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### The Use of **χάρις** in the Pauline Epistles

Walter W. Stuenkel

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, [ir\\_breitenbuecherl@csl.edu](mailto:ir_breitenbuecherl@csl.edu)

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THE USE OF ΧΑΡΙΣ IN THE  
PAULINE EPISTLES

Walter W. Stuenkel

Approved

J. J. Thayer.  
W. Arndt.

1936



## Introduction

The word  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ , under consideration in this thesis, holds a peculiar prestige in Lutheran theology. Our Lutheran Church is distinctly proud when it unfurls the banner of salvation by grace alone, and thereby distinguishes itself from all heterodox and unchristian bodies which corrupt this doctrine taught by  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  in Scripture and especially clarified in the Pauline Epistles. "The article of saving grace has made the Lutheran Church. The Lutheran Church, teaching this article, possesses the apostolic purity of doctrine. And this constitutes the glory of our church, that she, by the grace of God, faithfully teaches this article and jealously guards it against all perversions."<sup>1</sup> It is our intention then, through examination of the various passages in which  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  occurs, to see and show how this word is used and what it implies.<sup>2</sup>

## Development of Meaning

One must not consider the use of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  in the New Testament as identical with the use of it in the Septuagint, where it is usually found as a translation of the Hebrew  $\int \Pi$ .<sup>3</sup> To be sure, these words are very similar in meaning. They denote "charm, loveliness, favor, grace", but  $\int \Pi$  does not include the full idea of salvation<sup>4</sup> as does  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ . It is not a specifically biblical term as is  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ .

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<sup>1</sup>"Class Notes on Saving Grace", #41, Th. Engelder, D.D.

<sup>2</sup>Verbal inspiration of the Pauline Epistles is taken for granted.

<sup>3</sup>Gen. 6,8; Judges 6,17.

<sup>4</sup>"Aber  $\int \Pi$  bezeichnet nicht wie das neutestamentliche  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  etwas der goettlichen Heilsoekonomie Angehoeriges." - Biblisches Theologisches Woerterbuch der Neutestamentlichen Graecitaet, Herm. Cremer.



The Hebrew word  $\gamma\delta\eta$  would really express the idea of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  better than  $\gamma\eta$ , but  $\gamma\delta\eta$  is usually translated  $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ .

But the term  $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$  is not as rich as  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  since it stresses more the merciful attitude of God over against the ills and evils of the world and does not as finely bring out God's gracious relation to us as sinners.<sup>1</sup> Just in this point the word  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  shows its full meaning which dare not be neglected. That clearly points out the willing, liberal nature of God. He wants to forgive; He wants to pardon; His  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  is so abounding. His  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  is poured out upon man who is opposing God. Man is a transgressor doing what God does not want him to do, yet  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  abounds.

$\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  is a word, the meaning of which was really enriched by its specific use in the New Testament and especially in the Pauline Epistles. We cannot say that this New Testament meaning is really foreign to the connotation it had in profane Greek. But its deeper meanings are brought out, which changed the entire aspect of the word, so that, as Cremer states, one might be inclined to observe that  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  waited for the Christian religion to arrive in order to show its full meaning and the full scope of its implications. (His words: "So dass man fast sagen moechte, dasselbe habe auf das Christentum gewartet, um eine seinem eigentlichen Sinne vollkommen entsprechende Verwerthung, s.z.s. einen angemessenen Wirkungskreis zu finden.")<sup>2</sup> This idea of grace, condescension, undeserved kindness had no form of expression in profane Greek and was perhaps not even known to it. It is safe to assume that this basic Christian idea was entirely lacking in the pagan Greek mind. They could imagine no such conditions. Their gods had to be appeased, favored, and pampered.

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<sup>1</sup>This will be brought out later in the paper, when the apostolic salutations are discussed.

<sup>2</sup>Biblisches Theologisches Woerterbuch der Neutestamentlichen Graecitaet, Herm. Cremer.



Grammatical Form

The word  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  is remotely derived from the stem  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\sigma\iota\nu$ : "to rejoice, be glad". This verb has a second aorist form  $\epsilon'\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\eta\nu$ . In a broader sense it means "to be well, to thrive", and is used in letters as the salutation. The more direct verb also derived from this stem is  $\chi\alpha\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$ : "to do something pleasant or agreeable". This verb is found often in Greek from the time of Homer down.

$\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  has two forms for the accusative:  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\nu$  and the rarer form  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\alpha$ , which is poetic. This latter form occurs in Acts<sup>1</sup> and in Jude<sup>2</sup>. The form  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\nu$  is often used absolutely and has gained the meaning "in favor of, for the pleasure of":  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\nu$  Ἐκτορος<sup>3</sup>. Then like the Latin ablative, gratia, it takes on completely the nature of a preposition and is joined to the genitive, denoting "for, on account of, for the sake of", τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν προσετέθη; λαιδορίας χάριν<sup>5</sup>. τούτου χάριν: "on this account"<sup>6</sup>. The above is a complete list of passages in which  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\nu$  occurs in this absolute meaning; and everywhere in the New Testament, except in 1 John 3,12, it is placed after the genitive, as it generally is in profane authors<sup>7</sup>. In the Old Testament Apocrypha it is placed sometimes before, sometimes after.

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 24, 27.

<sup>2</sup> Jude 4.

<sup>3</sup> Illiad, Homer, 15, 744.

<sup>4</sup> Gal. 3, 19.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Tim. 5, 14.

<sup>6</sup> Tit. 1, 11; Jude 16; Eph. 3, 1; 3, 14; Tit. 1, 5; Luke 7, 47; 1 John 3, 12.

<sup>7</sup> Grammar of the Greek New Testament, A.T. Robertson.



However, this is not our primary concern now, and this has been mentioned merely for the sake of completeness. We wish to study  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  with its various meanings or fields of meanings<sup>1</sup>. There are four primary meanings: a) loveliness, b) good-will, c) benefaction, d) thanks. In that order they shall be considered and studied.

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<sup>1</sup>For the sake of completeness we add the following:  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  is not used once in Matthew or Mark. It occurs eight times in Luke, three times in John (all in the first chapter), seventeen times in Acts, eight times in Hebrews, two times in James, ten times in 1 Peter, twice in 2 Peter, once in 2 John, in 3 John, and in Jude, and twice in Revelation. This is based on the Moulton and Geden Concordance.



CHAPTER ONE

General Sense - "Charm", "Loveliness"

Under the term *χάρις* in its most general sense we understand properly "that which affords joy, pleasure, delight", which then gives it the meaning "sweetness, charm, loveliness". It is used thus especially in reference to words and speech and translated "grace of speech or words". The Septuagint uses it thus: *λόγοι στόματος σοφοῦ χάρις* <sup>1</sup> and *χάριτες δὲ μωρῶν ἐκχυθήσονται* <sup>2</sup>; "verbal pleasantries which the foolish affect in order to ingratiate themselves". It occurs in this general sense in Homer, *Od.* 8, 175, and in Demosthenes, 51, 9; 1419, 16<sup>3</sup>.

In the New Testament we find it used in Luke 4,22 *λόγοι χάριτος* : "words of grace", where Jesus explains the Isaiah passage at Nazareth. But here we cannot ascribe merely the meaning of "charm" but must include the Christian meaning of "grace". Jesus' words may have charmed the people, but they did more than that; they brought grace.

Paul uses the word in this general sense twice, as Thayer, Cremer, and Robinson agree. However, many lexicographers, as Abbott-Smith and Preuschen, feel that one of these passages has a <sup>spiritual</sup> significance. The one passage by universal consent using *χάρις* in this general sense is Col. 4,6: *ὁ λόγος ὑμῶν πάντοτε ἐν χάριτι* . The Expositor's Greek New Testament has this remark concerning it: "probably 'gracious, pleasant' is the meaning; by the sweetness and courtesy of their conversation they are to impress favorably the heathen. Some think Divine grace is meant, but this does not suit

<sup>1</sup>Ecc1. 10,12.

<sup>2</sup>Sir. 20,13.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted by Preuschen-Bauer, Griechisch-Deutsches Woerterbuch, col. 1398.



ἄλατι so well." Thus also the International Critical Commentary.

Jamison, Faussett and Brown have this remark: "Even the smallest leaf of the believer should be full of the sap of the Holy Spirit: his conversation cheerful without levity, serious without gloom." The ἄλας suggests a more general meaning. A Christian is to make his conver-

sation uplifting and beneficial. We have a similar use of χάρις and ἄλας in Plutarch: χάριν τινα παρασκευάζοντες ἀλλήλοις, ὡσπερ ἄλσι τοῖς λόγοις ἐφηνδύνουσι τῆν διατριβήν Cf. also p. 669, A: ἡ δὲ τῶν ἀλῶν δύναμις . . . . χάριν αὐτῶ καὶ ἡδονὴν προστί-

θησι.<sup>1</sup> Thus in giving these various directions for a respectable, profitable Christian life, Paul adds the exhortation to speak in an uplifting manner.

The passage in Ephesians<sup>2</sup> has caused much and variant comment.

It reads in the Greek: ἵνα δῶ χάριν τοῖς ἀκούουσιν .

The English translations have usually rendered χάριν as "grace":

"minister grace unto the hearers"<sup>3</sup>; "give grace to the hearers"<sup>4</sup>.

Tyndale translated: "That it may have favor", and Coverdale: "that it

be gracious to hear". Luther has: "dass es holdselig sei zu hoeren".

The Expositors Greek New Testament, however, adds this remark: "διδόναι

χάριν expresses the idea of doing a kindness to one, and in the

New Testament it has this sense with the specific notion of gracious

kindness. . . . The clause gives the Christian object of every speech

or utterance, namely, to impart a blessing to the hearers". Preuschen-

Bauer says: "Hier ist schwerlich an einen menschlichen Hulderweis zu

denken, sondern an die Uebermittlung goettlichen Gnadensbesitzes."

<sup>1</sup>Plutarch Mor., p. 514, quoted by expositors' Greek New Testament.

<sup>2</sup>Eph. 4, 29.

<sup>3</sup>Authorized Version.

<sup>4</sup>Revised Version.



The Expositors Greek New Testament, the International Critical Commentary, and Steekhardt point out that  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$   $\delta\iota\delta\acute{o}\nu\alpha\iota$  is never used in profane Greek to express "to show charm" but always "to do a favor". So it must be taken in that sense here with the Christian idea added to and expressed in the favor.<sup>n</sup> " $\delta\iota\delta\acute{o}\nu\alpha\iota$   $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ " in Scripture must not be confounded with the same expression in profane Greek where it means "to perform an act of kindness" in Scripture it signifies 'to give grace, to cause grace to be experienced', Eph. 4,2; Rom. 12,6; 1 Cor. 1,4; 2 Cor. 6,1; 8,1.<sup>1</sup> Conversation may not be charming to hear and yet it may  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$   $\delta\iota\delta\acute{o}\nu\alpha\iota$ ; "do good to the hearer".

In this most general sense of charm it occurs only once in the Pauline Epistles, although other passages as: "singing with grace in your hearts"<sup>2</sup>, "that ye might have a second benefit"<sup>3</sup> have been construed as indicating expression of charm and loveliness. But we declare, that although this may be included, it is not the primary meaning of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  in these passages which will be examined later. We see, then, that Paul uses his key word  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  predominantly for the idea of "favor" and not "charm".

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<sup>1</sup>Hastings, Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. 2, p. 254.

