; it is sin, which breaks the harmony between us and one another and between us and God. Joy cannot be found by seeking it. It is a by-product of self-forgetful activity. It is a fruit of the Spirit, not an artificial compound of pleasurable excitement, or sensual stimuli. The church should be the center of the highest type of joy, which is fellowship in Christ among people fully consecrated to his purpose and responding to his love.¹⁶

Therefore Paul reminded the Corinthians that at his coming to them they were "those who should have made me rejoice, ^οἴδετε με χαίρειν" (II Cor. 2:3). ^οἴδετε, which indicates some kind of compulsion not stated here, expresses that something that should have happened did not take place. To this end he had written to them as harshly as he did, yet with the confidence that his joy would also be their joy (v. 3b).

Paul pointed the Corinthians to the example of the Macedonian churches, whose "abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed, ^εἡ περιγεία τῆς χαρᾶς αὐτῶν. . . ^εἰπεριευγεν" (II Cor. 8:2). His emphatic words are a tribute to the paradoxical "joy and poverty" which lead the Macedonians to beg earnestly for the favor (^χαίρειν) of taking part in relieving the saints (v. 4).

¹⁶Filson, p. 292.

By the term joy he means that spiritual consolation by which believers are sustained under their afflictions; for the wicked either delude themselves with empty consolations, by avoiding a perception of the evil, and drawing off the mind to rambling thoughts, or else they wholly give way to grief, and allow themselves to be overwhelmed with it. Believers, on the other hand, seek occasion of joy in the affliction itself, as we see in the 8th chapter of the Romans.¹⁷

Joy is always expressed by those who possess it and therefore is one of the signs by which men may know another's faith.

St. Paul expects joy to increase in spite and even because of the believers' trying circumstances. To the Colossians he writes: "May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy giving thanks to the Father, *μετὰ χαρᾶς*" (Col. 1:11). In this construction *μετὰ χαρᾶς* is linked to the following *εὐχαριστοῦντες*; Abbott explains:

χαρᾶς is so far from being flat or unmeaning, that without it *εὐχαριστοῦντες* would be too weak. The idea of joyful endurance is not lost when the prayer passes from joyful endurance to joyful thanksgiving; and the emphatic position of the words is sufficiently explained by the writer's desire to emphasize this characteristic of their thanksgiving with special reference to the trials implied in *ὑπομονή* and *μακροθυμία*. The words thus acquire greater significance than if they slipped in as it were

¹⁷Calvin, Corinthians, p. 285.

after *μακροθυμίαν*. The connection with *Εὐχαριστοῦντες* is also favored by the structure of the preceding clauses, each of which commences after a definite adjunct.¹⁸

The Expositor's Greek Testament considers such a construction "tautological" but the reasoning here is guided by a desire to modify "endurance" and "patience" with the adjective expression translated as "joyful."¹⁹ A consideration of the following text avoids this necessity. Verses 12-14 remind us of the basis for joy to which St. Paul points the Colossians: the inheritance (v. 12), the deliverance (v. 13), the kingdom (v. 13), the redemption (v. 14), and the forgiveness (v. 14). Eyes upon the Christ described in verses 15-20 will fill hearts with joy sufficient for enduring trials. Then joy is not a moral habit to be developed but a blessing of faith in Christ. So Thomas, in Prayers of St. Paul, comments:

Notice, too, the suggestive addition, with joyfulness. Patience and longsuffering without joy are apt to be cold, chilly, unattractive. There is a stern, stoical endurance of suffering which, while it may be admired sometimes, tends to repel. But when patience and longsuffering are permeated and suffused with joyfulness, the very life of Christ is lived over again in his followers. Resignation to the will of God is only

¹⁸T. K. Abbott, To the Ephesians and to the Colossians (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, n.d.), p. 205.

¹⁹A. S. Peake, The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder and Stoughton, n.d.), III, 500.

very partially a Christian virtue; but when we take joyfully the things that come upon us we are indeed manifesting the very life of God Himself.²⁰

St. Paul prayed for the Colossians with the confidence born of his own experience of God's desire to perfect His children. Their progress along this route may be uneven but Paul is determined to continue in the effort to lead them to God's goal. "That this purpose will moreover reach its sacred goal is the deepest reason for the joyousness which is the fundamental characteristic note of this religion, and must ever remain so."²¹

We consider finally the many commands to rejoice in Paul's epistles. In the twelfth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans after discussing the diversity of spiritual gifts, Paul gives numerous exhortations to holy living. He urges the Romans, for example, to "rejoice in your hope, *τῇ ἐλπίδι χαίρουτες* "

(Rom. 12:12). In the midst of adversities

he bids us to raise our minds up to heaven, that we may possess solid and full joy. If our joy is derived from the hope of future life, then patience will grow up in adversities; for no kind of sorrow will be able to overwhelm this joy.²²

²⁰W. H. Griffith Thomas, The Prayers of St. Paul (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1914), p. 67.

