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### The Relationship Between the Concept of CHARIS and Santification in the Epistles of Paul

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**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN  
THE CONCEPT OF CHARIS AND SANCTIFICATION  
IN THE EPISTLES OF PAUL**

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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  
Bachelor of Divinity

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by

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June 1954

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### The Thesis and Purpose

There are two great doctrines in the Holy Scriptures with which we are here concerning ourselves. The first is a divine indicative, the fact that man can be converted, renewed, and restored to the life of God only by a mighty act of intervention through Jesus, the Son of God. This is called justification. The second doctrine is a divine imperative, the clear and unavoidable directive which requires man to live a life of obedience to God's commands and will, a life of goodness, purity, honesty, sincerity, and love. This is called sanctification. The relationship between these two great teachings has often mistakenly been thought to be paradoxical. The apparent paradox between the two has produced confusion, misunderstanding, a massive amount of study, and a tremendous amount of writing ever since God first gave man the divine revelation of salvation. This thesis is an attempt to find the correct New Testament relationship between this great indicative and this great imperative on the basis of St. Paul's use of the Greek term, *Χάρις*.

When we think of Martin Luther's fierce inner struggles and his gradual enlightenment as he pored over the Psalms, Isaiah, the Epistle to the Romans, the Epistle to the Galatians,

and other Scriptures, and when we think of the controversies that raged during the decades following Luther, we are reminded of the fact that this question has always caused a great deal of difficulty. The "purification of grace" was not an easy accomplishment.

The historic Lutheran Church has resolved the apparent paradox between God's pure grace and man's moral responsibility in its confessional writings. Especially in the Formula of Concord the early Lutheran theologians were forced to define the proper relationship. These are just a few of many pertinent statements from the Lutheran Confessions:

God will and does account us entirely righteous and holy for the sake of Christ, our Mediator. . . . And such faith, renewal, and forgiveness is followed by good works.<sup>1</sup>

We believe, teach, and confess that although the contrition that precedes, and the good works that follow, do not belong to the article of justification before God, yet one is not to imagine a faith of such a kind as can exist and abide with, and alongside of, a wicked intention to sin and to act against the conscience. But after man has been justified by faith, then a true living faith worketh by love, Gal. 5:6, so that thus good works always follow justifying faith, and are surely found with it, if it be true and living; for it never is alone, but always has with it love and hope.<sup>2</sup>

Love is also a fruit which surely and necessarily follows faith. For the fact that one does not love is a sure indication that he is not justified, but is still

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<sup>1</sup>Trigtot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 499.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 795.

in death, or has lost the righteousness of faith again.<sup>3</sup>

In order, therefore to deliver pious consciences from these labyrinths of the sophists, we have ascribed to repentance [or conversion] these two parts, namely contrition and faith. If any one desire to add a third, namely fruits worthy of repentance, i.e., a change of the entire life and character for the better [good works which shall and must follow conversion] we will not make any opposition.<sup>4</sup>

There is always a need for deepening the Biblical basis of this relationship between grace and responsibility. Willard Allbeck makes these observations in his Studies in the Lutheran Confessions:

. . . this was a sensitive point for the Reformers. As Plitt has observed, the Romanists could exhibit their interest in good works by their outward observances and ecclesiastical busyness; the Lutherans, unwilling to display such religiosity, seemed to neglect good works. And when Pietists attempted to correct this impression, they ended in a Puritanic legalism. Lutheranism is still being charged with being "quietistic"--a kind of religious isolationism, unwilling to exert any influence in the terrific struggles occurring in the social and economic order of our day. Some hard and clear thinking is needed at this point.<sup>5</sup>

In his discussion of the Formula of Concord Allbeck claims that the Formula did not offer the final solution to the original question of the controversy. He says:

Efforts to give an adequate account of the connection between justification and regeneration have at times been under suspicion. Standing between Roman moralism and antinomian moral laxity, Lutheranism has seemed

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 923.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 259.

<sup>5</sup>Willard D. Allbeck, Studies in the Lutheran Confessions (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1952), p. 77.

immobile. Dr. Kawerau declared, "The Formula of Concord closed the controversy by avoiding both extremes, but failed to offer a final solution of the question demanded by the original motive of the controversy." The problem of a vigorous ethical emphasis connected with sola gratia is still engaging the attention of theologians.<sup>6</sup>

The fact that the statement, "Good works are necessary," was debated so vigorously in the Lutheran Church shows that there must have been some unclear thinking on the meaning of "grace" among early Lutherans. In a long statement the Formula of Concord carefully endorses the phrase, "Good works are necessary," but the very historic existence of such a debate in the Church of the Augsburg Confession shows the need for a constant clarification of thinking on the relationship of grace and works.

The ethics of Paul are not an appendix or an afterthought to his proclamation. They pervade all his epistles. They are found in abundance where he eulogizes God's grace most eloquently. Romans 12 through 15 is as important as Romans 3; Galatians 5 and 6 are as important as Galatians 1 to 4; and 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 are just as prominent as 2 Corinthians 5. But what is the relationship between the pure grace of justification and the ethical commands? How are grace, faith, and works related? Every book on Christian ethics must struggle to find the answer to these questions. Erasmus tried to give an answer in his Diatriba, and Luther

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 267

confronted the problem in his De Servo Arbitrio. Dr. Adolph Koeberle comes to the heart of his great study on the relationship between justification and sanctification when he comes to the answers to these questions. Of this relationship between grace and responsibility he writes, "All that can further be said about justification and sanctification will depend on the correct description of this relationship." He speaks of the connection between "grace and freedom" as "the most important question."<sup>7</sup>

"Saved by grace" is a familiar religious term. Lutherans especially make much of sole gratia. This is good and right, for if we would try to summarize the theological meaning of the Lutheran Reformation in one word, "grace" would be a good choice. But the term "grace" was more than a static religious concept for the sixteenth century reformers. It was a powerful and living force. It was such for them because they found in Paul's epistles *χάρις* as a rich term with many implications and many different accents. The purpose of this paper is to explore one of the many facets of *χάρις*, one vital New Testament emphasis which is consistently linked to God's grace, namely the sanctification of the Christian believer. The thesis is: "What is the relationship between God's grace in Jesus Christ and Christian deeds of sanctification in the epistles of Paul?"

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<sup>7</sup>Adolph Koeberle, The Quest for Holiness (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1939), p. 138.

### The Scope

This topic could be approached in many different ways. For example, it could be studied from the content of the four gospels or the discourses of Jesus although Jesus Himself never uses the word *χάρις* in those sayings of His which are recorded in our New Testament. The few times that the word is used in the gospels it is used in the contemporary Greek usage and not in Paul's distinctively Christian sense of favor Dei. However, the same idea that Paul expressed with *χάρις* is very definitely to be found also in the gospels. T. F. Torrance summarizes the teaching of the gospels on the relationship of grace and sanctification with Matt. 10:8, "You received without pay, give without pay." (*Δωρεάν ἔλαβετε, δωρεάν δότε.*)<sup>8</sup>

The relationship could also be established from a New Testament study of the noun, *ἀγάπη*. In many instances Paul uses *ἀγάπη* practically as a synonym for *χάρις*. *Ἀγάπη*, like *χάρις*, is often used as a personified power. It is often used in formula-like expressions and sometimes takes the place of *χάρις*.<sup>9</sup> Anders Nygren plainly affirms that "love is the same as grace." "The two words," he says, "are

<sup>8</sup>Thomas F. Torrance, The Doctrine of Grace in the Apostolic Fathers (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1948), p. 23.

<sup>9</sup>Cf. passages like 2 Cor. 13:13: "The grace (*ἡ χάρις*) of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love (*ἡ ἀγάπη*) of God . . . be with you all."

interchangeable," and it is "thoroughly misleading to draw a sharp distinction between them."<sup>10</sup> 1 John 4:10 f.: "In this is love (ἡ ἀγάπη), not that we loved God but that He loved (ἡγάπησεν) us and sent His Son to be the expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved (ἡγάπησεν) us, we also ought to love (ἀγαπᾶν) one another." Here ἀγάπη is used of God and is similar to His χάρις and is also used of man's ἀγάπη which comes from God's ἀγάπη.

The subject could also be handled within the framework of any single New Testament book such as Matthew, James, Romans, or Revelations, or from any group of books as the synoptic gospels, the general epistles, or the Johannine corpus. A rewarding study could be made from the context and implications of other terms besides χάρις and ἀγάπη. A study of the relationship to sanctification in words like δύναμις, ἐνεργέω, and παιδεύω, or in phrases like ἐν Χριστῷ would be especially profitable. Terms which contain both the word and idea of χάρις such as χαριτόω and χάρισμα are not included in this study but would certainly be relevant. For example, a study of the "spiritual gifts" (χαρίσματα) in First Corinthians, of which Paul says, "It is the same God who inspires them all in every one." (1 Cor. 12:6) would be very helpful. The "therefore" (οὖν)

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<sup>10</sup>Anders Nygren, Agape and Eros, translated from the Swedish by Philip S. Watson (London: S. P. C. K., 1953), p. 119.

connections of Rom. 12:1 and Eph. 4:1, the whole "fruit-bearing" idea, the "saint" (*ἅγιος*) concept, the preaching of Jesus, John the Baptist, Peter, or one of the other apostles all are possible approaches of study to the relationship of God's grace and man's deeds.

All of these approaches to the topic provide fruitful amplification, but the scope of this thesis is limited to the ethical implications of *χάρις* in Paul. However, even this limitation leaves room for almost unlimited expansion of detail. Pregnant passages such as Rom. 5:20 to 6:1 or 1 Cor. 15:1 in themselves provide enough material for a lengthy discussion. Therefore, in order to be complete and to include every Pauline passage in which *χάρις* occurs, the discussion of individual passages is necessarily limited. Because of the large number of passages involved, the exegesis often has to be quite sketchy. Lexical and syntactical details are not emphasized. Rather the context, the thrust of the passages in their settings, is stressed.

#### The Method

Following this introductory chapter the second chapter briefly reviews the philology, meanings, and uses of *χάρις* in the New Testament. This second chapter especially delineates the Pauline usage of the word as favor Dei with the special accent of God's sanctifying power in man. Chapters III, IV, V, VI are exegetical chapters dealing with the

passages themselves. Chapter VII outlines a few of the emphases in the relationship between *χάρις* and sanctification, and Chapter VIII contains some brief conclusions.

*Χάρις* or a form of *χάρις* occurs 154 times in the New Testament and 101 times in the Pauline epistles.<sup>11</sup> The word has many different implications and many shades of meaning. It is therefore quite difficult to make a clear-cut division of chapters based on a greater or lesser involvement of sanctification in each passage. Any such division would be quite arbitrary and subjective. Therefore, merely for the sake of convenience, the first three exegetical chapters have been roughly divided according to the various definitions of *χάρις* listed by Joseph Henry Thayer in his lexicon. Chapter VI takes up passages which require special consideration.

Thayer lists four general definitions for *χάρις*. The first is the classical Greek meaning of the word. Eph. 4:29 and Col. 4:6 are the only instances of this usage in the Pauline epistles listed by Thayer. These two passages will be treated briefly in Chapter VI on passages requiring special consideration. Thayer's second definition includes the whole favor Dei concept. The many occurrences of *χάρις* falling under this category are discussed in Chapters III and IV. The third definition that Thayer gives to *χάρις*

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<sup>11</sup>Alfred Schmoller, Handkonkordanz zum Griechischen Neuen Testament (Eighth Edition; Stuttgart: Privilegierte Wuerttembergische Bibelanstalt, 1949), pp. 517-19.

is "what is due to grace." Instances of χάρις for which Thayer gives this meaning are studied in Chapter V. The fourth definition is "thanks" and is referred to briefly only in a footnote in Chapter VI.