<sup>2</sup>Col. 3,16

<sup>3</sup>2 Cor. 1,15



CHAPTER TWO

Good Will

Here again Paul uses the word first of all in a very general sense, but still that is the fundamental meaning, and everywhere else he makes specific application of this general meaning. The meaning is "good will, lovingkindness, favor in its broadest sense".

2 Cor. 8,4: δεόμενοι ἡμῶν τὴν χάριν :  
"begging of us the favor". The Macedonian Christians asked to be allowed the privilege or granted the favor of giving for the needy brethren. *χάρις* is used in this sense in Acts 24,27, where it states that Felix wanted to show the Jews a favor, and then in Acts 25,3, where the Jews ask a favor. Aside from the interesting grammatical meaning of *χάρις* here, it has a practical implication showing that the privilege of giving was considered the bestowal of a favor upon the giver.

Saving Grace

"The special use, however, of *χάρις* in the New Testament is in reference to the mind of God as manifested towards sinners, His redemptive mercy, whereby he grants pardon to offences, and bids those who have gone astray return and accept His gift of salvation and everlasting life."<sup>1</sup> It is *χάρις* in that sense that has become the standard of the Lutheran Church. *χάρις*, or better *ἐν χάριτι* is, as Stoeckhardt says: "das Shibboleth, Kern und Stern der lutherischen Kirche."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Hastings, Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. 2, p. 254.

<sup>2</sup>Lehre und Wehre, Vol. 31, p. 99.



It is interesting to note the different forms in which it occurs. It is *χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ*<sup>1</sup>, and then Paul extends the phrase to: *ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ σωτηρίας*<sup>2</sup>. Then in 2 Tim. 2,1 we have the still fuller explanation *ἡ χάρις ἡ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ* which gives us a picture of grace as being manifested in and through Christ Jesus. Then we naturally come to the term *ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ* as it occurs consistently, but often in abbreviated forms, at the beginning and the end of every one of the Pauline Epistles. Occurring thus in connection with the name of God and of Christ, it so firmly establishes itself as proceeding entirely from God that Paul at times omits these modifying phrases and lets *χάρις* stand alone, without further explanation, as for instance: *οἱ τὴν περισσεΐαν τῆς χάριτος*, v. 20. *ὑπερπερίσσευσεν ἡ χάρις*, v. 21. *οὕτω καὶ ἡ χάρις βασιλεύσῃ διὰ δικαιοσύνης*

These verses bring out the full meaning of *χάρις* as involving the rich spontaneous favor of God. Its fundamental thought is that the benefit conferred is recognized by giver and receiver alike as not due; it is that to which the receiver has no right, which has not been earned, or perhaps deserved, but which the giver freely, out of pure goodness, bestows.

#### Undeserved

We take up now the thought of *χάρις* as "kindness which bestows upon one what he has not deserved". Thus *κατὰ χάριν* is

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<sup>1</sup>Rom. 5,15; 1 Cor. 15,10; 2 Cor. 6,1; 8,1; 9,14.

<sup>2</sup>Tit. 2,11

<sup>3</sup>Rom. 5,17



contrasted with κατὰ ὀφείλημα. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt."<sup>1</sup> Paul presents the contrast between one who tries to acquire or earn salvation by works and between him who accepts his salvation as a gift of grace. If God were to reward him on the basis of his works, then it would be wages and not grace. Then we could not speak of justification by grace; ἐν χάριτι. Χάρις excludes every phase of wages or reward. Χάρις is free grace and excludes the idea of any debt on God's part, "aus Wohlwollen, gnadenweise"<sup>2</sup>. "Die Gnade gehoert fuer die Elenden, Demuetigen, Zerschlagenen, wie Hausmann, Cordatus, Philippus und ich."<sup>3</sup>

Identical with this but with just one additional feature is Rom. 4,16: διὰ τοῦτο ἐκ πίστεως ἵνα κατὰ χάριν. Justification by faith is identical with justification by grace, since that is the distinguishing and individual essence of faith, that it looks away entirely from self and rests completely in God's grace. "Der Glaube erwirbt nicht die Gnade Gottes; der Glaube erwirkt nicht die Gnade Gottes; der Glaube macht nicht erst die Gnade Gottes moeglich; die Gnade Gottes is schon da fuer jeden Menschen. Der Glaube ist aber die Hand, dadurch du die Gnade Gottes .... annimmst."<sup>4</sup> That is why Paul says: "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all

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<sup>1</sup>Rom. 4,4.

<sup>2</sup>Preuschen-Bauer, Griechisch-Deutsches Woerterbuch, col. 1399.

<sup>3</sup>Luther, XXII, 434.

<sup>4</sup>Synodical Report, Colorado District, 1924, p. 48.



the seed." Faith clings firmly to the promise, to that what God out of grace has promised and gives. "χάρις on God's part is the correlative of πίστις on Man's."<sup>1</sup>

Unearned

In Romans 11,6 χάρις is contrasted with ἔργα. εἰ δὲ χάριτι οὐκέτι ἐφ' ἔργων ἐπεὶ ἡ χάρις οὐκέτι γίνεταί χάρις. This is an expansion of χάρις used in the immediately preceding verse, where we read: λείμμα κατ' ἐκλογὴν χάριτος γέγονεν: "there is a remnant according to the election of grace." That there is a remnant which will be saved and which was determined for salvation before the world is due to the election of grace. Grace, nothing but grace, motivated this election. God's choice was prompted and carried out through His unmerited love alone.

To emphasize this Paul suggests contrasting views in verse six, showing that grace and works are mutually exclusive. God's election of the remnant must either be with respect to the works of these or only by his grace. And since it was by grace, as verse five plainly states, every work is excluded. God took absolutely no works into consideration, for if He had, we could no longer speak of election to salvation by grace. "Gratia nisi gratis sit gratia non est."<sup>2</sup> If God should consider anything, virtue, work, less-resistance, in man, He could no longer do as He pleased. He would have to take this "something" in man into consideration. "Gnade heisst eigentlich Gottes Huld oder Gunst, die er zu uns traegt bei sich selbst, aus welcher er geneigt wird, Christum und den Geist mit seinen Gaben in uns zu giessen."<sup>3</sup> "Saving grace is something in God.

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<sup>1</sup>Expositor's Greek New Testament

<sup>2</sup> Augustine.

<sup>3</sup>Luther, XIV, 98



It is necessary to emphasize this because a tendency has developed very early even within the Christian Church to transfer a saving quality to man and to call that grace. . . . Saving grace is not something which God requires in man, but which He offers man."<sup>1</sup> Stoeckhardt makes this clear by giving the example of a beggar. If someone has planned a gift for a beggar, but first permits him to do something which is worth a reward, the benefactor can no longer give him the planned gift, saying, "I give you a present", even if he give the beggar ten times more than he earned.<sup>2</sup> If any kind of work or attitude of man is mixed with grace, it is no longer grace. Therefore, the election of grace (verse five) was determined without reference to anything in man at all. The saved owe their salvation to God's grace alone. Here then, we have developed the idea clearly contained in χάρις, that all works are necessarily excluded.

#### Cause of Righteousness

The real essence of χάρις is shown in the kindness by which God bestows favor upon all sinners and grants them the pardon of their offences and bids them accept of eternal salvation through Christ. The most pertinent text in this connection is Romans 3,24: δικαιοσύμενοι δωρεὰν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι: "Being justified freely by His grace", and, the apostle adds, "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." St. Paul had first (verse twenty-three) shown that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." The totality of men with none excepted stands before God convicted of sin with nothing to excuse or justify them. They are condemned. And still, the apostle says they are justified. But how? Freely by His grace. The αὐτοῦ is emphasized by position. It is God's

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<sup>1</sup>W.H.T. Dau, Theological Quarterly, Vol. XXI, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup>Lehre und Wehre, Vol. 31, p. 102



unbounded grace that justifies. Luther's translation, "aus seiner Gnade", brings out the force of the dative.

In χάρις lies the motive for God's justification of the sinner. That is the only thing whereby God is persuaded to pronounce sinners righteous, sinners who in reality have nothing praiseworthy or meritorious about them, who have not even a right in God's presence. It is all a present, an undeserved reward, a free gift, as δωρεάν emphasizes. In the following verses Paul points out that God did not thereby sacrifice his justice and righteousness. Punishment for our sins had to be meted out, a ransom had to be paid, because God is a God of justice, who cannot permit iniquity to remain unrequited. However, our substitute, Jesus Christ, bore this punishment, paid this ransom, and redeemed us. That is χάρις σωτηρίας that God permitted, yea, required His own beloved Son to "bear our sins in His body on the tree", so that all sinners are redeemed. In spite of the fact that this is hard to understand, in spite of the fact that natural man is offended at the phrase δωρεάν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι because he wants to earn his way to heaven, God still very clearly has outlined the way of grace as the only way, grace through our Lord Jesus Christ, who saved us from sin and its curse and made us to be heirs of grace. Luther: "Die Gnade wird nicht allein gegeben den Unverdienten, sondern auch den uebelverdienten Menschen und Feinden der Gnade." Quenstedt: "Gratia gratuita dicitur, quod hoc beneficium (justificatio) confertur nobis non modo indignis et longe aliud meritis, sed etiam sine quocunque operis nostri interventu."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lehre und Wehre, Vol. 31, p. 72.



Abundance

Here then we have Paul's real use of *χάρις* in his Epistles, and we shall briefly consider the other passages where Paul still further explains this. All men have sinned, and as a result death passed upon all men.<sup>1</sup> This general statement Paul applies in verse seventeen: "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness ( οἱ τὴν περισσεΐαν τῆς χάριτος καὶ τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς δικαιοσύνης λαμβάνοντες ) shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." This abundance of grace received by faith will overcome all death and fear of death. God's grace in Christ is a power over hell and death; no sin is greater than the amount of grace that God has in store for that particular sinner. Paul continues in verse twenty: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound ( ὑπερπερίσσευσεν ἡ χάρις )." God's grace, Paul plainly states, is so abundant and immeasurably powerful that it automatically meets the demand of the penitent believer's sin. *χάρις θεοῦ* can never be exhausted by demand. The more is necessary, the more is available, in fact, the more is already there.

Even that thought, as glorious as it is, is not enough. Paul rises to new heights when he says in verse twenty-one: "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign ( οὕτω καὶ ἡ χάρις βασιλεύσῃ ) through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Grace as boundless as it is manifested here does not serve its complete purpose in this life. "It comes to its full sovereignty as it imparts to men the gift of God's righteousness; its goal, its limit, which is

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<sup>1</sup>Rom. 5,12.



yet no limit, is eternal life."<sup>1</sup>

And to think, as Paul emphasizes throughout, that all this is undeserved. We are sinners, we are subject to death; God is gracious, and through His grace gives us life. This is shown again by Paul in a personal reference when he writes to the Corinthians<sup>2</sup>, "By the grace of God, I am what I am."  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\iota\ \delta\epsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\ \epsilon\iota\mu\iota\ \delta\ \epsilon\iota\mu\iota$ . "Hier wird  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  sehr konkret gefasst. Sie ist von  $\delta\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$  kaum zu unterscheiden."<sup>3</sup> God's grace, which makes Paul what he is, is the favor, utterly undeserved, that summoned him from the foremost rank of the persecutors to the foremost rank amongst the servants of the Lord Jesus.  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\iota$  is placed first in the sentence because Paul acknowledges it as the complete source of his regeneration and spiritual life. It is definitely the grace of Christ, even though it lacks the article here.<sup>4</sup> It is significant that Paul makes this clear to every congregation that it is purely the grace of God that changes the undeserving sinner to a regenerate believer. He does this to the Galatians by another personal reference;<sup>5</sup> "God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace (  $\kappa\alpha\lambda\epsilon\acute{\iota}\sigma\alpha\varsigma\ \delta\iota\alpha\ \tau\eta\varsigma\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\omicron\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$  )." God called Paul from his path of persecution to a life of service; not because He saw something morally good in Paul, but because in His boundless grace He had mercy upon Paul and desired to save him. Paul was a wicked sinner; God was full of grace in turning him. Most beautifully Paul says

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<sup>1</sup>Expositor's Greek New Testament

<sup>2</sup>1 Cor. 15,10.