²¹Weiss and Knopf, II, 506.

²²John Calvin, Commentaries on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, translated by John Owen (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947), pp. 466f.

The same combination of joy and hope which St. Paul mentions in 15:13 is here presented but now it is hope that produces joy.

The dative expresses joy "by virtue of hope" and does not mean to convey the idea of rejoicing "over hope" or simply because a hope exists. The command to rejoice is to be understood as an "evangelical imperative": you must do this, but it is possible only because "God is at work in you" (Phil. 2:12f.). Joy does not come easily to believers. For

the constant cultivation of it is enjoined upon believers. The Apostle makes it an object of prayer, and represents its attainment as the goal of his apostolic activity for the churches.²³

But Christian hope must produce joy.

Auch die Apostel fordern, dass der Dienst Gottes selbst in der Drangsal in freudiger Stimmung geleistet werde; die Freude soll sich auf die²⁴ Hoffnung der himmlischen Verklärung stützen.

While in prison Paul commanded the Philippians to "complete my joy by being of the same mind, *πληρώσατε μου τὴν χαρὰν*" (Phil. 2:2). Even when speaking of his death he urged them, "You also should be glad and rejoice with me, *ὑμεῖς*

²³"Joy," A Dictionary of the Apostolic Church, edited by James Hastings (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1915), I, 654.

²⁴"Freude," Biblisches Reallexikon, edited by Edmund Kalt (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1931), I, 546.

ΧΑΙΡΕΤΕ ΚΑΙ ΟΥ ΧΑΙΡΕΤΕ ΜΟΙ " (Phil. 2:18). His death could not dim his joy nor should it dim their joy, "inasmuch as they will find it to be productive of advantage."²⁵

As Paul rejoiced in the presence and company of his fellow-saint, he urged his readers to do likewise. The coming of Epaphroditus to Philippi is not only an occasion that takes place "that you may rejoice at seeing him again, *ἵνα ἰδόντες αὐτὸν πάλιν χαρήτε*" (Phil. 2:28)²⁶ but is also a time when St. Paul could give the reminder and command to "receive him in the Lord with all joy, *μετὰ πάσης χαρᾶς*" (Phil. 2:29). As Calvin notes, "He employs the word all to mean sincere and abundant."²⁷ Vincent calls it "every kind of joy."²⁸ Whether or not there is a hidden meaning in Paul's words that speak to "some alienation" between Epaphroditus and the Philippians, as Kennedy has suggested,²⁹

²⁵ Calvin, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, p. 75.

²⁶ "In the same way as the ordinary adjective, the participle may fulfill the role of a predicate and answer either to the subject or the direct complement of the preposition." James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1929), III, 160.

²⁷ Calvin, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, p. 84.

²⁸ Marvin H. Vincent, To the Philippians and to Philemon (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1950), p. 77.

²⁹ H. A. A. Kennedy, The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder and Stoughton, n.d.), III, 447.

the meaning is obvious that Paul expected joy to be shared with this messenger upon his arrival. The New English Bible translates, "with wholehearted delight."³⁰ It is noteworthy that the Apostle calls for joy on the basis of Epaphroditus' connection with "the work of Christ" and the service of Christians to each other.

The heart of St. Paul's joy and the heart of that joy which he expects of his followers is expressed in Phil. 3:1: "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord, *Τὸ λοιπὸν, ἀδελφοί μου. Χαίρετε ἐν κυρίῳ.*"

Several of the older expositors found in *ἐν κυρίῳ* a contrast of the joy in God with the bitterness of the cross (Calvin); or with all worldly things (Theodoret, Theodore of Mopsuestia, von Lyra); or with the works of the flesh and fleshly renown (Anselm); or with the Jewish errors treated in the following verses (Calovius, Crocius, Piscator).³¹

Calvin himself wrote:

This is a conclusion from what goes before, for as Satan never ceased to distress them with daily rumours, he bids them divest themselves of anxiety and be of good courage . . . to take such satisfaction in the simple tasting of God's grace, that all annoyances, sorrows, anxieties, and griefs are sweetened.³²

³⁰The New English Bible, New Testament (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961).

³¹Vincent, p. 91.

³²Calvin, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, pp. 85f.