Unless otherwise indicated, the sixteenth edition of Nestle's Greek text and the Revised Standard Version of the English are used. The immediate context of each passage is usually included in the quotation. Italicized words in the Bible quotations are usually words which indicate or involve some aspect of sanctification.

This is a New Testament study based on the content of the New Testament. Extra-biblical material is used for illustration and amplification, but the general plan is to let the words of the New Testament passages speak for themselves in their historical and contextual settings.

In the New Testament χάρις acquires nearly all the classical usages,<sup>1</sup> acquires special religious significations for the Old Testament word  $\chi$ , and it takes on, under the influence of Christian thought, especially in Paul, certain distinctly new shades of meaning.<sup>2</sup> The special Christian

<sup>1</sup>J. Armitage Robinson, *The Greek Bible in the Vulgate* (second edition, London: Methuen, 1907), p. 321.

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Luke 1:28 for "graciousness," Luke 1:28 and 1:34 for "thanks," 1 Cor. 1:3 for "benefit," and 1 Cor. 1:3 for "bounty" or "gift."

<sup>3</sup>For a full account of the classical and Hellenistic vocabulary of the Greek of the Vulgate, see *The International Critical Commentary* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), p. 321.

## CHAPTER II

### CHARIS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

*Χάρις* is derived from the verb *χαίρειν*, "to rejoice." The verbs *χαίρειν*, *χαριτοῦν*, *χαρίζεσθαι*, and *χαριεντίζεσθαι*, the substantives *χάρισμα* and *χάρις*, the two adjectives *χαριεῖς* and *χαριστήριος*, and other words are derived from the same root.

In secular Greek literature *χάρις* has many meanings. It is used subjectively, of favorable regard or an expression of regard towards a person, a favor. It is used of a reciprocal feeling produced by favor, gratitude. And it is used adverbally, "to do something to please another" (*πρὸς χάριν τινὶ τι πράττειν*).<sup>1</sup>

In the New Testament *χάρις* inherits nearly all the classical usages,<sup>2</sup> acquires special religious significations for the Old Testament word *חסד*, and it takes on, under the influence of Christian thought, especially in Paul, certain distinctly new shades of meaning.<sup>3</sup> The special Christian

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<sup>1</sup>J. Armitage Robinson, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (Second edition; London: Macmillan, 1907), p. 221.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Luke 4:22 for "graciousness," Luke 6:32 and 1 Tim. 1:12 for "thanks," 2 Cor. 1:15 for "benefit," and 1 Cor. 16:3 for "bounty" or "gift."

<sup>3</sup>Ernest De Witt Burton, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians," The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c.1920), p. 423.

sense that Paul gives the word is the favor Dei concept, the undeserved favor of God toward the sinner. *Χάρις* is a gift of God. It is placed in absolute antithesis to *ἔργον* and *ὀφείλημα*. It is the only hope for sinful men. It is the one basis for salvation. It is founded on the incarnation, obedience, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the Son of God. It is the gift of Christ, the content of justification, and the source of all blessings.

Prof. T. F. Torrance of Edinburgh calls the Pauline use of *Χάρις* in the New Testament a "terminus technicus." In the introductory chapter of his book, The Doctrine of Grace in the Apostolic Fathers, he first discusses the meaning of *Χάρις* in Classical Greek, Philo, and the Old Testament and then moves to the New Testament and states, "While other meanings are still current, there is a special Christian sense of the word coined under the impact of Revelation to convey something quite unique."<sup>4</sup> He beautifully shows that the New Testament *Χάρις* must be understood in the light of the incarnation and the person and work of Jesus Christ. "God," he affirms, "personally intervened in human history and through sheer love that cuts clean across all questions of human merit and demerit objectively actualised His mercy in Jesus Christ." Christ is the "ground and content" of

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<sup>4</sup>Thomas F. Torrance, The Doctrine of Grace in the Apostolic Fathers (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1949), pp. 20 f.

*χάρις* in every instance of its special use. For support Torrance refers to Rom. 5:15, Rom. 5:21, 1 Cor. 1:4, 2 Tim. 2:1, and all of Paul's formal salutations.<sup>5</sup>

Although in the overwhelming majority of instances *χάρις* is used by Paul as favor Dei, the word has so many different accents that it is not always possible to tell when it is used in this distinctive manner. Burton declares:

It is not possible to determine in every case in which the grace of God or of Christ is spoken of whether this special aspect of it as manifested to the sinful and undeserving is distinctly present to the mind or not.<sup>6</sup>

Examining *χάρις* more closely, we see that there are two specific connotations of the word when used as favor Dei which are especially evident throughout Paul's epistles. These are: (1) God's imputed, forensic, and justifying favor to man, and (2) God's sanctifying power in man. Each of the two is pure grace, and each comes only from God's mercy in Jesus Christ. These two connotations are brought up again and again in articles discussing *χάρις*.

Reinhold Niebuhr speaks of grace both as Christ's imputed perfection and the God-given power for a new life. He maintains that these two aspects of grace are fundamental to Pauline thought. In The Nature and Destiny of Man he says:<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Burton, op. cit., p. 424.

<sup>7</sup>Reinhold Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man: Human Destiny (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c.1943), I, 100 f.

When we turn to the New Testament doctrine of grace, more particularly to the Pauline interpretation of it, it becomes apparent that both facets of the experience of grace--the conquest of sin in the heart of man on the one hand, and the merciful power of God over the sin which is never entirely overcome in any human heart, on the other--are fully expressed in the Pauline doctrine.

In the same connection Niebuhr quotes Schlatter as follows:

Both of these aspects . . . are rooted and united in the awareness of the divine forgiveness and the sense of a righteousness which divine grace has imparted.<sup>8</sup>

Torrance speaks of these two connotations of grace as the "primary sense" and the "applied sense." He points out that it is "the same grace . . . laying hold of men in an act of forgiving and creative love . . . an invasion of spiritual power in Jesus Christ . . . the actualisation in flesh and blood of the supernatural will and love of God." Torrance refers to Paul's "grace of apostleship" as an illustration of grace as power in man. "The grace of God in Christ Jesus had, as it were, found concrete embodiment in Paul's apostleship." There is in this apostleship an "emphasis on grace as a gift (Rom. 12:3; Rom. 15:15 f., etc.) . . . *Χάρις* is the word used for the cause and source of the Christian's status, but it is *Χάρις* essentially in its fundamental sense even here, and not as a transferred quality."<sup>9</sup>

While some of Salmond's expressions in a short article

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 101.

<sup>9</sup>Torrance, op. cit., pp. 29-32.

on *χάρις* under Eph. 1:7 in The Expositor's Greek Testament might be misunderstood in a synergistic sense, he does bring out these two connotations of grace clearly:

*χάρις* . . . is used especially of the goodness of God which bestows favour on those who have no claim or merit in themselves (Rom. 3:24; 5:17,20; 1 Cor. 15:10; Gal. 1:6, etc.), or of that free favour of God as a power which renews men and sustains them in the Christian life, aiding their efforts, keeping them from falling, securing their progress in holiness (2 Cor. 4:15; 6:1; 2 Thess. 1:12, etc.).<sup>10</sup>

These two connotations can be extended to three when God's preservation of the Christian in the state of grace is included. Lewis Sperry Chafer does this when he points out that: (1) God saves sinners by grace, (2) God keeps through grace those who are saved, and (3) God in grace teaches those who are saved and kept how they should live to His eternal glory. The second, third, and fourth chapters of his book, Grace, are entitled, "Salvation by Grace," "Safe-Keeping in Grace," and "The Life Under Grace."<sup>11</sup> Many parallels for such a division of grace could be cited.

It has been alleged that Missouri Synod Lutheran theologians in the past have emphasized the forensic and justifying grace of God almost to the complete exclusion of the sanctifying power of grace. This may be so, but examples of the latter are not completely lacking. During the bitter

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<sup>10</sup>W. Robertson Nicoll, editor, The Expositor's Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951), III, 255 f.

<sup>11</sup>Lewis Sperry Chafer, Grace (Chicago: Moody Press, c.1922).

days of the Predestinarian Controversy with the Ohio Synod, when the "purity" of forensic grace was so often and vehemently set forth, William H. T. Dau in an article written for the old Theological Quarterly pointed out that grace is also an "operative force." He said that grace is not merely "a beautiful idea" or a mere "notion" but is an "efficient agent" and "an engine of God for great ends."<sup>12</sup>

Actually the justifying and sanctifying connotations of grace comprise one force of God. Grace cannot be separated or pigeonholed into neat little categories. The "primary sense" and the "applied sense" find a common meeting ground in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Torrance puts it thus:

Grace means the primary and constitutive act in which out of free love God has intervened to set our life on a wholly new basis but also means that through faith this may be actualized in Jesus Christ, Who by the Cross and the Resurrection becomes our salvation, our righteousness, and our wisdom.<sup>13</sup>

Reinhold Niebuhr also lays stress on the basic unity of grace even though it has varying emphases. When he comments on Rom. 6:1 f.,<sup>14</sup> he shows that the two accents of grace actually complement one another. He says that it is

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<sup>12</sup>William Henry Theodore Dau, "Grace," Theological Quarterly, IX (July, 1905), 154.

<sup>13</sup>Torrance, op. cit., p. 35.

<sup>14</sup>"What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?"

important to emphasize that the two sides of the experience of grace . . . do not contradict, but support each other. To understand that the Christ in us is not a possession but a hope, that perfection is not a reality but an intention; that such peace as we know in this life is never purely the peace of achievement but the serenity of being "completely known and all forgiven;" all this does not destroy moral ardour or responsibility. On the contrary it is the only way of preventing premature completions of life or arresting the new and more terrible pride which may find its roots in the soil of humility, and of saving the Christian life from the intolerable pretension of saints who have forgotten that they are sinners.

The simple moralists will always regard this . . . with little or no comprehension. They will assert that it is merely a formula which allows us "to continue in sin that grace may abound." . . . the simple answer to this charge can be: "God forbid! How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"<sup>15</sup>

*Χάρις* is the source of justification, and *Χάρις* is the source of sanctification. Both activities are pure gifts of God, and Paul connects both activities to *Χάρις*.

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<sup>15</sup>Niebuhr, op. cit., pp. 125 f.

## CHAPTER III

### THE ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF CHARIS WHEN USED OF GOD'S UNDESERVED KINDNESS

We now proceed to an examination of the actual passages in which  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  is used. This chapter refers to passages in which  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  or a form of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  occurs twenty-seven times. Thayer defines  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  in these occurrences as "kindness which bestows upon one what he has not deserved" or "kindness by which God bestows favors even upon the ill-deserving, and grants to sinners the pardon of their offences, and bids them accept . . . eternal salvation through Christ."<sup>1</sup> Although this is the basic meaning of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  in these passages and in the entire New Testament, the word even in these instances has varying emphases which frequently include the idea of a creative ethical and moral force.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Corrected edition; New York: Harper and Bros., c.1889), p. 666.