<sup>3</sup>Preuschen-Bauer, Griechisch-Deutsches Woerterbuch, col. 1400

<sup>4</sup>A.T. Robertson, Grammar of the Greek New Testament, p. 791

<sup>5</sup>Gal. 1,15.



all this concerning himself in the second chapter of this epistle<sup>1</sup>:  
"The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." ( οὐκ ἄθετῶ τῆν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ). By preaching that we are saved alone by grace, we are emphasizing the real glory of Christ's death, for Christ died in order that men might live before God by His grace even though they break His law. "If men could keep the Law of themselves and live, there would be no call for grace, and the death of Christ would be proved a useless sacrifice."<sup>2</sup> We are saved completely and solely by God's grace. ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ is exclusive; it will allow nothing strange to be added. "You are not asked to do anything, nor to be anything, nor to feel anything; but you are simply bidden to look away from self to what Christ has done, and you shall live."<sup>3</sup> Anyone who adds the least part of self-righteousness or merit by good works automatically confuses the idea of χάρις . We live by the grace of God who loved us. Our salvation is undeserved; it is by God's grace. "Justificamur gratis, hoc est nihil operantes, neque vicem reddentes, ut exponit Ambrosius in hoc loco, nec praecedentibus operibus meremur nec sequentibus compensamus; 'Deus nihil invenit in vobis, unde salvet, multum autem invenit unde damnet; et tamen ex misericordia propter Christum nos recipit' ut scribit August. serm. 15. de verbis apostoli."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Gal. 2,20.21.

<sup>2</sup>Expositor's Greek New Testament

<sup>3</sup>Spurgeon, Sermon on Num. 24,17, vol. XI, p.13.

<sup>4</sup>Gerhardi, Loci Theologici, Tomus III, p. 310, col. 21.



Paul brings this out from so many angles that we cannot see how anyone can doubt it. To Timothy he writes<sup>1</sup>: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began." ( οὐ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν ἀλλὰ κατὰ ἰδίαν πρόθεσιν καὶ χάριν ). This passage with its context brings out various points regarding χάρις, but in this connection it proves conclusively that man does nothing to merit this grace. It is the undeserved gift of God. We are saved not κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν but solely κατὰ χάριν. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." That is χάρις. "This love is not called forth by any worthiness on the part of man."<sup>2</sup> "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins ( καὶ ὄντας ἡμᾶς νεκροὺς τοῖς παραπτώμασιν ) hath quickened us together with Christ, ( by grace are ye saved, χάριτι ἐστε σεσωσμένοι ), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace ( τὸ ὑπερβάλλον πλοῦτος τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ) in His kindness, toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved ( τῇ γὰρ χάριτι ἐστε σεσωσμένοι διὰ πίστεως ) through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."<sup>3</sup> In the above quoted section the fundamental idea is the justification of those dead in sins.

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. 1,9

<sup>2</sup> Hastings, Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. 2, p. 255

<sup>3</sup> Eph. 2,5-9.



God has rescued man from the death of sin, credit for which is due to His grace alone. Three times *χάρις* is used in this section. The first time it is a parenthetical phrase, "by grace ye are saved"; but it is very much in place because "nothing else than grace could give life to the dead, but grace could do even that"<sup>1</sup>. *χάριτι* is put emphatically first because there lies the emphasis.

Why does God do all this for man? Certainly because He loved man and wanted man to be saved. However, in this section we read, "that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace ( *πλοῦτος τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ* ) in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." God's purpose, therefore, is that in all ages to come, even in our future glory in heaven, the grace of God toward those once dead in sins should be declared and praised in all the grandeur of its abundant riches. The grace is ours through Christ in whom it has its ground and reason. Cremer says, *χάρις* occurs here as a special phase of *χρηστότης*. He says it means, "Gunst, bei welcher von einer Verpflichtung zu derselben nicht die Rede sein kann."<sup>2</sup>

This leads to the climax of the section: "By grace are ye saved through faith ( *τῇ γὰρ χάριτι ἔστε σωσμένοι διὰ πίστεως* ) and that not of yourselves ( *οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν* ), it is the gift of God ( *θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον* ); not of works ( *οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων* ), lest any man should boast." Here Paul mentions faith which is also a gift of God's grace. God has worked faith in our hearts as the hand to receive the grace that is offered in Christ. But it is *χάριτι* that has the first place in Paul's thoughts here. Furthermore, we should note that Paul does not say *διὰ τὴν πίστιν*, as if faith were the ground or the procuring cause of salvation.

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<sup>1</sup> Expositor's Greek New Testament

<sup>2</sup> Cremer, Woerterbuch, p. 578



Then that there may not be the slightest doubt of this grace or the least idea of any merit included, the statement is emphasized by three emphatically exclusive phrases. "It is the gift of God." The regeneration through faith, our salvation, is δωρον, the free gift of God's abounding love, which He owes to no one but sheds upon all without distinction. "Not of works, lest any man should boast": through no act of man was God persuaded to make alive and save him. All manner of earning is entirely excluded. How could man, dead in sin, do anything that would please the holy and righteous God in heaven? "Not of yourselves": excludes even any sympathetic attitude on the part of man. The χάρις θεου knows of no less-resistance or non-resistance in man. Man was totally corrupt and depraved; God's grace saw nothing good but everything wicked. God's grace saved, and it did everything; not the least credit is due to man. This then is firmly established and most certainly true: is bestowed upon man unearned and undeserved.

### Election

We have seen how God's grace comes upon sinners unearned and undeserved and how χάρις forms the basis of the doctrines of salvation, justification, and conversion. Now, we shall consider the doctrine of election and see how Paul also here brings out the fundamental idea of χάρις that is unearned and undeserved by the recipients.<sup>1</sup>

God saw nothing in man whereby the eternal decree of predestination was motivated or ordered. "God hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace (κατὰ ἰδίαν προθεσίαν καὶ χάριν), which was given us in Christ Jesus before the

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. exegesis on Rom. 11,6.



world began.<sup>1</sup> God has saved us in time according to the purpose He determined from eternity; but the sole cause of it all was  $\chi\rho\iota\varsigma$ . We have brought out Paul's antagonistic view towards meritorious work in this passage before, but here we wish to point out the idea of election involved. God from eternity through His grace in Christ "called us with an holy calling." Before any man existed; before anyone had a chance to be or do evil or good, God elected men to salvation. What was His norm? Paul tells us: "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." It pleased God to save man by grace in Christ, and that alone prompted Him to elect men. Nothing in man aided in the choice. "In Lutheran theology, the theology of St. Paul and all the Scriptures, the center is Christ, our Righteousness. ... Lutheran theology with St. Paul also excludes all manner of synergism. While its Soli Deo Gloria is not chiefly and primarily a praise of the sovereign majesty of God, but a praise of God's grace in Christ Jesus, and its sola gratia is nowhere a grace of God without Christ, it also emphasizes the Soli and Sola, and rejects everything which would in any way or measure make man a determining factor in his salvation."<sup>2</sup>

In the doctrine of election the pure meaning of  $\chi\rho\iota\varsigma$  stands out especially. We Christians know that we have been elected to salvation from eternity, and we know that it was purely through God's grace, as the Scriptures emphasize. Besides the above, Paul says: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. 1,9.

<sup>2</sup> A.L. Graebner, Theological Quarterly, Vol. V, p. 31



the praise of the glory of His grace ( εἰς ἑπαινον δόξης  
τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ) wherein he hath made us ac-  
cepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood,  
the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.<sup>1</sup>

( κατὰ τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ).

God's final purpose in His eternal determinations, and the  
supreme end to which all that He wills regarding us, looks, are the  
manifestations and adoring recognition of His grace in its glorious-  
ness. "He hath chosen us in Christ" - that is grace; 'He hath  
predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ' -  
that is grace. The aim of election is to magnify and glorify the  
riches of His grace toward us miserable sinners, who deserved noth-  
ing but punishment.<sup>2</sup> He wishes that the bounty of His grace

showered upon man in an unlimited manner is to redound to His e-  
ternal praise and glory. The praise of the glory of the grace of  
God is the finis ultimus, as some exegetes say, of God's election.

We have been chosen in Christ before the world began, we were re-  
deemed through His blood while the world was standing, we have  
forgiveness of sins and will live in eternal glory when this world  
has passed away; all "according to the riches of His grace",

κατὰ τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ . Our  
election is an election of grace, and as soon as we mingle the least  
work of merit or the least good quality in man, we can no longer  
speak of an election of grace. Grace is free; grace is unearned;  
grace is undeserved.

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<sup>1</sup> Eph. 1, 5-7.

<sup>2</sup> Wessel, Proof Texts of the Catechism, Part I, p. 292.



### Universality

So good was God, so gracious and merciful was He, so just and impartial, that He showered His grace upon all men. All men had sinned; all were undeserving beggars; all were treacherous enemies; yet "God so loved the world" that He extended His χάρις over all men. Some of the passages quoted have already brought that out by inference, but Paul mentions it most distinctly, when he says: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."<sup>1</sup>

Ἐπεφάνη γὰρ ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ σωτη-  
ριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις. ——— God's  
grace appeared as a revelation in Christ's incarnation and since that time it has spread and become visible in the lives of men. It is here described in its essential power, namely to bring salvation; and in its range "to all men." God's grace is for the individual, but it is for every individual. God wants all to be saved; His grace is extended to everyone for the one great purpose of offering salvation. "This grace of God was given in Christ, to be sure."<sup>2</sup> There is no doubt that saving grace is meant because it brings salvation, and this appeared only in and through Christ as will be emphasized later.

We may see the universality of grace indicated from Paul's statement: "Inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Titus 2,11.

<sup>2</sup>Weiss, Biblical Theology, Vol. II, p. 133.

<sup>3</sup>Phil. 1,7.



συγκοινωνούς μου τῆς χάριτος πάντας ὄντας Although χάρις in this passage has been taken to refer to Paul's grace of apostleship or to that granted to him in his trials and sufferings, there is no need to limit it to that. " χάρις here must be the great central gift of God's grace, which Paul always keeps in the foreground."<sup>1</sup> The Philippians' love and kindness towards Paul and his great work, even at the darkest moments of his career, are proof that they share along with him in the grace of God. God's grace is a bond of union between them. They are all partakers of it. This same truth is evident in the apostolic greetings at the beginning and close of the epistles.

#### Apostolic Greetings

It is significant of Pauline theology and of his emphasis upon the cardinal doctrine of the Christian religion, that every Pauline Epistle, without a single exception, includes χάρις in the salutation as well as in the concluding greeting and benediction. This subject by itself would be a very interesting study indeed, but we can only mention the essentials here. Various theories concerning the origin of these apostolic greetings have arisen, some attributing the form not to Paul but to a pre-Christian liturgical formula for the opening of the service. "So darf man diesen Wunsch als ueberkommene liturgische Formel betrachten, die vielleicht urchristliche Gottesdienste einleitete."<sup>2</sup> This, however, seems unlikely. The ordinary Greek salutation at the beginning of a letter was χαίρειν; so James begins his epistle.<sup>3</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup>Expositors' Greek New Testament.