A disputed point is raised by the translation of *χαίρετε* with the basic meaning of "rejoice." Scott suggests that "his Christian admonition is blended with the conventional 'good-by.'"³³ The matter of the proper translation of *χαίρετε* in Phil. 3:1 is dealt with by another writer who says:

Χαίρειν meant to be glad as well as to greet a friend. Even when it passed into the opening of a letter, it did not wholly lose its cheerful associations. If it sometimes came to mean little more than "dear" in our conventional start of a letter, it might mean more and often it did mean more. Thus it has been disputed whether *χαίρετε* in Phil. 3:1 is an epistolary phrase ("greeting to you") or definitely rejoice, as in James 1:1.³⁴

The same question of translation arises in Phil. 4:4 where Paul wrote, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say: rejoice, *χαίρετε ἐν κυρίῳ πάντοτε . . . χαίρετε* ." The same theme of constant rejoicing appears in II Cor. 6:10 and means that "come what may, believers, having the Lord standing on their side, have amply sufficient ground of joy."³⁵ Discussing Paul's Joy in Christ Robertson has written:

³³Scott, p. 72.

³⁴James Moffat, Grace in the New Testament (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1931), pp. 138f.

³⁵Calvin, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, p. 116.

Paul's joy is not grounded in earthly conditions, but in Christ. No one can rob Paul of Christ or of his joy in Christ. Christ satisfies Paul's soul. Christ is his all in all.³⁶

Goodspeed's suggestion that these words should simply be translated as "good-by" seems weak in comparison to all that has been said above. He claims:

Instead of imparting an atmosphere of gladness to the letter, it has just the opposite intention; it is a solemn farewell. This is the predominant sense of *χαίρω* in the imperative second and third persons, for example in sepulchral inscriptions. In fact, the imperative creates a strong presumption in favor of that understanding of the verb. . . . Few translations fail to recognize the salutation involved in the imperative in Matt. 26:49. . . . Yet the imperative *χαίρε* or *χαίρετε* is used even more frequently in farewell than in greeting. . . . The use of *χαίρεν* is very much like the English use of the expression, "to fare well," which in the imperative means something very different from what it means in other moods.³⁷

Such thinking is questionable as not characteristic of the use of the imperative by Paul; it is foreign to his other citations to imagine a sad word here. Likewise II Cor. 13:11 is usually translated, "Finally, brethren, farewell, *λοῦτρον, ἀδελφοί, χαί- ρετε* ." But Bultmann asks, "English tradition here renders it

³⁶A. T. Robertson, Paul's Joy in Christ (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1917), pp. 231f.

³⁷Edgar S. Goodspeed, Problems of New Testament Translation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945), pp. 174f.

'farewell'; but do ancient letters confirm this as a closing formula?"³⁸ No such evidence can be cited! The lexicon comments that the imperative is used at leavetaking but there is no evidence or citation for its use at the end of letters.³⁹ "Farewell would be ἔρωσθε."⁴⁰ Moffat says that to translate the *Χαίρετε* as a fare-well would be "abnormal."⁴¹ He offers the best explanation when he says:

The last words are not a pious phrase thrown in to close the verse, but the ground of that rare harmony of existence (*χαίρει*) which is only, as it is always, conceivable and accessible through such a relationship. . . . For after all, what is the history of joy but simply the history of a man's plain experience with his God in Jesus Christ?⁴²

In I Thess. 5:16 Paul commands, in a closing series of exhortations, "Rejoice always, *πάντοτε Χαίρετε*." The parallel phrases in verse 17, "Pray constantly," and verse 18, "Give thanks in all

³⁸Bultman, Theology of the New Testament, I, 339.

³⁹A Greek-English Lexicon, edited by Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, revised by Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 1970.

⁴⁰J. H. Bernard, The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder and Stoughton, n.d.), III, 118.

⁴¹Moffat, Grace in the New Testament, p. 142.

⁴²James Moffat, "The History of Joy," The Expository Times, IX (July 1898), 336. The translation "Rejoice" in Phil. 4:4 is "generally preferred by commentators." Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament, p. 682.

circumstances," comprise the triad concerning which Paul concludes in verse 18, "For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

Once again Calvin reminds:

For, in the first place, he would have us hold God's benefits in such esteem that the recognition of them, and meditation upon them shall overcome all sorrow. And, unquestionably, if we consider what Christ has conferred upon us, there will be no bitterness of grief so intense as may not be alleviated, and give way to spiritual joy. . . . And very ungrateful is that man to God, who does not set so high a value on the righteousness of Christ and the hope of eternal life, as to rejoice in the midst of sorrow.⁴³

All of Paul's imperatives to rejoice are echoes of what the Spirit commanded Paul himself to do, and what Paul as a new creation of God could not refrain from doing. Calling upon others to rejoice is Paul's way of indicating that joy is the essential consequence of life "in Christ." "Christian joy cannot merely be another word for high spirits. These we cannot command."⁴⁴ Wood notes that Paul emphasizes joy as a "positive duty" and claims, "No literary work has ever so often repeated the word 'joy' as the New Testament."⁴⁵

Looking at the references of St. Paul to the joy of other Christians we note that joy for Christians to whom Paul wrote may

⁴³Calvin, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, p. 297.