<sup>2</sup>Although we are not including Paul's formal introductions and farewells in this chapter, they also belong here. They are all very similar, however, and the occurrences of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  in them are listed by Thayer under his second definition, that of favor Dei. For ethical implications in the formal greetings the frequent link with "mercy" ( $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ ) and "peace" ( $\epsilon\iota\omicron\rho\eta\nu\eta$ ) might be noted. There are twenty-six such occurrences of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ , found at the beginning and end of each of Paul's epistles. They are: Rom. 1:7; 16:20; 1 Cor. 1:3; 16:23; 2 Cor. 1:2; 13:13; Gal. 1:3; 6:18; Eph. 1:2; 6:24; Phil. 1:2; 4:23; Col. 1:2; 4:18; 1 Thess. 1:1; 1 Thess. 5:28; 2 Thess. 1:2; 3:18; 1 Tim. 1:2; 6:21; 2 Tim. 1:2; 4:22; Titus 1:4; 3:15; Philemon 3, 25.

Perhaps the classic statements of the Apostle Saint Paul on grace are in his Epistle to the Romans. The concept of χάρις looms large and important in this epistle. The word occurs twenty-two times in Romans. Twelve of these twenty-two occurrences are discussed in this chapter.

Romans 3:24

They are justified by his grace (τῆ αὐτοῦ χάριτι) as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

Romans 4:4

Now to one who works, his wages are not reckoned as a gift (κατὰ χάριν) but as his due.

Romans 4:16

That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace (κατὰ χάριν) and be guaranteed to all his descendants.

Romans 11:5 f.

So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace (χάριτος), but if it is by grace (χάριτι), it is no longer on the basis of works. otherwise grace (ἢ χάρις) would no longer be grace (χάρις).

Galatians 1:6

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace (ἐν χάριτι) of Christ and turning to a different gospel.

2 Timothy 1:8 f.

Do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but take your share of suffering for the gospel in the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not in virtue of our works but in virtue of his own purpose and the grace (χάριν) which he gave us in Christ Jesus ages ago.

In these six passages χάρις is used in its distinctive

New Testament sense. Rom. 3:24 is well-known as a source for the teaching of salvation by grace through faith alone. In this passage δωρεάν and διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ bring out grace's sola and Christological character. In Romans 4:4 κατὰ ὀφείλημα is placed in contrast to κατὰ χάριν; Romans 11:6 contrasts ἐξ ἔργων with χάριτι. Gal. 1:6 and 2 Tim. 1:9 bring out the fact that Christians are called to salvation ἐν χάριτι. There may be ethical implications in the concept of δικαιοσύνη which is found in the context of Romans 3:24; 4:4; and 4:16, but if so, it is very indirect and not immediately related to χάρις. The mention of "testifying to our Lord," "suffering for the gospel," and "the power of God" in 2 Tim. 1:8 might be noted in passing. Beyond this, there are no ethical implications for χάρις in these passages.

#### Romans 5:15-6:4

But the free gift (χάρισμα) is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace (ἡ χάρις) of God and the free gift in the grace (ἐν χάριτι) of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the effect of that one man's sin. For the judgement following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift (χάρισμα) following many trespasses brings justification. If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace (τῆς χάριτος) and the free gift of righteousness (τῆς δωρεᾶς δικαιοσύνης) reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

Then as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous. Law came in, to increase the

trespass; but where sin increased, grace (ἡ χάρις) abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace (ἡ χάρις) also might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace (ἡ χάρις) may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Paul's concept of δικαιοσύνη, mentioned above, ought to be examined a little more carefully in this section of Romans. This term has been subjected to much misunderstanding throughout the Christian era. Paul, however, makes it very clear that God's righteousness is given freely, without debt, merit, or desert on the part of man. Sanday and Headlam comment on Rom. 5:17 as follows: "Every term here points to that gift of righteousness here described as something external to the man himself, not wrought within him but coming to him, imputed not infused . . . it is a gift which man receives." And on the phrase, "through the one man Jesus Christ," they add, "through the union with Him which follows (the state of righteousness through Christ's death) . . . his whole being is vitalized and transfigured through time into eternity."<sup>3</sup>

Paul's startling statement of 5:20, "where sin increased, grace abounded all the more," prepares the way for a logical

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<sup>3</sup>William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans," The International Critical Commentary (Fifth edition; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895), p. 141.

question, "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?" Paul mentions the same difficulty several chapters earlier in this way: "And why not do evil that good may come?--as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just." (Rom. 3:8) Reason would expect such an answer to pure and undeserved grace, but Paul's answer to this reasonable question is, "By no means!" Grace is not reasonable. The antinomian misunderstanding of the truth, "which has always accompanied Paulinism and Lutheranism like a dark shadow,"<sup>4</sup> Paul unequivocally challenges and completely discredits here. Paul meets the antinomians face to face and destroys their unholy rationalizing. Their assumption is wrong. The end of grace is not license and freedom to sin wildly. The end of grace is rather that we might walk in newness of life! Baptism we call a means of grace; and it is by baptism into Christ's atoning death and resurrection to a new life that grace finds its fulfillment. Righteous actions must follow the great gift of God's righteousness. "Grace," says Godet in discussing this passage, "is not the dismal prerogative of being able to sin with impunity; it is, on the contrary, the means of overcoming sin and acting holily."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Adolph Koeberle, The Quest for Holiness, translated from the third German edition by John C. Mattes (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1938), p. 166.

<sup>5</sup>F. Godet, Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, translated from the French by A. Cusin (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, n.d.), I, 196.

Anders Nygren quotes this passage when he discusses Tertullian's misconception of true ἀγάπη. Tertullian was unable to conceive of human ἀγάπη except as something based on justice, fear of punishment, or hope of reward. The paradox of ἀγάπη unmotivated by legal sanctions was incomprehensible to Tertullian. Nygren describes this weakness of Tertullian and then goes on to quote Rom. 6:1 and to add, "It is indicative of Tertullian's blindness to the Agape motif that he can attach no meaning to this immediate [sic] rejection of sin, which needs no mediate, egocentric motivation, but arises directly out of the experience of God's grace."<sup>6</sup>

There are ethical implications to the use of χάρις in this passage. Paul's whole line of thought demands it.

#### 2 Corinthians 8:9

For you know the grace (τὴν χάριν) of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.

This verse is a parenthesis in Paul's two great stewardship chapters, 2 Cor. 8 and 9. The Corinthians are to be motivated by the wonderful example of the Lord Jesus, who gave His all. Although the whole context is ethical, the only overtone of sanctification that is right in this verse and that might be connected indirectly to χάρις is in the

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<sup>6</sup>Anders Nygren, Agape and Eros, translated from the Swedish by Philip S. Watson (London: S. P. C. K., 1953), pp. 346 f.

phrase, "so that . . . you might become rich." Sanctification could be included in this "richness," which is a comprehensive statement of all that Christ signifies for the believer. Heinrich A. W. Meyer says, "These riches are the reconciliation, justification, illumination, sanctification, peace, joy, certainty of eternal life. . . ."7

Galatians 1:15 f.

But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace (*διὰ τῆς χάριτος*), was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood.

Grace caused Paul's eternal election. Although there are no clear indications of ethical power denoted in the use of *χάρις* here, the purpose of God's gracious election and the revelation of the Son to Paul was "that I might preach him among the Gentiles." Gospel preaching is certainly a work of sanctification made possible only by God's grace. Of his own accord man would never go out and proclaim the "foolishness" of preaching. (Cf. 1 Cor. 15:10) Then also, the antithesis to Paul's new life of preaching the Gospel was his old life of persecution. "I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it." (v. 13) The eternal call of God *διὰ τῆς χάριτος* and the revelation of God's Son were the factors that changed Paul's whole life.

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<sup>7</sup>Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Hand-book to the Epistles to the Corinthians, translated from the fourth edition of the German by Douglas Bannerman (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, c.1884), pp. 584 f.

## Galatians 2:20 f.

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace (τῆν χάριν) of God; for if justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose.

Two antithetical interpretations of the Gospel, one which is false--justification by the law--and the one which is the truth--justification by grace--form the framework of Paul's Epistle to the Galatians. This passage contains the essence of the epistle. "To seek justification by the works of the law, says Paul, is to reject the grace of God. Christianity is not a religion of law. "I do not [by a religion of law and works] nullify the grace of God." (v. 21)

The passage emphasizes living the kind of life that God wants, a life lived for God, but, and it is a big "but," "it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Works do not save, but the grace in Christ which saves must produce works. It is a matter of cause and effect. First comes grace; then comes the life. Luther remarked concerning verse 19, "The tree makes the apple; the apple does not make the tree."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Martin Luther, A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, abridged translation from the Latin by Theodore Graebner (Third edition; Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), p. 79.

## Ephesians 1:4-8

He chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will to the praise of his glorious grace (τῆς χάριτος) which he freely bestowed (ἐχάριτωσεν) on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace (τῆς χάριτος) which he lavished upon us.

This is a rich and interesting passage. Both the election and redemption of sinful man by God are brought about by the riches of His grace. These mighty cosmic interventions of God in the lives of men were done "in love," "to the praise of his glorious grace," and "according to the riches of his grace."

The dynamic impact of God's will upon mortal flesh is completely Christocentric. Note the many phrases referring to Christ in verses three to nine of Ephesians chapter one: "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" and "in Christ" (v. 3) and "in him" (v. 4); "through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will" (v. 5); "to the praise of his glorious grace" and "in the Beloved" (v. 6); "in him," "redemption through his blood," and "his grace" (v. 7); and "in Christ" (v. 9). This is the foundation and content of New Testament

χάρις.

Whether ethical action and sanctification are directly connected to χάρις in this passage is uncertain. The drift of the thought is that God "chose us . . . that we should be holy and blameless before him . . . through Jesus Christ . . .

to the praise of his glorious grace." If "holy and blameless" (*ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους*) refer to sanctification and the living of the Christian life, this action would quite clearly be connected with God's grace here. It is an exegetical question whether Paul here has in view the standing of the believers or their character, whether he is thinking of them as being justified in the sight of God or chosen for regeneration and sanctification. Commentators are not agreed in their answer to this problem, and there is sound support on both sides.<sup>9</sup> Westcott notes that the addition of *ἀνεγκλήτους* to *ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους* in the parallel passage of Col. 1:22 gives the passage a definite moral and ethical coloring there.<sup>10</sup> The adjective *ἀμώμος* may mean both "without blame" and "without blemish," but both senses may have ethical applications.<sup>11</sup> Justification and sanctification are probably both included in the phrase.

Some interpreters place the words *ἐν ἀγάπῃ* at the end of verse four ("holy and blameless in love") instead of at the beginning of verse five ("He destined us in love"). For example, both Salmond and Westcott do this whereas the Revised Standard Version and Nestle's text connect *ἐν ἀγάπῃ* with

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<sup>9</sup>W. Robertson Nicoll, The Expositor's Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951), III, 249 f.

<sup>10</sup>B. F. Westcott, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1950), p. 9.

<sup>11</sup>Nicoll, loc. cit.

verse five. The former punctuation would make it man's ἀγάπη instead of God's and would add to the ethical force of this verse.

Westcott makes this helpful comment which brings out the ethical aspect of this passage:

The grace of God is, as is explained in the next clause, the free and bounteous goodness with which He has visited us in His Son. The glory of this grace is the manifestation of its power as men are enabled to perceive it. Each fresh manifestation calls out a fresh acknowledgment of its surpassing excellence. Christians therefore in whom it is effective are set to reveal the perfections of Christ--the Son made known in the many sons--and by revealing them, to call out the thankful adoration of men. Compare Phil. 1:11.<sup>12</sup>

At any rate, whatever the chief emphasis of ἀγίους καὶ ἀμώμους may be and wherever ἐν ἀγάπῃ correctly belongs, both grace as favor and grace as ethical power in that favor are evident here. All praise is attributed to this grace, this χάρις.