<sup>2</sup>Zeitschr. fuer die N.T. Wissenschaft, Vol. 26, 1927, p. 162.

<sup>3</sup>Ignatius' ordinary formula: πλεῖστα χαίρειν.



old Eastern salutation was εἰρήνη σοι , in Hebrew שָׁלוֹם . Some say, "The occurrence of the peculiar phrase 'grace and peace' in Paul, John, and Peter intimates that we have here the earliest Christian password or symbolum."<sup>1</sup> χάρις and εἰρήνη are first coupled in the Priestly Benediction in Numbers 6,24. Paul undoubtedly felt that the ordinary χαίρειν was too meagre for Christian intercourse. However, closely connected with χαίρειν was his own great watchword χάρις , a word which Paul uses in a truly Christian sense. χάρις for Paul, as we have seen, is the central revelation of the fatherly heart of God in the redemption which Christ has accomplished for us unworthy sinners. And its direct result is εἰρήνη , the harmony, satisfaction, and joy of that life which is reconciled to God through Jesus Christ.

"The simple greeting of ordinary courtesy, is thus filled with a deep religious meaning."<sup>2</sup> χάρις is the keynote of the Gospel, as we have seen, and εἰρήνη on Christian lips and in Christian letters signifies not earthly peace alone, but the peace of God flowing from χάρις . We may call it the apostolic blessing summed up in the words χάρις and εἰρήνη which include the life-giving power of the Spirit, the assurance of God's forgiving love in Christ, and the bestowal of peace upon the conscience. Paul had but to say χάρις ὑμῶν and this would include all blessings. Paul never adds the εἰη but leaves that to be supplied by the readers. Peter uses the optative in his epistles: χάρις ὑμῶν καὶ εἰρήνη πληθυνθείη.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Expositor's Greek New Testament, to 1 Cor. 1,3

<sup>2</sup> Expositor's Greek New Testament

<sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. 1,2; 2 Pet. 1,2.



Paul's usual formula is: χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ  
θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.<sup>1</sup>  
"Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus  
Christ." This formula is kept intact in the passages referred to.  
In Paul's Epistle to the Colossians some manuscripts omit the words  
καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, but the evidence  
is practically evenly balanced, so we need not make a case about  
it. The greeting in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians in some  
manuscripts is simply: χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη.  
However, it is found complete in Codex Sinaiticus and in numerous  
less important codices. These minor differences do not concern  
us here, for even if Paul did not use the complete formula here,  
he quite naturally implied it, since it was his characteristic sal-  
utation.

However, in the Pastoral Epistles to Timothy Paul adds the  
word ἔλεος. This directs the intention and meaning of χάρις to-  
ward the misery of man as far as his moral standing is concerned.  
As some exegetes say, χάρις plus ἔλεος, wants to make the benefits  
of Christ applicable to all men in a very special sense. It empha-  
sizes that phase of χάρις which extends it to man who is unde-  
serving and unworthy. "But while charis has thus reference to the  
sins of men, and is that blessed attribute of God which these sins  
call out and display, His free gift in their forgiveness, eleos, has  
special and immediate regard to the misery which is the consequence  
of these sins. ... We may say then that the charis of God is extend-  
ed to men as they are guilty, His eleos as they are miserable."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Rom. 1,7; 1 Cor. 1,3; 2 Cor.1,2; Gal. 1,4; Eph. 1,2; Phil. 1,2;  
2 Thess. 1,2; Tit. 1,4.

<sup>2</sup>Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament, p. 153.



Thus Paul begins everyone of his epistles by wishing to the readers *χάρις*, the source of all temporal and spiritual blessings. Concerning *χάρις* and its synonyms Luther aptly says: "Sie fuehren hinauf in des Vaters Herz und es gebuehrt sich, dass man mit diesen Worten einschlafe und aufstehe."<sup>1</sup>

Nor does Paul fail to wish them the same *χάρις* again at the end of every epistle. He indeed uses and explains the word in the body of each of his divinely inspired letters except in the first one to the Thessalonians and in the one to Philemon. In the two latter ones he uses *χάρις* only in the opening and closing salutations. The formula at the end of the epistles is not as fixed as the opening salutation. The fundamental form is: *Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ μεθ' ὑμῶν*. This is embellished and augmented in some of the epistles. However, the fundamental idea of *χάρις* is always prevalent. The ordinary conclusion of a letter at Paul's time was *ἔρρωσθε*, but St. Paul had a signature of his own; it was a sign by which Paul showed the theme of all his preaching. Some exegetes refer the statement *σημεῖον ἐν πάσῃ ἐπιστολῇ*<sup>2</sup> to this specific greeting at the close of the Pauline epistles. His prayer is that the *χάρις* of God through Christ may rest on all his correspondents.

The simplest form of this greeting occurs in the pastoral epistles where we have merely *ἡ χάρις μεθ' ὑμῶν*. But *χάρις* has the article. It refers to the specific grace of God in Christ. If this wish is fulfilled in them, they need nothing else, for through this *χάρις* we are made partakers of Christ's

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<sup>1</sup> Luther, XI, 1103. 1096.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Thess. 3, 17.



work of atonement and all its blessed consequences; through it we have perfect peace. "Wer diese Gnade im Glauben ergreift, der ist hier zeitlich gluecklich und dort ewig selig."<sup>1</sup> In Ephesians and Colossians we have a somewhat similar form without any difining addition. The benediction is of widest scope. It was wished upon all those who love Christ.<sup>2</sup>

In the closing benediction of the Epistles to the Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, Thessalonians, Romans, and Philemon we find the fuller form. It is Paul's personal wish to all the members of the churches that the grace of Christ be with them and upon them. The most complete benediction is found at the end of St. Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians, where it is filled out so as to embrace the three Persons of the Trinity: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." After Bengel makes the remark that the grace of Christ leads to the love of the Father, he adds the exclamation: "Egregium de S.S. Trinitate testimonium." Grace is mentioned first. *χάρις* is always primary and fundamental in Paul's greetings, but *χάρις* only, in as far as it is *χάρις τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*.

#### Grace in Christ

We have mentioned this before, but the fact that *χάρις σωτηρίας* is and always must be *χάρις Χριστοῦ* deserves special emphasis. One of the clearest passages proving this is Romans 3, 24: "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" which has been explained above. "Justifying grace

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<sup>1</sup>Kretzmann, Pastoralbriefe.

<sup>2</sup>Eph. 6, 24.



is not absolute grace or grace bestowed upon the sinner by a fiat of the divine sovereign will, but grace mediated through Christ, or grace in or for the sake of Christ. In other words, according to Scripture, God is gracious to sinful and condemned mankind only in view of the fact that the incarnate Son of God through His vicarious atonement has ransomed all sinners from the curse and condemnation of the Law."<sup>1</sup> "Saving grace became incorporated in a Savior. ... There is no saving grace for the sinner except such as He finds in Christ."<sup>2</sup> "Aber das ist Gnade, dass die Strafe, das Gericht an Christo hinausgegangen ist und somit die Suender vom Gericht befreit sind."<sup>3</sup> "Niemals aber betrachtet Paulus die Gnade als eine von Christi Person und geschichtlicher Leistung abtrennbare allgemeine Kraft, sie ist immer ἡ χάρις ἡ ἐν Χριστῷ. Die Gegenwirkung der Gnade gegen die Sünde will darum als die im Subjekt zum Vollzug kommende Wirkung Christi verstanden sein und alle Spekulationen, welche die Gnade als eine unpersoenliche, metaphysische Groesse behandeln, sind von vornherin unpaulinisch."<sup>4</sup>

We have shown in the treatment of the apostolic salutations and benedictions that χάρις is very seldom used without the modifying phrase Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ and where it is, it has the article, which shows that this certain grace is meant. Paul is careful always to remind his readers that all this grace and the manifestations of it in its riches have their ground and reason in Christ. There lies the strength of the word χάρις, and that gives it power to forgive sins and comfort sinners. "For if through

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<sup>1</sup>J.T. Mueller, Christian Dogmatics, p. 246

<sup>2</sup>Dau, Theological Quarterly, XXI, p. 72

<sup>3</sup>Stoekhardt, Lehre und Wehre, 31, p. 70

<sup>4</sup>Realencyklopaedie fuer Prot. Th. u. Kirche, Vol. 6, p. 718.



the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift of grace, which is by one man Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.<sup>1</sup> Paul praises the grace of God, and in order to explain what this grace is, he adds: ἡ δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι τοῦ ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, that is, the gift of God which consists in the grace of that one man, Jesus Christ.

The grace of God is a δωρεὰ, a gift of God's free love. God did not owe it to man to send His only begotten Son into the world and through Him bring redemption and life to man. He did it freely out of love. The χάρις with which He abundantly blesses man is effective because of and through Christ. There is no χάρις Θεοῦ which is not χάρις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. God does not accept the worthless ransom-price, which men offer Him to satisfy the eternal claims of His justice. As far as we are concerned it is a gift, as Augustine expresses it: "Gratia gratis datur, nec ista esset gratia, si non daretur gratuita, sed debita redderetur."<sup>2</sup> Hence we have the axiom: "Divine grace and human merit exclude each other; but divine grace includes the divine merits of Christ."<sup>3</sup> It truly comes through one man, the God-man, Christ Jesus, who paid the penalty, suffered the punishment, and earned that which we receive as a gift. That is why we speak of χάρις always as χάρις Χριστοῦ.

Paul mentions his personal case<sup>4</sup>: "And I thank Christ Jesus

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<sup>1</sup>Rom. 5,15.

<sup>2</sup>Lehre und Wehre, Vol. 31, p. 66.

<sup>3</sup>J.T. Mueller, Christian Dogmatics, p. 247

<sup>4</sup>1 Tim. 1,12-15



our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant ( ὑπερπεπλεόνασεν δὲ ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν ) with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.\* Paul could write and preach the true meaning and implication of χάρις because he felt all its blessings in his personal life. He knew the wretchedness of his former state, "chief among sinners" and now "chief among apostles", all the result of χάρις . As the poet says: "By grace I'm saved, grace free and boundless."<sup>1</sup>

But we ask in what this χάρις consisted; where did χάρις show its power? The apostle says: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." The poet paraphrases: "The mighty Savior, long expected, to us this blissful truth hath brought, that He by death redeems our race, and we are saved alone by grace."<sup>2</sup> Just in sending His Son, God showed His χάρις upon man. Here we have the sum of the whole Gospel, the forceful meaning of χάρις : "grace through Jesus Christ." Christ came into the world for this one primary purpose: to save sinners. Thus grace is the ruling principle in the kingdom of God. In the kingdom of the world the merited punishment is usually meted out to the transgressor, in the kingdom of God invariably the transgressor is pardoned; in the kingdom of the world grace is the exception; in the kingdom of God it is the rule.

<sup>1</sup>Hymn 311, Evangelical Lutheran Hymn Book.

<sup>2</sup>Hymn 311, Evangelical Lutheran Hymn Book.



It is not that God pities man as he is striving to do right and then merely extends His  $\chi\rho\iota\varsigma$  as help. Indeed not, it is His definite aim, will, and purpose to pardon the sinners. For that very purpose Christ was sent into the world. So the  $\chi\rho\iota\varsigma$   $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ , which has manifested itself so gloriously in the sending of Christ, the Redeemer and Savior, was especially and exclusively provided for sinners. Sinners, also chief sinners, have access to this  $\chi\rho\iota\varsigma$ . Grace is an unusual evidence of God's love toward man, manifested in the incarnation of Jesus Christ, so that no sinner is excluded from its comfort. Truly, His grace is abundant, so abundant that it knows no limits. Jesus Christ died for all; Jesus Christ rose for all; through Jesus Christ God's  $\chi\rho\iota\varsigma$  extends to all, but only through Jesus Christ.