⁴⁴The Holy Bible with Commentary, edited by F. C. Cook (London: John Murray, 1881), III, 728.

⁴⁵C. T. Wood, The Life, Letters, and Religion of St. Paul (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1932), p. 131.

denote an earthly emotion, but usually refers to a special grace bestowed upon believers by God and to be cultivated by them. Joy is intertwined with peace and hope as a product of faith in Christ conveyed by the Spirit and triumphant over adverse circumstances. The many imperatives of *χαίρω* that appear in Paul's letters indicate his deep concern that his followers continually rejoice (they are always present tense imperatives), and his farewells are significantly couched in words of joy that are more than formal epistolary devices. Joy is for all Christians, Paul wants to declare, not only for his Lord or himself.

CHAPTER VII

ST. PAUL'S CONCEPT OF JOY: CONCLUSIONS

The basis for St. Paul's concept of joy as expressed by his use of *χαίρω* and *καρά* is found in the Old Testament and secular Greek usage of these words. In the Old Testament "joy" is an emotional reaction to some event or happening, and for God's people is a reaction to some benefit directly or indirectly attributable to God. While it is true that the wicked or unbelievers are spoken of as rejoicing on occasion, the object or cause of such joy is contrary to God's will or His plans for His people. The Biblical Hebrew words translated by a form of *χαίρω/καρά* in the Septuagint are also translated by other Greek words, such as *εὐφραίνω, ἀγαλλιάω*, but no clear distinction can be seen in the various words.

The Septuagint uses *χαίρω/καρά* to express a happy reaction to some good event or good fortune. Forms of *χαίρω* (infinitive or imperative) had come to be used in spoken or written salutations. These same uses are found in classical and secular Greek but have almost no reference to the actions of the gods. Joy has a this-world orientation in non-Biblical Greek.

In the New Testament the focus of joy narrows from "some good thing" that God gives to a direct emphasis upon the person, work, and message of Christ. In the Gospels Christ speaks of His joy as

the joy that He bestows upon others who know and follow Him. We encounter a strong emphasis upon joy as present among Christ's disciples despite disadvantages and hardships which may be attendant upon life in this world, because joy is from and of Christ alone. In the Acts of the Apostles, the non-Pauline epistles and the Revelation of St. John the theme of full salvation in Christ which produces joy is continued. This salvation and joy come to me by the promised and now-present Spirit of God as they faithfully cling to Christ. The conviction of the Lord's imminent return solidified the joy of the Apostolic church as it anticipated the constant and full presence of Christ.

Paul's concept of joy picks up the theme of the Apostolic church, and in his definition of joy he re-emphasizes that God gives joy through the Spirit in connection with His Word. He places new meaning *καίρω/καρά* as he rejects the detached and emotionless philosophical idea of joy along with the rabbinic joy in the Torah, and expands *καρά* from its secular meanings to include the essential character of life in the kingdom of God, as synonymous with life in Christ.

Paul's personal joy is that he rejoices in the Lord. He declares that this gift of the Spirit is kindled or stimulated by the acts and presence of other Christians. He even calls other Christians his joy when they display the character of Christ in their lives and behavior as God's proclamation of Christ takes its

full effect in them. His preaching of Christ is the means to bring joy to others, whatever glorifies Christ is joyful service for him.

Paul exhorts Christians to increase in joy as in all spiritual gifts. He may refer on occasion to joy as a commiseration with other people; at another time joy should be restrained in the face of Christ's imminent return. But real joy for Paul is no earthly emotion but a divine grace that exists and persists in Christians despite any unpleasantness in their lives. His numerous imperatives to rejoice display his concern for the development of joy in all Christians as a fruit of the Spirit which is beyond moods and feelings of men. He declares that joy begins and continues in Christ, and calls men back to the Lord of joy continually.

A careful study of St. Paul's words about joy lead to the conclusion that for St. Paul joy is no ephemeral emotion or surface happiness, but a deeply grounded assurance that all is well now and a confident expectancy of greater bliss to come. With this joy, given by the Spirit of God to them that are His, communicated through the message of the Gospel and received by faith in the person and work of Christ, man more than conquers the vicissitudes and complexities of life in Christ in this present world.

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