#### Ephesians 2:3-10

Among these we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of body and mind, and so we were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace [χάριτι] you have been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace (τῆς χάριτος) in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace (χάριτι) you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift

<sup>12</sup>Westcott, op. cit., p. 10.

of God--not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

The power of God is mentioned in the last part of chapter one in connection with Christ's resurrection and exaltation. In the first verses of chapter two the raising of the Ephesians from the death of sin is accomplished by the same power. This power also pours itself forth in a gracious new life cleansed from sin and abounding in good works.

*Χάρις* dominates this passage as the source of energy for all the good that is mentioned. The term is used three times in the paragraph--in verses three and eight as the instrument of salvation ("by grace you have been saved") and in verse seven the "riches of his grace" are spoken of as shown in "the coming ages" as a result of God's making us alive with Him (*συνεζωοποίησεν*), raising us up with Him (*συνῆγειρεν*), and making us to sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus (*συνεκάθισεν*).

Again in this passage the whole concept of *Χάρις* is intimately linked to the person and work of Jesus Christ. Note the phrases: "with Christ" (v. 5); "with him," and "in Christ Jesus" (v. 6); "in Christ Jesus" (v. 7); and "in Christ Jesus" (v. 10). Also there are analogies to Christ's atoning work in the phrases: "made us alive together with Christ," "raised us up with him," and "made us sit with him

in heavenly places."<sup>13</sup>

Whether there is in the first part of this passage a reference to good works and sanctified Christian living depends largely upon the interpretation of *συνεζωοποίησεν*, *συνήγειρεν*, and *συνεκάθισεν*. The justification of the sinner is undoubtedly the primary meaning here. The Colossians parallel (2:12 f.) associates quickening with the forgiveness of sins and the blotting out of the handwriting. But when we see that there is a contrast in this passage between the old life of worldly lusts and the Christian's new life, we see that this quickening includes regeneration. It is the giving of a new life of imputed righteousness as well as the power for righteous living. A word like *συνήγειρεν* probably involves many things--conversion, a moral resurrection, and the future bodily resurrection.<sup>14</sup> The chief emphasis remains, however, on the believer's total union with Christ.

Westcott compares the *τὸ ὑπερβάλλον πλοῦτος τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ* of this passage to *τὸ ὑπερβάλλον μέγεθος τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ* of 1:19 and comments, "His grace corresponds with His power."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>The close connection between *χάρις* and the person and work of Christ is very evident in many of the passages discussed in this thesis. It is to be remembered that even though the emphasis is not always pointed out in these pages, it is usually present in the passages and always implied by *χάρις*.

<sup>14</sup>Nicoll, *op. cit.*, pp. 287 f. Cf. also Rom. 13:11 ff.

<sup>15</sup>Westcott, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

Although *χάρις* is not mentioned in verse ten, the good works Paul speaks of there are the object of God's grace mentioned in verses three, seven, and eight. The connection is made by a *γάρ*. "For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." *Ποίημα*, "workmanship," refers to an actual making. Christians are made by God's grace for good works. Salmond comments:

We ourselves then having been created anew by God, and good works being the object [sic] to which the new creation looked, not the cause that led to it, all must be of grace, not of deeds (*ἔργων*), and there can be no room for boasting. . . . That they are of God's origination, and not of our own action and merit, is implied in the fact that we had ourselves to be made a new creation in Christ with a view to them.<sup>16</sup>

Although the power for good works is in God's grace, Christians are not machine-like automatons involuntarily doing good. No necessity constrains the Christian, but "in Christ" and by God's grace he fulfills his part and by true service realizes his freedom. The passage closes with the words, "that we should walk in them." This brings us face to face with one of the greatest apparent paradoxes of the Christian faith--the existence of man's complete freedom and God's sovereign grace side by side. Lewis Sperry Chafer's words do not resolve but do explain the paradox. They can also summarize the discussion of this passage.

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<sup>16</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 290.

In this passage the only order which can exist between divine grace and human merit is made clear. Man is permitted to do nothing until God has done all that His grace designs. "Good works" grow out of, and are made possible by, the gracious work of God. To this exact order all revelation concerning divine grace is in agreement.<sup>17</sup>

#### Philippians 1:7

It is right for me to feel thus about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace (*τῆς χάριτος*), both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.

*Χάρις* is used here basically as God's undeserved favor toward man, but this favor includes the power which enabled the Philippians to suffer for the gospel and therewith to defend and confirm the same gospel. Suffering for, defending, and confirming the gospel are certainly works of sanctification.<sup>18</sup>

The Philippians had shown their love for Paul in a special way, and Paul in turn loved them with a special love. The love of the Philippians was a sharing of grace with him. In his comments on this passage Kennedy says of the Philippians, "Their love and kindness towards him and his great work, even at the darkest moments in his career, are proof enough that they share along with him in the grace of God."<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup>Lewis Sperry Chafer, Grace (Chicago: Moody Press, c.1922), pp. 9 f.

<sup>18</sup>H. A. W. Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Hand-book to the Epistles to the Philippians and Colossians, and to Philemon, translated from the fourth edition of the German by John C. Moore (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, c.1885), p. 16.

<sup>19</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 420.

A study of the larger context is also helpful, for only two verses further Paul begins this beautiful description of his prayers for the increase of sanctification among the Philippians:

And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruits of righteousness which come through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God. (Phil. 1:9-11)

#### Colossians 1:3-8

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love which you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and growing—so among yourselves, from the day you heard and understood the grace (*τὴν χάριν*) of God in truth, . . . Epaphras . . . has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

This passage is parallel to the Philippians passage above. Paul begins by thanking God for the faith and love which he had heard was being manifested in his Colossian congregation. "His faith and love had come from the "word of truth, the gospel," which the Colossians had heard from Paul. And this gospel, Paul attests, is bearing fruit and growing wherever it is preached even as it has among the Colossians "from the day you heard and understood the grace (*τὴν χάριν*) of God in truth." Grace is here spoken of as being "heard and understood." It is synonymous with the gospel and has brought about the encouraging results that are

mentioned. First comes the gospel of God's unmerited favor or *χάρις*, and then comes growth and the fruits of Christian living. The connection is clear. As in the Epistle to the Philippians, Paul also mentions his continued prayers that this sanctification which the Colossians had so wonderfully evidenced might grow and increase. (vv. 9-12)

2 Thessalonians 2:16 f.

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace (*ἐν χάριτι*), comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and deed.

This verse is a benediction at the end of 2 Thessalonians, chapter two. Paul puts a number of afterthoughts into chapter three, after which he adds a second benediction.

*Ἐν χάριτι* is directly connected to God's giving of *αἰωνίαν καὶ ἐλπίδα ἀγαθῶν*. In other words, God in Christ gave us righteousness and holiness of justification here called "eternal comfort and good hope" through His grace, but this passage implies that the establishment of the heart in "every good work and deed" is also done *ἐν χάριτι*. The God who has done the one will assuredly do the other, as surely as He is the God of grace.

1 Timothy 1:14

And the grace (*ἡ χάρις*) of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

This is the only time *χάρις* is used in First Timothy. The verb *ὑπερπλέοντασεν* indicates the superlative and overflowing richness of *χάρις*. As in Rom. 5:15 ff. grace is

represented as outweighing sin. Bengel contrasts Paul's "faith" in this verse with his former unbelief referred to in verse thirteen and his "love" with his former blasphemy mentioned in the same verse.<sup>20</sup> Most commentators agree that the "love . . . in Christ Jesus" here does not refer to Christ's love but to the Christian's love, an outward manifestation of God's grace, the ethical result of God's love in man, the fruit of grace. Love finds its source in *Χάρις*.

Titus 2:11-13

For the grace ( *ἡ χάρις* ) of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world, awaiting our blessed hope.

This passage clearly speaks of sanctification. If we would want a locus classicus for this thesis, Titus 2:11-13 would be a good choice. Paul here lists three aspects of the Christian life which are motivated by God's educative (*παιδεύουσα*) grace. These are denying the Devil and sinful lusts (*ἀρνησάμενοι . . .*), living a positive and clean Christian life (*ἡγίσωμεν . . .*), and awaiting the blessed hope of the *παρουσία* (*προσδεχόμενοι . . .*).<sup>21</sup> All of this is preceded by the appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ (*ἔπεφάνη γὰρ ἡ χάρις*). This Christmas epistle shows the richness of *Χάρις*, God's gift to mankind. This grace has appeared "for the salvation of all men,"

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., IV, 97.

<sup>21</sup>Note the force of the aorist participles.

and this includes justification and sanctification, both acts of God.

The setting and context of this passage is also helpful in understanding what grace is to bring and teach. Verses one to ten, the section immediately preceding this passage, contain a long list of Christian virtues which befit sound doctrine and which Titus is to teach faithfully. The same note is continued in chapter three. Titus 2:11-13 stands in a thoroughly ethical portion of the epistle.

#### Titus 3:3-8

For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by men and hating one another; but when the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, so that we be justified by his grace (χάριτι) and become heirs in hope of eternal life. The saying is sure. I desire you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to apply themselves to good deeds; these are excellent and profitable to men.

The connection between *χάρις* and sanctification is indirect in this passage, but there is a link. "The solidly ethical content of Titus two and three mentioned above is also to be noted here. "The saying" (ὁ λόγος) of verse eight does not refer to any isolated statement but to the entire doctrinal content of the epistle. The result of "insisting on these things" should be that "those who have believed in God may be careful to apply themselves to good deeds."

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF CHARIS

#### WHEN USED OF

#### GOD'S UNDESERVED KINDNESS ACTIVE IN THE LIVES OF MEN

The twelve occurrences of *Χάρις* examined in this chapter for ethical implications are also listed by Thayer under the general favor Dei definition. However, in these passages Thayer sees more clearly the sanctifying power of *Χάρις* and adds the definition, "the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of Christian virtues."<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to note that five of these twelve occurrences are found in Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians.

#### Romans 6:14 f.

For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under the law but under grace (*ὑπὸ χάρις*). What then? Are we to sin because we are not under the law but under grace (*ὑπὸ χάρις*)? By no means! Do you not know . . . you are slaves . . . either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? . . . you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Corrected edition; New York: Harper and Bros., c.1889), p. 666.

to which you were committed, . . . have become slaves of righteousness. . . . so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification.

This passage with the question, "Are we to sin because we are not under the law but under grace?" is very similar to Rom. 6:1 treated in the last chapter. Being under law (ὑπὸ νόμον) is the opposite of being under grace (ὑπὸ χάριν). It is not as a slave to the commandment of the law that the Christian leads a good life and faithfully continues in the Christian virtues. The Christian is living "under grace," and there must naturally follow from this life under grace "obedience," "righteousness,"<sup>2</sup> and "sanctification." This unit of thought is concluded with verses 22-23:

But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 6:22 f.)

#### 1 Corinthians 15:10

But by the grace of God (χάριτι δὲ θεοῦ) I am what I am, and his grace (ἡ χάρις) toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace (ἡ χάρις) of God which is with me.

All the Apostles worked hard, but Paul writes that he "worked harder than any of them." This was neither self-praise nor criticism of the other Apostles. Paul rather

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<sup>2</sup>The thrust of this passage indicates that this δικαιοσύνη does not mean justification in the forensic sense but rather righteousness as Christian virtue.

was thinking of the result of his labors, and from the witness of the Acts and the epistles we cannot deny the amazing results of these labors. But the reason, says Paul, is that "the grace of God is with me (σὺν ἑμοί)." "By the grace of God I am what I am." All credit goes to the power of God's grace. Grace is the power, and Paul is the instrument of the power. Grace is not "in vain" or empty (κενή). It produces living, growing, sanctifying results. It produces hard work and good deeds.