Paul reminds the Corinthians of that when he writes to them for a second time in these classic words<sup>1</sup>: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." God's grace was the cause for Christ's deep humiliation and suffering, and because of this vicarious atonement God can now forgive man's sins. Here we see the deep significance of the term  $\chi\rho\iota\varsigma$ .

Though Christ was rich, equal to the Father in power and glory, rich in all the blessedness of heaven; yet for the sake of the sinners, He became poor; not only did He become man for us, but He became poor also. He was born in poor circumstances, lived and died in poverty. He did this for the sinners' sake that they thereby might be made rich, rich in the love and favor of God, rich

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. 8, 9.



in the blessings and promises of the Kingdom of God, rich in the hopes of eternal life. Christ did everything for us; He willingly relinquished much to give us everything. What clearer meaning of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  could be presented! "This is a good reason why we should be charitable to the poor out of what we have, because we ourselves live upon the charity of the Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup>  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  is saving grace in Jesus Christ, the only and complete source of our salvation. Luther aptly says: "Though grace is given to us for nothing, so that it does not cost us anything, yet it cost someone else on our behalf very much; for it has been secured through an uncountable, infinite treasure, namely, through God's Son Himself."<sup>2</sup>

Paul emphasizes this same fact when he writes to Titus<sup>3</sup>: "But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by His grace ( $\text{\u0399}\nu\alpha\ \delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omega\theta\acute{\epsilon}\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma\ \tau\eta\ \acute{\epsilon}\kappa\epsilon\iota\upsilon\omicron\upsilon\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\iota$ ) we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Here again we see the procuring cause of everything that is freely bestowed upon us: it is shed upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior. There can be no  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  toward man except through this God-man Christ Jesus. The result is brought before our eyes: we are justified by His grace. This is not in contradiction to the statement of Paul in Romans 5,1: "Therefore, being justified

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<sup>1</sup>Matthew Henry, Commentary, p. 1087.

<sup>2</sup>Luther, St. L. XI, 1085 ff., quoted in Christian Dogmatics, p. 247

<sup>3</sup>Titus 3,7.



by faith, we have peace with God", because faith is merely the hand that receives this grace. But it is  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  that justifies. Weiss fittingly remarks concerning this passage: "Grace appears expressly as justifying, and that quite in the forensic sense of the earlier Epistles, as the hope of the child's portion in eternal life is connected with it."<sup>1</sup> Justification in the gospel sense is the free remission of the sinner and accepting him as righteous through the righteousness of Christ received by faith. We are justified freely by His  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ , however, through the redemption of Jesus. God, in justifying a sinner through His grace, forgives him all his sins, yet He remains perfectly just to His Law and His perfect righteousness; because forgiveness was merited through the perfect obedience of Christ and through the satisfaction rendered by His death. Paul makes clear that nothing was acquired "by works of righteousness which we have done." We dare not trust in our own works but must rely entirely on our justification  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\iota\ \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\upsilon$ .

With our sins forgiven through Christ, Paul mentions the next blessing of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ : "we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." We do not as yet enjoy the full blessings of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ , as they have been obtained for us by Christ. Our full inheritance will be given us in heaven, but it is nevertheless certain that it is ours. As a child can only live in hope of receiving its full inheritance when it is of age, so we can only hope for full inheritance after this life. But our hope is a certain hope because it rests in Christ. That is the important point in this connection that  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  can only have its full meaning for us when we view it as "grace in and through Christ."

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<sup>1</sup>Biblical Theology of the New Testament, Vol. II, p. 183.



As a proper conclusion to this part, we mention 2 Thessalonians 2, 16: "Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace ( ἐν χάριτι ) comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." Paul shows them that they have hope and consolation through grace, "consolation for this world, hope for the world to come."<sup>1</sup> Their consolation and hope are to be founded on the free grace of God through Jesus Christ and not on any merit or worth of their own.

We have then firmly established this definition of saving grace, χάρις σωτηρίας : "Saving grace, by which God is moved to forgive sin and to bestow salvation upon fallen mankind, is His gracious disposition (gratuitus Dei favor), or benevolent inclination, mediated through Christ's vicarious atonement, revealed in the Gospel, and witnessed to the world in order that it may be believed by all men."<sup>2</sup>

Sanctification

χάρις : "grace of God", has still a wider force.

"Eadem Dei justificantis gratia dat nobis Spiritum sanctum, per quem natura nostra renovari incipit, sed haec renovatio non est statim perfecta, sed quotidie debet crescere, in futura autem vita perficietur."<sup>3</sup> χάρις is used of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting His holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith,

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<sup>1</sup>Expositors' Greek Testament.

<sup>2</sup>J.T. Meuller, Christian Dogmatics, p. 243.

<sup>3</sup>Gerhardi, Loci Theologici, Tomus III, p. 310, col. 2.



knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of Christian virtues."<sup>1</sup>

As we have seen that  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  manifests itself in the incarnation of Jesus Christ, in the act of justification, so it manifests itself further as working in man. To the salvation of the sinner we must also add the fact that the sinner is torn out of his natural lost condition and renewed in the image of God. This is a result of the grace of God. The grace of God gives life to the spiritually dead, converts the sinner, works faith and everything good in man. The grace of God gives new powers to man and makes these new powers active in the regenerate man and uses them in its service. This is sanctification. Also in those passages in which  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  is used in reference to sanctification it keeps the meaning of favor Dei; it is still God's love for the sinner. When we read that the grace of God renews the sinner, we must understand that God Himself renews and sanctifies the sinner. Whatever is good in man, whatever good man does, God has placed there through His  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  .

Paul's statement<sup>2</sup>, although mentioned above, must be referred to in this connection: "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God, which was with me." ( οὐκ ἐγὼ δὲ ἀλλὰ ἡ  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  τοῦ θεοῦ σὺν ἐμοί ). Paul here declares that by the grace of God he, who had before this time been a persecutor, became an ardent disciple of Christ. He labored diligently, yes, "more abundantly than they all." However,

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<sup>1</sup>Thayer, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 666.

<sup>2</sup>1 Cor. 15, 16.



it was not he, but the grace of God which was with him which did all this through him.  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  was the agent in him. Paul recognized that it was all due to the grace of God that he had done anything good. Every good work, every act for the glory of God, had as its ultimate cause: God's  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  .

What was true in Paul's case is true in every believer's life. What we Christians are, the fact that we believe on Christ as our Savior, we owe to the grace of God. Then whatever we Christians think, say, or do to God's glory is all a result of God's grace working in us. Every desire for the good, every victory over sin is the effective operation of grace on our hearts. So the grace of God is continually with us and orders our sanctified life step by step. Whenever we have done anything good, the glory and honor and credit is all due to the grace of God (  $\eta\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  ) which has operated in us, who are weak and powerless. We must say, as Paul does, "yet not I, but the grace of God, which was with me."

In defending himself against those who had attacked his conduct and apostleship, Paul writes to the Corinthians<sup>1</sup>: "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God (  $\epsilon\nu\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\iota\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  ), we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward." "Hier wird  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  sehr konkret gefasst. Sie ist von  $\delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  kaum zu unterscheiden."<sup>2</sup> Pagan leaders would order their conduct according to man-made philosophical principles, which at their very best are weak and often misleading. But Paul, as every Christ-

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. 1,12.

<sup>2</sup> Preuschen-Bauer, Griechisch-Deutsches Woerterbuch, col. 1400.



lian, had "his conversation in this world" by the grace of God, an unerring incentive and guide. If a person is a Christian, his path is clear before him and the motivating influence for every action is *ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ*.

The Pauline Epistles in inculcating holiness always have the grace of God as the basis. Accordingly when Paul writes to the Romans, he says:<sup>1</sup> "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" Paul had just pictured the abundance of grace and now proceeds to show that men cannot infer from that that now they may sin without restraint. He answers this question quite distinctly in verse fourteen: "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." (*οὐ γὰρ ἐστε ὑπὸ νόμον, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ χάριν* ). We will no longer live in sin and corruption because God in His abundant grace constrains us to love Him and serve Him. We serve Him not in a slavish, legalistic way, but gladly and willingly because of His grace toward us. "It is not restraint but inspiration which liberates from sin: not Mt. Sinai but Mt. Calvary which makes saints."<sup>2</sup> "Die Christen stehen *ὑπὸ χάριν*, unter dem in der Erloesungstat sich aussprechenden Gnadenwillen."<sup>3</sup> "The leading doctrine of this section, and of the whole Gospel, in reference to sanctification, is, that grace, instead of leading to the indulgence of sin, is essential to the exercise of holiness. So

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<sup>1</sup>Rom. 6,1.

<sup>2</sup>Expositors' Greek New Testament.

<sup>3</sup>Freuschen-Bauer, Griechisch-Deutsches Woerterbuch, col. 1400.



long as we are under the influence of a self-righteous or legal spirit, the motive and aim of all good works, are wrong or defective. The motive is fear, or some merely material affection, and the aim, to merit the bestowment of good. But when we accept of the gracious offers of the gospel, and feel that our sins are gratuitously pardoned, a sense of the divine love, shed abroad in the heart of the Holy Spirit, awakens all holy affections."<sup>1</sup>

The grace of God completely justifies man before God without any works on man's part, but this grace of God at the same time arouses man's inner life and furnishes the incentive to lead a holy life.

"*Gratia non solum peccata diluit, sed ut non peccemus facit.*"<sup>2</sup> Grace excludes the service of sin. It would be contradictory to grace to continue a life of open, willful sinning. Paul clinches this when he once more in this same connection asks:<sup>3</sup> "What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid."

Χ'ρ'is justifies us, Χ'ρ'is regenerates and sanctifies us. We no longer want to sin, we want to serve Him who has been gracious to us. "If the thought that God, without any works on your part, bought you fills your heart with joy, you are a Christian. But if the thought that God, who bought you, now owns you and expects you to give yourself entirely to Him puts a damper on your joy, you are a poor Christian."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Hodge, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, p. 211.

<sup>2</sup>Augustine, Stoeckhardt's Roemerbrief, p. 298.

<sup>3</sup>Rom. 6, 15.

<sup>4</sup>O. W. Linnemeier, Lutheran Witness, Vol LV, p. 97.



In encouraging and comforting the Thessalonians, Paul writes:<sup>1</sup>

"Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power; that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." (κατὰ τῆς χάριτος τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) The purpose and aim of God's bestowal of grace upon us is the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Anything and all we do to the glory of God flows from the grace of God, and contrariwise anything that flows from the grace of God in us tends to the glory of God. "The idea is the merciful favor of God to the exclusion of human merit."<sup>2</sup>

In a similar strain Paul writes to the Corinthians:<sup>3</sup> "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace (ἐν ἣ χάρις πλεονάσασα) might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God." All that Paul by the grace of God had preached and done had been done for the benefit of the Christians and to the glory of God. "But the end and aim which he had in mind as the final end was that the grace which had been multiplied to him, which gave him such wonderful strength and endurance, should by the force of their many additional prayers result in the more abundant thanksgiving to the glory of God."<sup>4</sup> God's grace had led Paul on the path of sanctification and the greater the number of those who would partake of God's grace with him, the greater would be the glory of God.