Yet grace is not a fatalistic, deterministic, or coercive force, for Paul writes, "I worked (ἐκοπιῶσα)." We continually meet this apparent paradox of divine grace and human responsibility in the New Testament. The scriptural answer is Paul's answer--that of giving all credit to grace.

Adolph Koeberle ends his longest and perhaps his best chapter, "Sanctification as the Answer of the Justified Sinner," with the words:

So the sanctification of the Christian is always expressed by two statements; by the "Confiteor" and by the Gloria in excelsis; by the confession, "By the grace of God I am that I am," and by the words of the prayer, "that His grace may not be given me in vain."<sup>3</sup>

2 Corinthians 1:12

For our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience that we have behaved in the world, and still more toward you, with holiness and godly sincerity, not by earthly

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<sup>3</sup>Adolph Koeberle, The Quest for Holiness, translated from the third German edition by John C. Mattes (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1938), p. 205.

wisdom but by the grace (ἐν χάριτι) of God.

As one begins to read this verse, he may sit up with a start. Paul and Timothy write to their Corinthian friends and boast of their holy, sincere, and godly behavior! "How," thinks the reader, "is this compatible with the humility by which a Christian should give all credit and honor to God?" The answer comes in the next breath, "not by earthly wisdom (ἐν σοφίᾳ σαρκικῇ) but by the grace of God (ἐν χάριτι θεοῦ)." <sup>4</sup> Paul's great concept of χάρις dispels the reader's alarm. This is Christianity, and this is Pauline theology. All credit for godliness and sanctification as well as salvation for eternity goes to God's grace in Christ Jesus.

#### 2 Corinthians 4:15

For it is for your sake, so that as grace (ἡ χάρις) extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

The Greek construction of this passage is difficult, <sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Lenski says that boasting as Paul and Timothy did here is "one way of glorifying God for what He has produced in us and through us." He adds, "Some people are so humble that their humility fails to acknowledge with joy what God has done." R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Epistle to the Corinthians (Columbus, Ohio: Wartburg Press, c. 1946), p. 335.

<sup>5</sup>The difficulties include the questions whether περισειύη is transitive or intransitive and how the participle πλεονάσασα and the phrase διὰ τῶν πλειόνων fit into the meaning. The play on the two words χάρις and εὐχαριστία, and the alliteration πλεονάσασα . . . πλειόνων are also interesting points in the Greek of this passage.

but the Revised Standard Version clearly gives the meaning, namely that grace causes thanksgiving to increase. Giving thanks is an exercise of Christian sanctification, and this passage declares that *χάρις* is the power of God in people which creates such thanksgiving.

Paul's witness concerning his afflictions (4:7-11), the relevance of Jesus' death and resurrection (4:14), and the power of grace in this verse is followed by verse sixteen, "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day." The thrust of the passage implies that it is the gospel ("the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ") and "grace" which brings about this inner renewal.

### 2 Corinthians 6:1-3

Working together with him, then, we entreat you not to accept the grace (*την χάριν*) of God in vain. For he says, "At the acceptable time I have listened to you, and helped you on the day of salvation." Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

With deep concern Paul entreats the Corinthians not to receive the grace of God "in vain" (*εις κενόν*). The assumption seems to be that there are some who hear of God's grace but do not let it penetrate them with its power. The opposite of receiving grace "in vain" is accepting it and letting its power revitalize. In his comments on this passage H. A. Meyer says that grace cannot be received "without corresponding moral results." Bernard in The Expositor's Greek

Testament makes these comments on this passage:

Note that "the grace of God" may be "received" in vain; it is offered, independently of man's faith and obedience, but it will not profit these. The choice in the Anglican Liturgy of vv. 1-10 as the Epistle for the First Sunday in Lent, when the Ember Collect is said on behalf of those to be ordained in the next week, is especially happy; the magnificent description of the characteristics and the conditions of a faithful Christian ministry (vv. 4-10) being prefaced by the solemn warning of vv. 1-3.<sup>6</sup>

The context of this passage is a pertinent study, for a few verses further Paul lists a few of grace's effects which he knew from his own experience. These are, "purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, . . . the power of God; . . . the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left."  
(2 Cor. 6:6 f.)

#### 2 Corinthians 9:11-15

You will be enriched in every way for great generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God; for the rendering of this service not only supplies the wants of the saints but also overflows in many thanksgivings to God. Under the test of this service, you will glorify God by your obedience in acknowledging the gospel of Christ, and by the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others; while they long for you, because of the surpassing grace (χρηὶς) of God in you. Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift.

These verses are the closing sentences in Paul's two chapters concerning the collection for the Jerusalem poor. In their very generous response to the plea for funds the

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<sup>6</sup>W. Robertson Nicoll, editor, The Expositor's Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951), III, 74.

Corinthian Christians had glorified God (δοξάζοντες τὸν θεόν) with a moving demonstration of obedience in acknowledging the gospel of Christ (ἐπὶ τῇ ὑποταγῇ τῆς ὁμολογίας ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον). Their generosity was both a confession of their faith (ὁμολογία) and a proof of their service (διὰ τῆς δοκιμῆς διακονίας ταύτης). The whole effort was a manifestation of the "surpassing grace of God" (τὴν ὑπερβάλλουσαν χάριν) among the Corinthians. This outstanding display of grace operating at Corinth caused the recipients of the generosity to "long for" and "pray for" the Corinthians.

The doxology of verse fifteen, "Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift," undoubtedly refers to the grace of God and these fruits which flow from it. Paul ends the "collection chapters" with a reference to χάρις as he has begun them. (8:1)

#### 2 Corinthians 12:8-10

Three times I besought the Lord about this, that it should leave me; but he said to me, "My grace (ἡ χάρις) is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." I will all the more gladly boast of my weakness, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Whether it was malaria, bad eyesight, a deformed body, a poor voice, or any other malady, Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was a heavy burden to bear. But Paul found an unseen source of strength to bear him up under his weakness, to keep him

from dissatisfaction and grumbling, even to help him to rejoice and boast in his troubles. This source of strength was *χάρις*.

Bearing a cross nobly and patiently is one of the hardest and most convincing of Christian virtues. It is an act of sanctification. And here its source is declared to be *χάρις*. "My grace is sufficient for you," insists God. Grace must have been a tremendous power in the life of Paul to produce the results that it did.

The power (*δύναμις*) of God and the grace (*χάρις*) of God are practically synonymous in this passage. Lenski comments, "the power is generally identified with 'my grace.' Strictly speaking, the Lord's grace possesses power and works and operates in and through us with power."<sup>7</sup>

The closing clause of this passage, "For when I am weak, then I am strong," brings to mind Rom. 5:20, "Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more." Grace brings forgiveness in Christ. Grace brings strength in weakness. And grace always brings the opposite of sin.

#### Galatians 5:4-6

You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen from grace (*τῆς χάριτος*). For through the Spirit, by faith, we wait for the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision is of any avail, but faith working through love.

The two antithesis discusses by Paul in Galatians,

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<sup>7</sup>Lenski, op. cit., p. 1305.

justification by the law and justification by grace, come out in this passage. In chapter two Paul defends his doctrine of justification by saying, "I do not nullify the grace of God; for if justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose" (2:21). Here he warns those who put their trust in observance of the law for their justification, "you have fallen from grace." But, implies Paul, we who trust in grace "through the Spirit, by faith, . . . wait for the hope of righteousness (δικαιοσύνη)."

The ethical implications of χάρις in this passage are indirect. "Righteousness" (δικαιοσύνη) is probably chiefly God's imputed righteousness in Christ which avails at the judgement although the claim is made that it has "reference both to ethical character and forensic standing."<sup>8</sup> An ethical accent is evident in verse six which speaks of "faith working through love" (δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη) and not "circumcision nor uncircumcision" that "is of any avail."

2 Thessalonians 1:11 f.

To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his call, and may fulfill every good resolve and work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace (κατὰ τὴν χάριν) of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

A mere reading of this passage in Greek or English makes

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<sup>8</sup>Ernest De Witt Burton, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians," The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c.1920), p. 278.

it clear that the worthiness of the Christian calling and "every good resolve and work of faith" that Paul refers to in this passage are "by his power" (ἐν δυνάμει) and "according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ" (κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). The content of Paul's prayer is that God may make the Thessalonians worthy of their call, that He fulfill every good resolve and work of faith in them, and that this be done by His power and by His grace in Jesus Christ. The dynamic source of power and the motivating energy of God's χάρις in man's sanctification is made crystal clear by this passage.

### The Spiritual Condition of Grace

Romans 8:1-5

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace

## CHAPTER V

### THE ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF CHARIS WHEN USED OF SOMETHING DUE TO GRACE

The third definition which Thayer gives to *χάρις* is "what is due to grace." This meaning is very closely related to the favor Dei definition used by Thayer for the occurrences of *χάρις* discussed in Chapters III and IV above, but it has more emphasis on the subjective something which is in the Christian as a result of God's favor the condition of grace, the capacity or ability due to grace, such as the apostolic office, etc.<sup>1</sup> This chapter refers to fourteen occurrences of *χάρις* used according to Thayer's third definition. These are divided under three headings: (1) the spiritual condition of grace, (2) the grace of the apostleship, and (3) the capacity and ability due to grace. Some of the passages listed by Thayer under the definition, "what is due to grace," are treated in the next chapter on passages requiring special consideration.

#### The Spiritual Condition of Grace

Romans 5:1-5

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Corrected edition; New York: Harper and Bros., c.1899), p. 666.

with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand (ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΧΑΡΙΝ ΤΑΥΤΗΝ ΕΝ ᾧ ἘΣΤΗΚΑΜΕΝ), and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given us.

The "grace in which we stand" clearly includes the rich results of sanctification outlined by Paul here. When Paul speaks of rejoicing in hope, rejoicing in suffering, endurance, character, and God's love poured into the heart through the Spirit, he is speaking from personal experience. This passage immediately follows Paul's great sole gratia chapters on justification by faith in the first part of Romans. Here Paul recognizes *Χάρις* as the source of the Christian's sanctified life. Living a life of Christian virtues is living a life in a constant state of grace. The theologians call this state the "status gratiae."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Schlatter expands Paul's thoughts on our "standing" in grace with the comments: "Es müssen uns weiter die Wege geöffnet werden zu Christus hin, so dass wir die Gnade hören, merken und fassen können. Durch die Verkündigung des Evangeliums, durch den Dienst der Apostel, durch die Arbeit der Kirche, in Zusammenwirken innerer und äußerer Erlebnisse und Lehren werden wir hinzugeleitet zur Gnade, die uns in Christus bereitet ist. Auch diese Hinzuführung ist sein Werk. So bildet die Fortsetzung seiner Arbeit auf Erden, die immer wiederholte Erneuerung seines Rufs: Kommt her zu mir alle, den er nun als der Verherrlichte ins Werk setzt mit einer die Welt umfassenden Tätigkeit. Dadurch verschafft er uns die Aufrichtung aus unserem Fall und die Bewahrung vor dem uns verderbenden Sturz; nun stehen wir." U. Schlatter, "Die Briefe des Paulus," Erläuterungen zum Neuen Testament, II (Stuttgart: Calver Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1921), pp. 66 f.