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Thess. 1, 11, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Expositor's Greek Testament

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. 4, 15.

<sup>4</sup> Kretzmann, Popular Commentary



χάρις has as its ultimate aim the glory of God through the justification and sanctification of the sinner.

Paul gives an earnest admonition to sanctification in the sixth chapter of this same epistle:<sup>1</sup> "We, then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

( παρακαλοῦμεν μὴ εἰς κενὸν τῆς χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ δεῖξασθαι ὑμᾶς — ) Paul explains that he and all his assistants are working for the salvation of souls which can only be acquired through God's grace. Therefore, it is his duty to appeal to the people not to hear the message of the grace of God in vain. This would be the case if in their daily life they would not bear witness to the fact that the grace of God is their guiding influence. "To accept the grace of God in vain can be nothing else than hearing the pure Word of God, in which the grace of God is offered, and yet remaining apathetic and not accepting it, remaining as one was before."<sup>2</sup> χάρις is here not to be limited to grace given at any special moment, as for example, at baptism. "Grace is offered, independent of man's faith and obedience, but it will not profit without these."<sup>3</sup>

Paul encourages the Colossians to further sanctification in an entirely different way:<sup>4</sup> "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of

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<sup>1</sup>2 Cor. 6,1.

<sup>2</sup>Translation of Luther, XII, 438.

<sup>3</sup>Expositors' Greek New Testament

<sup>4</sup>Col, 1,6.



your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the Word of the Truth, of the Gospel, which is come unto you as it is in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth." ( ἐπέγνωτε τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ ) We cannot take ἐν ἀληθείᾳ as an adjectival phrase with τὴν χάριν and translate "the true grace of God" as some suggest; because there is no false grace of God. We must take it with ἐπέγνωτε in the sense that they knew the Gospel as it truly is, in its genuine reality, the revelation of the grace of God. Paul offers up prayer of thanksgiving for the fruitful results of the preaching of the grace of God among them, but in so doing he at the same time encourages them to greater heights. However, all true Christian hope, knowledge, and sanctification must be based solely upon the grace of God in Christ. If it is, it will be a clear evidence that the person is resting all his ambition on and receiving all his energy from the grace of God.

Paul encourages the Corinthians to a similar display of God's grace in their lives. The Christians in Jerusalem were in need, and Paul appealed to the Christian congregations elsewhere for an offering to help these needy brethren. The Corinthians had accepted the proposal, and in the ninth chapter of his second epistle Paul encourages them to complete the work they had undertaken. He shows that not only blessings result from liberal giving upon the recipients but the recipients will glorify God "for your professed subjection unto the Gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them and unto all men, and by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you" ( διὰ τὴν ὑπερβάλλουσαν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐφ' ὑμῶν )<sup>1</sup> The Christians at Jerusalem

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. 9, 14.



would thank God that these Corinthian brethren in Christ showed such wonderful results of God's grace bestowed upon them. ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ is the power and motive behind all sanctification. Through it Paul encourages his fellow-Christians to holiness.



CHAPTER THREE

The sanctification resulting from the grace of God in believers merits nothing toward salvation. Paul has conclusively proven that we are saved τῆ χάριτι and if by grace then οὐκ ἐστὶ ἐργων . In fact, the good works which we do are even motivated and shaped by the grace of God. We dare not claim any credit. To eliminate all doubt Paul says:<sup>1</sup> "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law; ye are fallen from grace," ( τῆς χάριτος ἐξέπεσαντε ). False teachers had come to the Galatians and had permitted the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith to stand, but had in addition urged circumcision and ceremonial obedience as necessary to salvation. Paul emphasizes that grace is free and whoever mixes works and grace is fallen from grace. "Wer die kleinste Dosis von eigener Gerechtigkeit, von Gesetzeswerken beimischt, der stoest die Gnade ganz von sich, der hebt die Gnade ganz auf."<sup>2</sup> God justifies the sinner freely through grace for Christ's sake. He who seeks justification any other way forfeits his right to be an heir of God and is cast out of God's favor. "For like as he that is in a ship, on which side soever he falleth into the sea, is drowned, even so he which has fallen from grace, must needs perish. He, therefore, that will be justified by the law is fallen into the sea, and hath cast himself into danger of eternal death."<sup>3</sup> This furnishes us with the proper background for that which is to come.

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<sup>1</sup>Gal. 5,4.

<sup>2</sup>Stoekhardt, Lehre und Wehre, Vol. 31, p. 98.

<sup>3</sup>Luther, Commentary on Galatians, Edition by Middleton, p. 431.



### Status Gratiae

χάρις is used in the Pauline Epistles to denote the spiritual condition of one governed by the power of divine grace, what the theologians call the "status gratiae". Christians are spoken of as standing in God's grace in which they have been called by Christ. Paul firmly rebukes the Galatians who had become inclined toward false teachers:<sup>1</sup> "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ ( ἐν χάριτι Χριστοῦ ) unto another gospel. God by His grace had called them through the preaching of Paul and Barnabas, and now these converts were beginning to follow false teachers. They had been called ἐν χάριτι, and now they were to live ἐν χάριτι. "Christ's calling bringeth grace and saving health; for they that be called by him, instead of the law that worketh sorrow, do gain the glad tidings of the gospel, and are translated out of God's wrath into his favor, out of sin into righteousness, and out of death into life."<sup>2</sup> Grace was to determine their entire course of life. In it they should "live and move and have their being."

To the Romans Paul writes:<sup>3</sup> "Therefore, being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand ( εἰς τὴν χάριν ταύτην ἐν ᾗ ἐστήκαμεν ) and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." The believer moves in an altogether new spiritual atmosphere. He is reconciled to God through Christ. The door to complete forgiveness has been opened. He is at peace with his

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<sup>1</sup>Gal. 1,6.

<sup>2</sup>Luther, Commentary on Galatians, Edition by Middleton, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup>Rom. 5,1.2.



Lord and consequently nothing can harm or alarm him. He is sure that he is standing in grace before God. As a result, even the tribulations which come upon Christians are a source of rejoicing, since we know that these will only "work together for good to them that love God."

Here again, as so many times before, Paul can write from personal experience. He had endured hardships, he had tribulation all his life; there was given to him a "thorn in the flesh" for which he besought the Lord thrice that it might be removed, but he wrote to the Corinthians:<sup>1</sup> "The Lord said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee ( ἀρκεῖ σοι ἡ χάρις μου ); for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Paul was standing in God's grace. He knew that he had a gracious Father in heaven who loved him and "whose every thought and action was in his interest." In his very weakness the gracious power of the Lord was given an opportunity to reveal itself in Him. God's grace can only do good in our behalf. God controls everything; and, since He is the God of grace, we may glory in everything that befalls us. We are His children; He is our dear Father.

Accordingly, Paul learned his lesson, and then in writing to Timothy he advises:<sup>2</sup> "Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus ( ἐν δυνάμει ἐν τῇ χάριτι τῇ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ——— )." "Χάρις ist hier die Gnade, welche an Christus gebunden, weil mit und in ihm erschienen ist."<sup>3</sup> "In der χάρις liegt Vergebung, wo wir fehlen, und Gabe fuer das, was uns fehlt."<sup>4</sup> The grace of God in

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. 12,9.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. 2,1.

<sup>3</sup> Cremer, Woerterbuch, p. 578.

<sup>4</sup> Beck quoted in Kretzmann, Die Pastoralbriefe.



Christ was to be the sphere, the element in which Timothy was to have his spiritual being; through it he was to be a staunch defender of the truth and a fearless preacher of the Gospel. He was also to realize that all his power and strength lay in the grace that God extended to him. As Gerhard writes: "Eadem gratia, quae nos justificat, dat nobis spiritum, per quem renovamur."<sup>1</sup> (The same grace which justifies us, gives us the Spirit through whom we are renewed.) So we mention once more what we have emphasized throughout, that man does nothing toward his justification or in his sanctification; God does it all. He justifies man and gives him salvation freely through His saving grace in Christ, and then He gives man grace to lead a holy life in proof of his faith and not to merit any reward.

#### Gnadenausruestung

As long as we keep this in mind that all we do toward the glory of God and the welfare of our neighbor is all a working of God's grace in us which dogmaticians call gratia inhaerens (indwelling grace) or gratia infusa (infused grace), we will not become proud in the service God performs through us. God does not give the same measure of every gift to each individual. His  $\chi\rho\iota\varsigma$   $\sigma\omega\tau\eta\rho\iota\omicron\varsigma$  is poured out in equal measure to all men. There are no preferred individuals. All have sinned; all need grace; all are offered the abundant riches of God's grace. However, after a person has been led to accept God's saving grace, God gives him grace to lead a holy life. "Grace in this sense is never set down in Scripture as the cause of man's salvation, never as an auxiliary of, or preparation for saving grace, but explicitly excluded as a cause."<sup>2</sup> This  $\chi\rho\iota\varsigma$ , this subjective grace, which works within,

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<sup>1</sup>Gerhard, Loci III, p. 310.

<sup>2</sup>Engelder, Class Notes on Saving Grace, #12.



shows itself in the *χάρισμα*, the gracious quality in the believer.

So Paul encourages the Ephesians to "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" by telling them:<sup>1</sup> "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."

( *ἐνὶ δὲ ἑκάστῳ ἡμῶν ἰδίῃ ἢ χάρις* ). Every single Christian has received some special gift or gifts from God which he should apply in the interest of the Church. Christ distributes different spiritual gifts to different Christians; but they all flow from His grace. "Each gets the grace which Christ has to give, and each gets it in the proportion in which the Giver is pleased to bestow it, each getting it from the same hand and with the same purpose."<sup>2</sup> No Christian is left unregarded, but each is made a partaker of the rich store which Christ has to give. This same point of

a distinction of gifts is mentioned by Paul when he urges the Romans to the proper use of Gd's gifts of mercy. He writes:<sup>3</sup> "Having, then, gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us,

( *χαρίσματα κατὰ τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθείσαν ἡμῖν διέφορα* ) whether prophecy let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith." Here we have the distinction between *χάρισμα* and *χάρις* referred to before. Every Christian has received some special gift and in the following verses Paul enumerates various ones and illustrates how these are to be put to proper use. They all have but one ultimate purpose: to serve the Lord who gave them.

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<sup>1</sup>Eph. 4,7.

<sup>2</sup>Expositors' Greek Testament.

<sup>3</sup>Rom. 12,6.



This grace which God bestows upon the Christians is a source of joy to Paul and a cause of thanksgiving, so he exclaims:<sup>1</sup> "I thank my God always on your behalf for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ ( ἐπὶ τῇ χάριτι τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ δωθεῖσῃ ὑμῖν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ) that in everything ye are enriched by Him, in all utterance and in all knowledge." These Corinthian Christians had received God's grace as a free gift in Christ Jesus, and for that Paul is thankful. In spite of their many weaknesses, they were yet believers. In the following verses the apostle shows how that grace of God has given practical evidence of its living power in the hearts of these Christians. Thus we have seen the power that works all good within us. It is χάρις θεοῦ again with the meaning best expressed by the German word, Gnadenausruestung.

Grace of Apostleship

A specialized form of the χάρις above was given to the apostles. Paul speaks of it in various connections in his personal case. We shall examine the various passages and see how Paul treats also this form of grace from every angle. In the very opening verses of his epistle to the Romans Paul speaks of this special χάρις, as he identifies himself as a called apostle of Jesus Christ:<sup>2</sup> "by whom we have received grace and apostleship ( δι' οὗ ἐλάβομεν χάριν καὶ ἀποστολήν ), for obedience to the faith among all nations, for His name". Paul makes it very clear that everything has come from the Lord Jesus Christ. Through

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 1,4.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 1,5.