In a Bibliotheca Sacra article entitled "Grace in the Book of Romans", Roy L. Aldrich first explains God's imputed forensic grace and then comments briefly on Romans 5:1-11 under the heading, "Standing in Grace." This section, says Aldrich, could be called, "The Results of Justification." He points out that "The ultimate explanation of our standing in grace is grace." And the "grace in which we stand" is always "in Christ." "If the believer did not stand in grace, the slightest sin of omission or commission would be his undoing."<sup>3</sup>

2 Timothy 2:1-5

You then, my son, be strong in the grace (ἐν τῇ χάριτι) that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Take your share of suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

Basically, grace here has its simplest theological meaning, that of the unmerited gift of divine favor that comes from God,<sup>4</sup> but it also is the "status gratiae" of Romans 5:2. The ethical implications come from the imperative infinitive, "be strong" (ἐνδυναμοῦσθαι), and the immediate context: "What you have heard from me . . . entrust to faithful men. . . . Take your share of suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus." The ethical instructions in

<sup>3</sup>Roy L. Aldrich, "Grace in the Book of Romans," Bibliotheca Sacra, XCVII (1940), 224 f.

<sup>4</sup>Robertson Nicoll, editor, The Expositor's Greek Testament, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951), IV, 100.

the last part of the chapter and in chapters three and four of the epistle might also be noted.<sup>5</sup>

### The Grace of the Apostleship

The six passages under consideration under this heading also use *χάρις*, according to Thayer, as something that is "due to grace." However, the idea of *χάρις* in these instances is specifically "the power to undertake and administer the apostolic office."<sup>6</sup>

#### Romans 1:1-6

Paul . . . called to be an apostle, . . . Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace (*χάρις*) and apostleship to bring about obedience to the faith for the sake of his name among all nations, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

This passage is part of Paul's pregnant six-verse introduction to Romans. In six verses Paul mentions his slavery to Christ, his call, his apostleship, the Old Testament promise of the gospel, the descendancy of Jesus from David, the Son of God, the power of the Spirit, the resurrection from the dead, obedience of faith, and the apostleship to all nations. We find almost the whole of Christian theology implicit in these few phrases.

The point which immediately concerns us, however, is the close link between grace and Paul's apostleship. Grace

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<sup>5</sup>In addition to the two Pauline passages discussed here compare 1 Peter 5:12 and 2 Peter 3:18.

<sup>6</sup>Thayer, loc. cit.

and apostleship are treated almost as synonyms here by Paul as he says, ". . . Jesus Christ, our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship . . ."

The term, "obedience of faith," may have ethical colorings. One definition is that of Sanday and Headlam who say that the phrase, ὑπακοήν πίστεως, as used here in Romans does not yet mean following a certain "body of doctrine" but is the "lively act or impulse of adhesion to Christ" or "an act of assent by which the Gospel is appropriated."<sup>7</sup>

Romans 12:5 and 6 ff.

For by the grace (διὰ τῆς χάριτος) given to me I bid every one among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith which God has assigned him.

Having gifts (χάρισματά) that differ according to the grace (κατὰ τὴν χάριν) given to us, let us use them: if prophecy . . . service . . . teaching . . . exhortation . . . liberality . . . zeal . . . mercy . . . cheerfulness.

These two occurrences of χάρις come at the beginning of Paul's great ethical section of Romans, chapters twelve to sixteen, which emphasize sanctification. The order of Romans is the order of grace. God's doing comes before man's doing. The χάρις of God in Christ Jesus precedes the χάρισματά given to men. Before we appropriate Paul's ethics

<sup>7</sup>William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans," The International Critical Commentary (Fifth edition; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895), p. 11.

we must take to heart passages like Romans 4:5, which give all credit to God's grace in Christ Jesus. The  $\delta\iota\alpha\ \tau\eta\varsigma\ \chi\alpha\rho\iota\tau\omega\varsigma$  of 12:1 refers to the content of chapters one to eight. The ethics of Paul are wholly dependent on grace.

Roy Aldrich says it nicely:

It might be supposed that little need be said about grace in this second division of Romans, but such is not the case . . . last chapters of Romans dealing with the human obligations of Christian service are shot through and through with grace. Grace is the incentive, grace is the source, and grace is the result of all real Christian service.<sup>8</sup>

In verse three Paul appeals to the grace given him in his apostolic office for the authority to bid his readers to lead a holy and good life. The very apostolic ability and capacity to give such directions and exhortation are the result of grace-given sanctification. In verse six and following Paul mentions the various  $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$  given  $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\ \tau\eta\upsilon\ \chi\alpha\rho\iota\upsilon$  --prophecy, service, teaching, exhortation, liberality, helpfulness, almsgiving, and cheerfulness.

Romans 15:15 f.

But on some points, I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace ( $\delta\iota\alpha\ \tau\eta\upsilon\ \chi\alpha\rho\iota\upsilon$ ) given me by God to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God.

This is another occurrence of the grace of apostleship. Paul's authority for writing Romans was the grace of God,

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<sup>8</sup>Aldrich, op. cit., pp. 342 f.

and grace made him write boldly! He recognized that anything he wrote, did, or accomplished as an apostle of the Lord Christ was by His grace.

Romans 15:18, "For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has wrought through me," is a commentary on verse fifteen.

#### 2 Corinthians 3:10

According to the commission (κατὰ τὴν χάριν) of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation.

The Revised Standard Version translates *χάρις* with "commission" here. Perhaps this is helpful in understanding the meaning of Paul's grace of apostleship, but because there is no reason for this rendering and since it eliminates the idea of God's undeserved favor, it is probably best to keep "the grace of God" with the Authorized Version. This is another instance of the grace of apostleship.

#### Galatians 2:9

And when they perceived the grace (τὴν χάριν) that was given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship.

The verse preceding this passage reads, "For he who worked through Peter for the mission to the circumcised worked through me also for the Gentiles." Paul's apostleship meant that God was working in him. It was a "grace given to him." As in all the passages referring to the apostleship, *χάρις* is here also used in its richest New

Testament sense. Burton states:

The "grace that was given to me" is manifestly the grace of God or Christ, including especially the entrusting to him of the gospel to the uncircumcised, but not necessarily excluding that manifested in the results which he had been able to accomplish.<sup>9</sup>

Ephesians 3:2-9

. . . assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace (τῆς χάριτος) that was given to me for you, how the mystery made known to me by revelation . . . my insight into the mystery of Christ . . . has now been revealed to his holy apostles by the Spirit; . . . how the Gentiles are fellow heirs, . . .

Of this Gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace (τῆς χάριτος) which was given me by the working of his power. To me, though I am, the very least of all the saints, this grace (ἡ χάρις) was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, . . . to make all men see what is the plan of the mystery.

It was the "stewardship of God's grace," "the gift of God's grace," and "the working of his power" which selected and qualified Paul for the office of an apostle. The revelation that God's mercy was for Gentiles also is especially referred to here. This "revelation," this "insight into the mystery of Christ" which showed Paul "how the Gentiles are fellow heirs" was indeed a "gift of God's grace."

Paul's apostleship was dependent upon two conditions: the original gift of God's grace (κατὰ τὴν δωρεὰν τῆς χάριτος) and the continuous working of God's power in him

<sup>9</sup>Ernest De Witt Burton, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians," The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c.1920), p. 95.

(κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ). The two thoughts are parallel, and, according to Westcott, "In the New Testament ἐνεργεία and ἐνεργεῖν are characteristically used of moral and spiritual working whether Divine or Satanic."<sup>10</sup>

The afflictions, labors, persecutions, and many other troubles suffered by the Apostle Paul and listed in 2 Corinthians 11 are not mentioned in these six passages but were certainly made possible only by the grace of the apostleship.

### The Capacity and Ability Due to Grace.<sup>11</sup>

#### 1 Corinthians 1:4-7

I give thanks to God always for you because of the grace of God (τῇ χάριτι) which was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him with all speech and all knowledge--even as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among you--so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

G. G. Findlay in The Expositor's Greek Testament speaks of the ἐπὶ τῇ χάριτι as "the occasioning cause" of Paul's prayer. The "enrichment in Christ with all speech and knowledge," he says, "stands in explicative apposition to the foregoing τῇ χάριτι . . . τῇ δοθείσῃ ὑμῖν ." Because God's grace was given to the Corinthians so richly that they were "not lacking in any spiritual gift" (μὴ ὑστερεῖσθαι ἐν μηδενὶ χαρίσματι) and were especially

<sup>10</sup>B. F. Westcott, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1950), p. 47.

<sup>11</sup>German, Gnadenausruestung.

blessed with the gifts of good speech and knowledge, Paul was moved to give thanks. "The exuberance of grace in the Corinthians shone 'in all (manner of) utterance and all (manner of) knowledge'."<sup>12</sup>

### 2 Corinthians 8:1-3

We want you to know, brethren, about the grace (τὴν χάριν) of God which has been shown in the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of liberality on their part. For they have according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own free will

The working of God's operative grace is very clearly seen in this passage. God's grace showing itself in the Macedonian churches (δεδομένῃν ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Μακεδονίας) produced the amazing fruits described as, "abundance of joy" and "wealth of liberality" in the midst of total and abject poverty. "They gave . . . beyond their means, of their own free will."

Chapters eight and nine of 2 Corinthians discuss the collection for the poor at Jerusalem. Here in the very first verse of this section dealing with a very specific work of sanctification Paul introduces the motive and force for the whole project, God's grace.

Verse three, on the other hand, shows that grace is not an infused or coercive power which man must involuntarily obey. They gave "beyond their means, of their own free will." God's grace is the source of all sanctification, but man is

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<sup>12</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., II, 760.

nevertheless responsible for his actions. Again we find it necessary to bow before this apparent paradox of the Christian faith.

Ephesians 4:7

But grace (ἡ χάρις) was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

This pregnant little verse is found nestled among the opening sentences of Paul's great ethical injunctions in Ephesians four, five, and six. Paul begs his readers to lead lives of lowliness and meekness, patience, forbearance, and love. He pleads that they be "eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" as there is "one body and one Spirit . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all . . ." Then comes this little verse injecting God's grace into the picture, and after a quotation from the Psalter there are many more guidelines for Christian living. It is obvious that the giving of grace has much to do with the ability to obey these instructions. Salmond says of this passage:

The article defines *χάρις* as the grace of which the writer and his fellow-believers had experience, which they knew to have been given them (ἐδόθη), and by which God worked in them. What is given is not the *χάρισμα* but the *χάρις*, the subjective grace that works within and shows itself in its results.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., III, 323.

## CHAPTER VI

### OCCURRENCES OF CHARIS REQUIRING SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

In this chapter ten occurrences of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  which require special consideration are examined briefly. Strictly speaking these do not come under the scope of this thesis, since it is doubtful whether  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  is used in any of them in Paul's distinctive New Testament meaning of "God's undeserved kindness or favor to the sinner." However, the favor Dei thought may be present or implicit in several uncertain cases. It will be useful to briefly examine these passages to get a complete perspective of Paul's use of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ .

#### Charis Used as a Gift

##### 1 Corinthians 16:3

On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that contributions need not be made when I come. And when I arrive, I will send those whom you accredit by letter to carry your gift ( $\tau\acute{\eta}\nu \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ ) to Jerusalem.