Him he was made partaker of the grace of God in the Redeemer. He had received full and complete forgiveness of all his sins. Then as a special distinction he received from Jesus the office of apostle. His specialized χάρις was ἰσοστολή for which he was called and equipped by Christ Himself. Paul refers to it again in the same epistle as he instructs and exhorts the Roman Christians to a proper use of their own individual gifts of grace. He says:<sup>1</sup> "For I say, through the grace given unto me ( λέγω γὰρ διὰ τῆς χάριτος τῆς δοθείσης μοι ) to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think." "Paul speaks through the grace given him and therefore without presumption."<sup>2</sup> "The ordinary and extraordinary gifts which he had thus received qualified him for his duties and gave authority to his instructions."<sup>3</sup>

That this authority was recognized even by the apostles who had been in the inner circle of the Lord's disciples, Paul shows in Galatians, chapter two, verse nine: "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars perceived the grace which was given unto me ( γινόντες τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι ) they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship." These apostles who were recognized by all as the leaders in the Church fully acknowledged Paul as a recipient of the special grace of apostleship. He had received the same gift that they had received; he was a co-apostle with them. All the more boldly Paul could now step forward and do the work designed for him. He confesses his boldness

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<sup>1</sup>Rom. 12,3.

<sup>2</sup>Expositor's Greek Testament.

<sup>3</sup>Kretzmann, Popular Commentary.



on the basis of this gift as he writes to the Romans:<sup>1</sup> "Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind because of the grace that is given to me of God ( διὰ τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι ) that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God." Paul knew that in certain instances he had waxed bold in writing this epistle, but he knew it was incumbent upon him because of the grace of apostleship which had been given him. He was not proud or wanton but merely doing his duty as an apostle of God.

His modesty and humility is shown when he writes to the Ephesians:<sup>2</sup> "For this cause I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God ( τὴν οἰκονομίαν τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ ) which is given to me to you-ward how that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery ..... which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel, whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God ( κατὰ τὴν δωρεάν τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ ) given unto me by the effectual working of His power, unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, ( ἐδόθη ἡ χάρις αὕτη ) that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." This is one of the most noteworthy passages in the Pauline epistles, emphasizing the unusual meekness and modesty of the gifted apostle. Paul knew he was an apostle of Christ; he knew the full responsibility

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<sup>1</sup> Rom. 15,15.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. 3, 1-8.



that rested upon his shoulders; he recognized the possibilities that lay <sup>to</sup> open him; but he realized above all that his apostleship was completely a gift of God's grace. Three times he says it in the passage quoted above, and in the third instance he shows his true deep modesty most clearly. Some critics claim that Paul here manifests false modesty. That is not the case, because we have seen previously that Paul clearly recognized and used the important status he held because of his office. Here he merely repeats what he always felt, namely, that God's grace was bounteously showered upon him. The fact that he should be the apostle chosen to bring the Gospel of Christ to the Gentiles overwhelmed him as an evidence of God's unmerited grace. God had already blessed him wondrously with His grace by turning him from the paths of darkness to the way of life, but then also to have bestowed upon him the special gift of apostleship excited him to continual humility but at the same time to continual thanksgiving.

To show that Paul knew the possibilities invested in his office, we quote from his first Epistle to the Corinthians:<sup>1</sup> "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, (κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι) as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon." While the grace of God was given to all Christians in a special manner, (each had his special *χάρισμα*, a gift of God's *χάρις*), Paul had received a very singular gift, the grace of apostleship. With this grace he had the ability to build the Church in various cities. He was an apostle. The Lord by His grace had made him a wise apostle, endowed with most extraordinary gifts to make him a wise master builder.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 3, 10.



He went ahead; others followed. He laid the foundation upon which others built. However, he realized that everything he accomplished was a gift of grace from Him upon whom he built the Church, namely, Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. Paul was an apostle but entirely by the grace of God. And he knew and confessed it.

### Grace of Liberality

In this connection we speak of liberality as due to the operation of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ . Paul had been overwhelmed at the liberality manifested by the Macedonian Christians. He wanted the Corinthians to do equally well, so he wrote them: "Moreover, brethren, we do you, to wit, of the grace of God ( $\gamma\upsilon\omega\rho\iota\acute{\sigma}\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu\ \delta\epsilon\ \upsilon\mu\acute{\iota}\nu\ \alpha\delta\epsilon\lambda\phi\omicron\iota\ \tau\acute{\eta}\nu\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  - ) bestowed on the churches of Macedonia."<sup>1</sup>  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  here refers to the special grace of liberality in giving which was bestowed upon and exhibited in the churches of Macedonia. However, Paul points out immediately that these people of Macedonia were naturally no more inclined to good works than other men. It was the grace of God, as he expressly says, which enlarged their hearts. "For Christians to help each other, to communicate to the needy, is not an evidence of unusual liberality, as a special merit of which they may boast, but it is the work of God's grace, a grace for which all Christians and all Christian congregations should seek and beg in honest prayer."<sup>2</sup> Hodge makes a general statement in reference to this verse which applies to  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  always inasmuch as it is the motive for sanctification. He says: "The sacred writers con-

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. 8, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Kretzmann, Popular Commentary, New Testament, Vol II, p. 201.



stantly recognize the fact that the freest and most spontaneous acts of men, their inward states, when good, are due to the secret influence of the Spirit of God, which eludes our consciousness. The believer is most truly self-determined, when determined by the grace of God."<sup>1</sup>

Paul further describes how wholeheartedly these Macedonians gave. They begged the apostle to let them give. They wanted to help the needy brethren. They placed themselves with all that they had at the disposal of God and the apostle. Paul tells this with a purpose. He wants to arouse the Corinthians. Consequently, he adds: "Insomuch that we desired Titus, as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also. ( ἵνα . . . οὕτως καὶ ἐπιτελέσῃ εἰς ὑμᾶς καὶ τὴν χάριν ταύτην ). Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also, ( ἵνα καὶ ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ χάριτι περισσεύητε )."

Some exegetes make *χάρις* mean "good work" here; but it is better to take it as meaning "the motive for the good work of giving." This is shown especially by the context. It is put on a par with many other gifts of grace which are found in Christians. Paul mentions these and says he is glad they abound in all these and then wishes that they would abound in this grace of giving also. Titus, who had begun the work in Achaia, was to come to them to further this grace among them. That is a worthwhile thought that even the desire to give is due to the operation of God's grace in us. Liberality is a *χάρις* given by God. And as Dr. Kretzmann observes: "The gift of Christian liberality does not belong to the special graces of the apostolic age, but may be obtained by earnest

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<sup>1</sup> Hodge, Second Epistle to the Corinthians, p. 192.



application to the Word of God and by prayer."<sup>1</sup>

### Alms

Paul, having given the necessary encouragement and information about the collection, now recommends Titus to them and also the man (some say it was Luke, others say it was Trophimus) who would come along. In telling about this he uses  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  in another sense. We read: "We have sent with him the brother .... who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace ( $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \tau\eta\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\epsilon\ \tau\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta$ ) which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord and declaration of your ready mind."<sup>2</sup> There is some dispute as to the preposition with  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\epsilon$  here. Codices B C P have  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ , but  $\Delta$  D E G K L have  $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ . De Wette says: " $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ : 'mit dieser Liebesgabe.' Aber B C 6. 10. 17. all. Vulg. all. Lohm. Rek. Mey. lesen  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ , was warscheinlich durch jenes  $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$  falsch glossirt worden ist, also: 'in diesem Liebeswerke'."<sup>3</sup> The Expositor's Greek Testament offers a good paraphrase thus: "in the matter of this grace, this contribution of money."  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  here denotes the gift, which is shown by the following clause in which Paul speaks of its disposal. Paul emphasizes here that this will also redound to the glory of God, as he emphasized before that it was the gift of God that made them liberal.

$\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  occurs in this same sense in Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. In his closing remarks of that epistle he says: "And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them

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<sup>1</sup>Kretzmann, Popular Commentary, Vol. II, New Testament, p. 202.

<sup>2</sup>2 Cor. 8, 19.

<sup>3</sup>De Wette, Briefe an die Corinther, p. 227.



will I send to bring your liberality ( ἀπενεργεῖν τῆν  
 χάριν ὑμῶν — ) unto Jerusalem."<sup>1</sup> This was written  
 in reference to the same collection of which we have been speaking. It  
 is interesting to see that in this meaning of "aims" or "bounty",  
 χάρις occurs in a very special sense, inasmuch as it does not  
 point to anything which comes from God but which man contributes. Of  
 course, the urge and willingness to donate these alms, the grace of  
 liberality, is the gift of God.

All Gifts

In a very enthusiastic manner Paul urged the Corinthians to  
 give and to give liberally. As a final admonition and encouragement  
 he says: "God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all  
 grace abound toward you ( δυνάτεται δὲ ὁ θεὸς πᾶσαν  
 χάριν περισσεύσαι εἰς ὑμᾶς - ); that ye,  
 always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good  
 work."<sup>2</sup> God is powerful to make "all grace" ( πᾶσαν χάριν )  
 every gift, temporal as well as spiritual "abound unto you." The  
 little or much that they give, God can restore to them hundredfold.  
 "The might and power of God is such as to make it an easy matter for  
 Him to bless them with every gift, both temporal and spiritual, in  
 rich measure. And the result will naturally be that they, having  
 always all sufficiency, would abound unto every good work."<sup>3</sup> God  
 can give us anything and everything.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 16,3.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. 9,7.8.

<sup>3</sup> Kretzmann, Popular Commentary, New Testament, Vol. II, p. 207.



CHAPTER FOUR

In this chapter we shall consider a use of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  which is very common in profane Greek, and occurs in that use in many other languages. The best translation of it in such instances is "thanks". Robinson points out how a translation of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  is used thus in other languages: "We say grace after meals'. Latin: 'gratias habere alicui.' French: 'grâces', i.e. 'gratitude, thanks'."<sup>1</sup>

$\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\epsilon$

Paul uses the word  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  also in this sense of "gratitude, thanks". Writing to the Corinthians he says: "For if I by grace be a partaker (  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\ \epsilon\gamma\omega\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\epsilon\ \mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\epsilon}\chi\omega$  ), why am I evil spoken of, for that for which I give thanks?"<sup>2</sup> Preuschen-Bauer translate "in Dankbarkeit". The Expositor's Greek New Testament: "The bare  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\epsilon$  can scarcely mean here 'by the grace of God' - especially in view of  $\epsilon\upsilon\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$  ." Paul is speaking of eating sacrificial meat. He says if any Christian were invited by a non-Christian and it were told him sacrificial meat was being served, the Christian should not eat. He should not give offence to a weak brother. Consequently, he should not offer a prayer of thanks at such a meal, because it might be regarded as hypocrisy. Thus  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\epsilon$  is best translated "with thanksgiving" here.

$\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\upsilon\ \epsilon\chi\epsilon\iota\upsilon$

The usual phrase in which  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  occurs as meaning "thanks" is  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\upsilon\ \epsilon\chi\epsilon\iota\upsilon\ \tau\iota\upsilon\acute{\iota}$  . Paul uses it thus in his pastoral

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<sup>1</sup>Robinson, Lexicon of the New Testament.