There seems to be no direct connection between  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  as favor Dei and the use of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  here as "gift." The Authorized Version translates  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  with "liberality" in this passage; Goodspeed uses "gift;" and Luther has "Wohltat." The word is  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ , it is true, but it would seem to be going beyond the text and the context to make  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  here mean more than "gift." On this passage Lenski has a

helpful little commentary:

Paul uses the beautiful term  $\eta\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma\ \upsilon\mu\acute{\omega}\nu$  to designate the gift that is to be sent. In the broader sense  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  means anything that delights, any kindly favor. When it is used in connection with sin and guilt the word always means unmerited grace and favor. Here the money gift for Jerusalem is termed a kindly and gracious favor which is bestowed upon the recipients with a kind and gracious spirit.<sup>1</sup>

2 Corinthians 8:4,6,7, and 19

. . . begging us earnestly for the favor ( $\tau\eta\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ ) of taking part in the relief of the saints.

Accordingly we have urged Titus that as he had already made a beginning, he should also complete among you this gracious work ( $\tau\eta\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ ).

Now as you excel in everything--in faith, in utterance, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in your love for us--see that you excel in this gracious work ( $\tau\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\ \tau\eta\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\iota$ ) also.

. . . he has been appointed by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work ( $\epsilon\upsilon\ \tau\eta\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\iota$ ) which we are carrying on, for the glory of the Lord and to show our good will.

In these instances  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  is again used as a gift, a contribution, a collection, or the liberality behind such a gift.

It is strange that in 1 Corinthians 16:3 Lenski takes  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  as "gift," but in 2 Corinthians 8:1,4,6,7, and 19 he understands the word as a "bestowal of God's unmerited grace."<sup>2</sup> In verse one, it is true, "the grace of God" ( $\tau\eta\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ )

<sup>1</sup>R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians (Columbus, Ohio: Wartburg Press, c.1946), pp. 762 f.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 1132.

$\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\upsilon\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ ) is undoubtedly used in its distinctive sense, but it is pressing the favor Dei definition too far to apply it to all of the other instances in the chapter. Instead of pushing  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  to the point that Lenski does here we would go along with Luther who uses "Gnade" in verse one and "Wohltat" in four, six, seven, and nineteen or with Plummer who says of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  in six, seven, and nineteen:

This has no reference to τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ (v. 1): it is not "the grace of God" which Titus is to make efficacious, but the gracious efforts for the poor Christians that he is to bring to a fruitful conclusion.<sup>3</sup>

The interpretation of those whom Meyer calls the "older commentators," who "explain it [i.e.  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ ] as divine grace [sic], of which they are made worthy through the service rendered" is completely unacceptable.<sup>4</sup> Instead, says Meyer, the word means "the work of collection" or the "work of kindness or love administered by us."<sup>5</sup>

$\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  in verse four has a slightly different meaning from verses six, seven, and nineteen. It is used in verse

<sup>3</sup>Alfred Plummer, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians," The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 237.

<sup>4</sup>Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistles to the Corinthians, translated from the fifth edition of the German by Douglas Bannerman (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, c.1884), p. 582.

<sup>5</sup>Robinson sees the idea of "gift . . . alms . . . grace in act or deed" for  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  in this passage. J. Armitage Robinson, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (Second edition; London: MacMillan, 1907), p. 779.

four as a personal favor. Without translating *χάρις* itself, Goodspeed nicely brings out this meaning when he renders the fourth verse, "they . . . begged me most earnestly, of their own accord, to let them share in the support of God's people."<sup>6</sup>

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

The point is this: he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing (*πάντων χάριν*) in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work.

*χάρις* here probably means both the source and result, both God's favor and the power for good works that grace produces. The Authorized Version retains the word "grace": "God is able to make all grace abound . . . that ye . . . may abound to every good work." However, grace here is "every gift, temporal as well as spiritual."<sup>7</sup> It is the "desire to be generous and the means of being generous."<sup>8</sup> It is "earthly blessing" and "means for beneficence."<sup>9</sup> It is *χάρις* in the "broadest sense of the term--not only blessing so that you have means, but also grace to give."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup>For parallels compare Acts 24:27 and 25:3.

<sup>7</sup>W. Robertson Nicoll, The Expositor's Greek Testament, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951), III, 93.

<sup>8</sup>Plummer, op. cit., p. 260.

<sup>9</sup>Meyer, op. cit., p. 605.

<sup>10</sup>Lenski, op. cit., pp. 1173 f.

The idea of "gift" or "blessing" is certainly here, but the grace in Jesus Christ, the favor Dei, cannot be overlooked, for it is God who provided this grace.

It is an interesting fact that in Paul's two chapters on Christian giving, 2 Corinthians eight and nine, the word "money" is not even used, but the word "grace" (*Χάρις*) takes its place. Hence there may be some overtones of *Χάρις* with the favor Dei meaning in these passages.

#### A Problem Passage

##### Colossians 3:16

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness (*ἐν τῇ χάριτι*) in your hearts to God.

A special exegetical problem places this passage somewhat in a position by itself. The problem is this: "What does *ἐν τῇ χάριτι* mean here?" There are three possibilities, each of which has been defended by many interpreters: (1) "By means of the divine grace," (2) "with gracefulness," and (3) "with thankfulness."

First of all, the context is to be noted. The third chapter of Colossians is jammed with instructions for Christian living. In every verse, from the beginning to the end of the chapter, Paul exhorts the Colossian believers to live a full life of Christian sanctification to the glory of the Lord Christ. There are dozens of details and scores of

implications. It is one of the richest ethical chapters in the New Testament.

If  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \tau\eta\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\iota$  in this passage means "by divine grace" and Paul is here using  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  in his special New Testament sense of favor Dei, this passage is one of the most important for this thesis. Then the teaching and admonishing, the wisdom, and the singing of psalms and hymns would be intimately linked with God's grace. Thayer understands  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  in such an instrumental and motivating sense here and translates the phrase  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \tau\eta\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\iota$  with the words, "prompted by grace." Meyer also adopts this view and writes:

Inasmuch as the interpretation which takes it of the divine grace is highly suitable both to the connection and to the use of the article (which sets forth the  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  as a conception formally set apart), and places an admirable characteristic element in the foreground, there is no reason for assuming here a call to thanksgiving.<sup>11</sup>

The second interpretation takes  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  in one of its classical Greek meanings and translates the phrase, "with gracefulness." This view was defended by Theophylact (who, however, permits a choice between this and the first explanation), Erasmus, Luther, Melancthon ("sine confusione,  $\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\chi\eta\mu\acute{o}\nu\omega\varsigma$ "), Calvin, Grotius, and others.<sup>12</sup> There are at least two good reasons why this interpretation is not

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<sup>11</sup>Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Hand-Book to the Epistles to the Philippians and Colossians, and to Philemon, translated from the fourth edition of the German by John C. Moore (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, c.1885), p. 367.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

satisfactory. First, since the passage concerns singing in the heart, the words "with gracefulness" are inappropriate. Secondly, even though singing in public worship is spoken of here, the injunction to sing "gracefully," especially with this emphasis placed first in the Greek, would touch on "too singular an element."<sup>13</sup>

The third interpretation translates the phrase  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \tau\eta\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\iota$  as "with thankfulness."<sup>14</sup> Many commentators have also defended this view. (Boehmer, Huther, de Wette, Bleek, Von Soden, Haupt, Abbot, and others.) The context of the passage is one of the arguments for this interpretation as Peake in the Expositor's Greek Testament shows:

Not with sweetness or acceptableness (4:6), which does not suit  $\tau\omega\ \delta\epsilon\ \acute{\omega}\nu$  or the emphatic position. It may be "by the help of Divine grace," but more probably the meaning is "with thankfulness," on account of the reference to thankfulness in verses 15 and 17. Thankfulness finds expression in song.<sup>15</sup>

The versions and lexicons are not too helpful in resolving this problem. The Authorized Version has "singing with grace in your hearts;" Revised Standard, "with thankfulness;" Goodspeed, "with thankfulness;" Phillips, "with joyful hearts;" Luther, "geistlichen lieblichen Liedern."

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp. 366 f.

<sup>14</sup>Thayer's fourth definition of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  is "thanks." The ten Pauline passages where  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  is definitely used as "thanks" are: Rom. 6:17; Rom. 7:25; 1 Cor. 10:30; 1 Cor. 15:57; 2 Cor. 2:5; 2 Cor. 8:16; 2 Cor. 9:15; 1 Tim. 1:12; 2 Tim. 1:3; and Philemon 7.

<sup>15</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 542.

Bauer's lexicon renders the phrase, "in dankerfueller Gesinnung."

If  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  is used in Paul's special sense of God's favor to the undeserving sinner, this passage is very important to this thesis. If, however, the second or third interpretation discussed above is correct, the passage is helpful only in rounding out an understanding of Paul's uses of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ .

### A Textual Difficulty

#### 2 Corinthians 1:15

Because I was sure of this, I wanted to come to you, first, so that you might have a double pleasure ( $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\upsilon$ ).

This passage is complicated by textual doubt concerning the authenticity of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\upsilon$ . Manuscript evidence is divided almost evenly between the reading,  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\upsilon$ , and the reading,  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\acute{\alpha}\upsilon$ , although the important Vaticanus reads  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\acute{\alpha}\upsilon$ . Some commentators and translators use  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\upsilon$ , some  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\acute{\alpha}\upsilon$ . Westcott-Hort, Plummer, the Revised Standard Version, Goodspeed, and Phillips all prefer  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\acute{\alpha}\upsilon$  and translate the word with "pleasure," "treat," or "joy." On the other hand, Nestle and the Authorized Version use  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\upsilon$ . Robinson keeps  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\upsilon$  but says that it means "gratification," "joy," or "pleasure." His idea is the joy that rises from a favor.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup>Robinson, op. cit., p. 779.

The Authorized Version translation is "benefit." Thayer lists this occurrence with *χάρις* under the definition, "what is due to grace," specifically, "a token or proof of grace." If *χάρις* is correct, it may here mean "personal favor" as the word does in 2 Corinthians 8:4.

Even if *χάρις* is the correct reading and if it is used as God's favor to the sinner--two very doubtful premises--there do not seem to be any ethical implications.

### Charis as Gracefulness

#### Ephesians 4:29

Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for edifying, as fits the occasion, that it may impart grace (*χάρις*) to those who hear.

#### Colossians 4:6

Let your speech always be gracious (*ἐν χάριτι*), seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer every one.

These two passages are listed only for the sake of completeness since *χάρις* is used by Paul in these two instances in one of the original classical meanings of the word as "gracefulness," "elegance," or "charm." This is a primitive meaning separate from Paul's distinctive New Testament connotations. Every lexicon and commentary that I consulted on these two occurrences of *χάρις* gave this meaning.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Thayer; Gremer; Bauer; J. Armitage Robinson; Expositor's Greek Testament.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE RELATIONSHIP OF CHARIS AND SANCTIFICATION

Paul very evidently links  $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\varsigma$  to some form of sanctification in the vast majority of occurrences of the word. Once grace has justified the sinner "it does not cease to operate in the justified." Grace is a seed which buds and bears fruit (Col. 1:6); it works righteousness (2 Thess. 1:11 f.); it "educates" the sinner who had formerly been under a different schoolmaster (Titus 2:11 f.; Rom. 6:12-14); it is an aid, comfort, and help in times of trial and difficulty (2 Thess. 2:16 f.); it humbles man in weakness and, as it did in Paul's case, makes man more fit to receive grace (2 Cor. 12:9 f.); it produces thanksgiving (2 Cor. 4:15). The apostolic office committed to Paul as a gift is a "grace" (Rom. 1:5; 12:3; 15:5; 1 Cor. 3:10). The exercise of the Christian obligation to love is a gift of God, a "grace" (2 Cor. 8:6,19), and so is every manifestation of Christian living (1 Cor. 1:4; 2 Cor. 9:8). Grace is a power in the life of the individual Christian (1 Cor. 15:15; 2 Cor. 1:12; 2 Cor. 12:9; 1 Cor. 15:10). The recipients of grace cannot will to sin (Rom. 6:2), for they "stand in grace" (Rom. 5:2). Each of these Pauline thoughts illustrates one or more types of relationship between  $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\varsigma$  and sanctification. There are many. In his comments on Titus 2:11 f. Dr. Newport J. White lists some of the New Testament verbs which link God's

grace to man:

The grace of God (also 3:7) is His kindness and love (3:4). It appeared (3:4) (a) as a revelation, in the Incarnation, and also (b) in its visible results; and so it is both heard and recognized (Col. 1:6). Accordingly Barnabas could see it at Antioch (Acts 11:23). It is possible to stand fast in it (1 Peter 5:12), and to continue in it (Acts 13:43). It is given to men, to be dispensed by them to others (Rom. 1:6; Eph. 3:2,7); and if men do not respond to it, they are said to fall short of it (Heb. 12:15).<sup>1</sup>

These many different aspects of grace make it very difficult to define or isolate any single relationship between *Χάρις* and sanctification. From the Pauline passages studied it is easier to determine what the relationship is not than to tell exactly what it is. "Grace-sanctification" is not moralism; it is not an ethic motivated by law; it is not an outside power giving man a "lift," as it were, toward the path of virtue; and it does not mean merely a human struggle to "do right."

The life lived under grace is not moralism. The relationship between God's grace and man's doing is not that man is impressed by the good life of the man Jesus and then goes out and by his own strength and will does "likewise." Such a "moral influence" relationship is certainly part of the method but certainly far from being the whole picture. To the Christian this is a self-evident fact, but whenever

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<sup>1</sup>W. Robertson Nicoll, editor, The Expositor's Greek Testament, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951), III, 194.

sanctification is mentioned it is good to make this point very clearly. Chafer says:

Through false emphasis by many religious leaders, Christianity has become in the estimate of a large part of the public no more than an ethical system. The revealed fact, however, is that the supreme feature of the Christian faith is that supernatural, saving, transforming work of God, which is made possible through the infinite sacrifice of Christ and which, in sovereign grace, is bestowed on all who believe.<sup>2</sup>

The entire concept of *Χάρις* as used by Paul excludes all naked moralism.

Furthermore, the life lived under grace is not motivated by the Law. Grace and Law are antithetical. Grace, never Law, is the foundation and source of virtuous Christian living. The Law kills; grace saves. The sanctification of the believer by faith through grace can never come from a legalistic code of ethics. The Christian lives only by faith in the Son of God. Mention of the Law is never found in connection with *Χάρις* as the motivation for Christian living. Bishop Berggrav is not using "grace" in the Pauline sense and is using "law" in its confusing "third use" when he says:

Grace, when divorced from all law, becomes arbitrary enthusiasm and emotionalism, and becomes destruction of the soul. At the same time God is the God of free grace, he requires that his commandments be kept and his life-plan followed.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Lewis S. Chafer, Grace (Chicago: Moody Press, c.1922), p. vii.

<sup>3</sup>Eivind J. Berggrav, Man and State, translated from the Norwegian by George Aus (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1951), p. 290.

This may be properly understood, but is not Pauline language and can produce confusion and unfortunate conclusions. When Paul speaks of Christian virtues in connection with grace, Law is excluded.

Grace is not merely a "lift" to help man along on his way to sanctification. It is never an ad hoc remedy, a plus added to the energies of the believer. Paul gives all the credit to grace.

The grace of sanctification does not mean that man must involve himself in a merely human struggle to "do right." Of course, man is never an automaton driven to virtue by some magical power called "grace." Paul insists that man retains his complete moral responsibility, but at the same time the only source of his sanctification is the grace of God. It is a divine paradox. Chafer declares:

The carnal Christian is not urged to try to live a spiritual life; he is rather besought to yield himself to God, apart from which there can be no Spirit-filling with its realization of power.<sup>4</sup>

Torrance says that the man living in the power of genuine

New Testament grace

is not really concerned to ask questions about ethical practice. He acts before questions can be asked. He is caught up in the overwhelming love of Christ, and is concerned only about doing His will. There is no anxious concern about the past. It is Christ that died! There is no anxious striving toward an ideal. It is

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<sup>4</sup>Chafer, op. cit., pp. xv f.

Christ that rose again;<sup>5</sup>

What then is the relationship between *χάρις* and sanctification? There is no single answer, for the word is used in too many different ways. Grace is a teacher (Titus 2:11 f.), an energizing principle (*ἐνεργέω*), a moral influence (2 Cor. 8:9), a direct cause or power, and a gift. There are many other ways of defining this relationship. Each definition contains a Pauline truth, and yet each one taken alone and without other legitimate aspects of the relationship could produce faulty conclusions such as deterministic monergism, Pelagianism, or synergism. Because of the many aspects of Paul's *χάρις* we can only lay down a few general principles of its correct relationship to sanctification here.

First of all, the Christian way of grace is an unbroken whole, it is one way of righteousness, one way of repentance, one life in God. John Schmidt writes:

Christianity does not have two messages, one relating to salvation and the other connected with morality. It has one message, the story of God's unfathomable grace in Jesus Christ which . . . is able to accomplish the complete transformation of the sinner into a saint.<sup>6</sup>

This one way begins at conversion and continues into all eternity. Paul brings this out in his letter to the Philippians

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<sup>5</sup>T. F. Torrance, The Doctrine of Grace in the Apostolic Fathers (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1946), p. 34.

<sup>6</sup>John Schmidt, The Riches of His Grace (New York: American Tract Society, c.1940), p. 170.

when he says, "And I am sure that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ." (1:6)

Although Christianity has really only one message of righteousness in Jesus Christ, in the presentation of Christianity the announcement of the content of grace must always precede a description of its results or the imperative to use it. Chafer maintains this when he comments on Romans:

When the human obligation is presented first, and the divine blessing is made to depend on the faithful discharge of that obligation, it is of and in conformity with pure law. When the divine blessing is presented first, and the human obligation follows, it is of and in conformity with pure grace.<sup>7</sup>

Although St. Augustine erred by detaching grace from the person and work of Christ, he did emphasize the power of grace in human lives, and he never tired of saying that grace must precede all our works.<sup>8</sup> Martin Luther excellently summarized the correct causal relationship in his curt Propositions of 1520:

Faith, unless it is without even the smallest works, does not justify, indeed, is not faith.

It is impossible for faith to exist without assiduous, many and great works.

Neither faith nor justification comes from works, but works come from faith and justification.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Chafer, op. cit., p. 219.

<sup>8</sup>Anders Nygren, Agape and Eros, translated from the Swedish by P. S. Watson (London: S. P. C. K., 1953), p. 527.

<sup>9</sup>Sydney Cave, The Christian Way (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1949), p. 138.

The final and the most important point to remember in determining the relationship between *χάρις* and sanctification is that the whole process is intimately linked up with the person and work of Jesus Christ, culminating on the cross of Calvary and the empty tomb in the garden. Again and again Paul creates a link between *χάρις*, Christ, and sanctification. Sanctification is by grace in Christ, through Christ, by Christ, of Christ, and for Christ. Torrance's thesis in The Doctrine of Grace in the Apostolic Fathers is that the misunderstanding of the Gospel which came as early as the second century and resulted in many unbiblical ideas was the result of a misunderstanding of God's grace, of separating it from the person and work of Christ. Torrance shows that the literature of the Apostolic Fathers already lapses into the psychological tendencies at work in the Hellenistic usage of *χάρις*. Certain leaders of the early Christian Church, including St. Augustine, claims Torrance, departed from Paul's distinctive terminus technicus conception of grace which absolutely linked it to the complete love and forgiveness found in Jesus Christ.

Torrance writes:

In Him [i.e. Jesus] all the Christian's hopes are centered. His life is hid with Christ in God. In Him a new order of things has come into being, by which the old is set aside. Everything therefore is seen in Christ, in the light of the end, toward which the whole creation travaileth waiting for redemption. The great act of salvation has already taken place in

Christ, and has become an eternal indicative.<sup>10</sup>

To summarize the relationship between *Χαρις* and sanctification in the epistles of Paul we would emphasize these three facts: (1) Christianity is one unified way of righteousness through grace, including both justification and sanctification. (2) In the presentation of the Christian Gospel the content of grace must always precede the imperative exhortation to use the grace for living. (3) The grace of sanctification as well as justification is based, grounded, and founded in the person and work of Jesus Christ, the Savior.

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<sup>10</sup>Torrance, op. cit., p. 35.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSIONS

This study has shown that there is in the epistles of Paul a vital relationship between the grace of God (*χάρις*) and the sanctification of the Christian believer. A full proclamation of *χάρις* must include the riches of Christian sanctification. A Christian life living and throbbing in good works comes from the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

This study has shown that *χάρις* is a favor and force of God which does not only operate by forensic imputation, or does not only begin to show itself in the person of the Christian at the time of the *παρουσία* and the fulfillment of salvation, but that it operates in the "now," in every deed of righteousness, every good impulse, every good work of every hour and every day of the Christian life.

This study also has shown that *χάρις* is a very rich term with many different emphases. Justification and sanctification are both linked to *χάρις*. God keeps and preserves the Christian by grace. The Christian stands in God's grace. Gentleness, humility, gracious speech, thanksgiving, hymn-singing, preaching, suffering for Christ, obedience, love, longsuffering, mercy, and practically every other Christian virtue mentioned by Paul are in some place either directly or indirectly connected with the grace of God.

This study has shown that grace in Paul is always bound up with the person and work of Jesus Christ. Grace is Christocentric. Both God's imputed righteousness and God's sanctifying power are gifts of undeserved grace in the Lord Jesus Christ. Although the references were not always made in this thesis, Christ is mentioned again and again by Paul in a dynamic unity with *χάρις*. Jesus' life, death, resurrection and the atonement that these acts bring always lie behind *χάρις*.

An apparent paradox was seen. "As men we have the sad possibility of a freedom to do evil. The freedom to do good must be given us. . . . The bona opera are God's work, the mala opera are our work."<sup>1</sup> Man is morally responsible, and yet he is bound to live the life of grace during every moment of his life. The paradox stands as the revealed truth presents it.

The heresies of Judaistic Christianity, moralism, legalism, Pelagianism, fatalism, and deterministic monergism are sent crashing to the ground by Paul's *χάρις*. The grace of God in Christ stands alone. Christian sanctification is placed where it properly belongs--solidly on grace.

This study has deepened and broadened the concept of grace for the writer. God's *χάρις* to him has become bigger,

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<sup>1</sup>Adolph Koeberle, The Quest For Holiness, translated from the third German edition by John C. Mattes (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1938), p. 145.

stronger, greater, and more glorious. It has been an invigorating experience and an ever-increasing thrill to study author after author who on the basis of the Pauline χάρις lift the absolute solā of God's grace into the forefront. The rediscoveries, exegesis, insights, and teachings of Martin Luther were repeatedly referred to and praised by many of these authors. A knowledge of the use of χάρις made by the Blessed Apostle St. Paul stirs one to thank God a hundred times over for the revelation of His pure and mighty grace in Jesus Christ.

The believer's victory over sin, then, is God's victory over sin, and therefore is the victory of grace.<sup>2</sup>

MAY ALL GLORY BE TO THE GRACE OF GOD IN JESUS CHRIST

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<sup>2</sup>Roy L. Aldrich, "Grace in the Book of Romans," Bibliotheca Sacra, XCVII (1940), 227.

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