<sup>2</sup>1Cor. 10,30.



epistles. In writing to Timothy he expresses the gratitude in his heart: "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, ( χάρις ἔχω τῷ ἐνδυναμώσαντί με Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν ) who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful putting me into the ministry."<sup>1</sup>

Paul uses the phrase again in his second epistle to Timothy: "I thank God ( χάρις ἔχω τῷ θεῷ ) .... when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee."<sup>2</sup> Paul always begins his epistles with a note of praise and thanksgiving but he usually uses the word εὐχαριστῶ. "Mit Betonung steht χάρις ἔχω statt des gewöhnlichen εὐχαριστῶ. Gerade mit Absicht auf Timotheus konnte er nicht anders, als dem lieben Gott Dank darbringen. In seinem Lieblingsschueler waren seine Wuensche und Hoffnungen mehrmals erfuehlt."<sup>3</sup> Paul takes no credit but thanks God for the faith and faithfulness of Timothy.

χάρις τῷ θεῷ

Paul has a characteristic form also for expressing thanks. He uses the simple phrase: χάρις τῷ θεῷ. He writes to the Romans: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." There is some dispute whether Paul used the term εὐχαριστῶ as Δ A K L have it or χάρις τῷ θεῷ as B V and many minor ones have. Expositor's Greek Testament says χάρις τῷ θεῷ "is the reading adopted in all the critical editions as the one from which the variants are most easily deduced." Paul has just expressed a longing for deliverance. The longed for deliverance is achieved and God deserves

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. 1, 12.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. 1, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Kretzmann, Die Pastoralbriefe, p. 197.



the thanks. "Ein Christ soll also bei seinem gegenwaertigen Suendenjammer nie vergessen, was er als Christ ist und hat, und Gott danken durch Jesum Christum, unsern Herrn, dem er diesen seinen gegenwaertigen, immerhin so seligen Christenstand verdankt."<sup>1</sup>

Paul finds occasion to thank God for the faith of his readers. He writes: "But God be thanked (  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma \delta\epsilon\tau\omega \theta\epsilon\omega$  ) that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."<sup>2</sup> These Roman Christians had accepted the Gospel in all sincerity. They believed the doctrine that had been delivered to them. But this faith is a gift of God, for which all thanks and praise must be given to God, and to Him alone.

In the glorious "resurrection chapter" of the first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul exultantly exclaims: "But thanks be to God (  $\tau\omega \delta\epsilon\tau\omega \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma \theta\epsilon\omega$  ) which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>3</sup> Paul with his firm Christian assurance can defy death and hell. He is a victor over sin, death, and the devil; but only because Christ gained the victory. Therefore,  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma \tau\omega \theta\epsilon\omega$ , to God, the author of salvation, all thanks are due.

Paul bursts out into a characteristic doxology in his second epistle to the Corinthians: "Now thanks be unto God (  $\tau\omega \delta\epsilon\tau\omega \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma \theta\epsilon\omega$  ), which always causeth us to triumph in Christ."<sup>4</sup> Paul's thanks are given to God because, as he says, "we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ." God is the cause of his triumph and the cause of his success; so He must be given thanks.

Again in this same epistle Paul offers thanks to God as he

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<sup>1</sup> Stoeckhardt, Commentar ueber Pauli Brief an die Roemer, p. 347

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 6, 17.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. 15, 57.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. 2, 14.



commends Titus to the Corinthians: "But thanks be to God (  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$   $\delta\epsilon\ \tau\bar{\omega}\ \theta\epsilon\bar{\omega}$  ) which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you."<sup>1</sup> The object of the visit of Titus of which Paul writes was to bring to an end the collection for the poor, which was referred to previously. Titus had as much zeal in the matter as Paul, and therefore, the apostle thanks God who put this "earnest care" for them into the heart of Titus. The zeal which Titus felt toward the Corinthians "was the spontaneous effusion of his own heart and was an index and element of his character. Yet God put that zeal into his heart. This is not a figure of speech. It was a simple and serious truth, a ground of solemn thanksgiving to God."<sup>2</sup>

Then in the ninth chapter of this same epistle, after Paul has reminded the Corinthians of the blessings involved in liberal giving both for givers and recipients, we have a wonderful exclamation of thanksgiving: "Thanks be unto God, for his unspeakable gift." (  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$   $\tau\bar{\omega}\ \theta\epsilon\bar{\omega}$   $\epsilon\pi\acute{\iota}\ \tau\eta\ \alpha\upsilon\epsilon\kappa\delta\iota\eta\gamma\eta\tau\omega\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$   $\delta\omega\rho\epsilon\bar{\omega}$  ). Here Paul can only refer to that one great, supreme all-comprehending gift: God's Son, our Savior. Some would refer it to the offering, but Paul's language is too strong for that. Paul considers the fruits of the Gospel in Corinth and thinks of the fact that all this would not have occurred, if God had not given His only-begotten Son to redeem the world. So he exclaims:  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$   $\tau\bar{\omega}\ \theta\epsilon\bar{\omega}$  .

#### Passages in Dispute

Two passages remain to be discussed. In one the word is

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<sup>1</sup>2 Cor. 8,16.

<sup>2</sup>Hodge, Exposition of II Corinthians, p. 207.



doubtful, in the other the meaning is disputed.

The first is 2 Corinthians 1,15: "And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit," ( ἵνα δευτέρων χάριν ἔχητε — ). There is doubt concerning the word χάριν here. א' A C D E G K have χάριν, but א" B L P have χαρὴν. "Chrysostom adopts χάρις, but explains it as χαρὴ; Theodoret adopts χαρὴ, but explains it as human χάρις, which in the New Testament is not probable. χαρὴν is perhaps better than χάριν."<sup>1</sup> The Expositor's Greek Testament retains χάριν. Westcott-Hort adopt the reading χαρὴν, and Nestle adopts χάριν. Schaff-Lange accepts χάριν. No matter which reading is adopted, it undoubtedly refers to Paul's second visit to the Corinthians which he had planned to make.

That would, of course, be a joy to the Corinthians, but it seems as though Paul's visit would mean more to them than a mere cause for joy. It would be a blessing. Every visit he might make to them would be the occasion of many blessings and would manifest the divine favor toward them. Had he visited them a second time, his presence with them would have been a second grace. So we accept the reading χάριν and give it the meaning of "blessing, favor" here.

The other passage is Colossians 3,16: "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." ( ἐν χάριτι ᾄδοντες ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν τῷ θεῷ ) In this passage the word

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<sup>1</sup>International Critical Commentary, II Cor., p. 32.



is definitely *χάρις*, but what does *χάρις* mean in this connection? The meaning of "sweetness or acceptableness" is ruled out by the emphatic position of *χάρις* and the phrase *τῷ θεῷ*. "In conformity with the connection assigned to *ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ, ἐν (τῇ) χάριτι* is to be joined to what follows."<sup>1</sup> Luther takes it with *πνευματικαῖς ᾠδαῖς* and takes *χάρις* in the sense of "sweetness". He translates: "mit geistlichen, lieblichen Liedern." That seems an unlikely interpretation, especially since then the phrase *ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις* is hard to explain. However, Bengel also takes it thus and refers to Ps. 45,3 as a parallel passage.

Meyer, Alford, Ellicott, and Lightfoot adopt the meaning "divine grace", while Anselm, De Wette, Bleek, and Soden translate "with thankfulness". Preuschen-Bauer: "in dankerfüllter Gesinnung." Kretzmann: "They should sing with grace. The mercy of God is the theme of their grateful singing, of their continuous thanksgiving, even when not a word is spoken." Mezger has probably the best and most comprehensive explanation: "In der Gnade sollen die Christen singen. *Ἄιδειν ἐν τινι* heisst, wie v. Hofmann ausführt, etwas gesingen, von etwas singen. Christen sollen singen in ihren Liedern von der Gnade Gottes. Das ist das Thema, das immer wiederkehrt in mannigfachen Wendungen - die Gnade Gottes. Davon ist das Herz der Christen voll, davon fliesst ihr Mund ueber, davon singen und sagen sie am liebsten."<sup>2</sup> In that sense it also fits very well as the last passage to be considered in this paper. As Stoeckhardt says: "So haben wir Stoff und Ursache, lebenslaenglich von der Gnade Gottes

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<sup>1</sup>International Critical Commentary.

<sup>2</sup>Homiletic Magazine, Vol. 30, p. 46.



zu predigen, ja, von der Gnade des Herrn zu singen ewiglich."<sup>1</sup>

### Conclusion

We have considered every passage in which  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  occurs in the Pauline Epistles, as far as could be ascertained through the use of lexicons and concordances. We have attempted to present clearly and correctly the use of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  in each instance of its occurrence in these epistles. The many false conceptions of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  have only been alluded to as far as it was necessary. It is quite natural that all the erroneous views could not be listed because that would lead us too far afield. We would have to treat the erroneous views concerning the meaning of grace, the universality of grace, the absoluteness of grace, and the efficacy of grace. However, we have shown the positive, correct Pauline use of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  and have found that saving grace excludes everything in man and consists solely in God's love for us through Christ; and the grace that God gives us to lead a holy life is not saving grace and is never said to be by Paul. The Pauline use of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  is predominantly that of  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$   $\sigma\omega\tau\eta\rho\iota\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma$ , and that he knows to be our only hope of salvation. He also uses  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  in the general sense of "charm" and as "benefaction" and as "thanks" but never then as a cause of our salvation.

This true note of Pauline theology was fully discovered by Luther. So he said already in his Ninety-five Theses: "The true treasure of the Church is the holy Gospel of the glory and grace of God." (Thesis 62)<sup>2</sup> This formed the burden of all his teaching, as it is the heart of the Pauline Epistles and of all Scripture. "He

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<sup>1</sup>Lehre und Wehre, Vol. XXI, p. 134.

<sup>2</sup>American Lutheran Almanac, 1901, p. 20



taught salvation by grace alone, salvation in every respect, from beginning to end. All theological thoughts of the Reformation had but one source: sola gratia. We love the word and pronounce it at every step of our salvation."<sup>1</sup> "Kurz, der im Evangelium ausgesprochene gratuitus Dei favor propter Christum ist der unbewegliche Gnadenhimmel, der ueber die christliche Kirche ausgespannt ist und unter dem die Christen durch den Glauben wohnen und wirken. Durch das Anschauen dieses Gnadenhimmels entsteht der Glaube, wird der Glaube erhalten und ist der Glaube 'ein lebendig, schaeftig, taetig, maechtig Ding'".<sup>2</sup> The Lutheran Church accepts no compromise on the doctrine of grace as taught in the Pauline Epistles. "Deshalb soll, ob Gott will, mein Kopf haerter sein als der Kopf aller Menschen. Hier will ich hart sein und auch fuer hart gehalten werden; hier fuehre ich den Wahlspruch: Ich weiche niemand und freue mich von Herzen, dass ich in dieser Sache aufruehrerisch und hartnaeckig genannt werde. Hier bekenne ich oeffentlich, dass ich hart sei und hart sein wolle und nicht ein Haarbreit weichen werde."<sup>3</sup> As Paul taught by divine inspiration, as Luther taught on the basis of Paul's inspired epistles, so the Lutheran Church teaches today. "'Salvation unto us has come by God's free grace and favor' - we cannot keep that song locked up in our hearts. The earth must be filled with the psalm of sola gratia, gratia universalis."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Four Hundred Years, p. 104

<sup>2</sup>Pieper, Christliche Dogmatik, Vol. II, p. 13f.

<sup>3</sup>Luther IX, 139

<sup>4</sup>Engelder, Concordia Theological Monthly, Vol. VII, No.1, p. 3.



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