

THE ANTECEDENTS AND MEANING OF
THE MODERN EVANGELICAL CONCEPTION OF GRACE

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PREFACE

This thesis proposes to bring together under a single cover material which is found at present in many separate volumes. First, beginning with primitive religion, it as-
says to trace the antecedent development of the conception of grace down to the present century, endeavouring to emphasize coherence rather than divergence, and positive as-
sertion rather than negative teaching. Second, it attempts to elucidate the meaning of what it captions (rather boldly perhaps), The Modern Evangelical Conception of Grace.

In the first half of the thesis our method is historical and exegetical, as befits the subject matter. We have tried to permit the discovered facts to dictate the form of construction, and have sought to write with accuracy of knowledge, clarity of exposition and smoothness of expression. As far as possible we have used primary works as source material, and when secondary authors were relied upon we have consistently sought verification from more than one authority.

The second half of our work is organized around the central chapter entitled, The Nature of Grace. Subsequent chapters develop the conception therein set forth, with reference to the chief problems which emerge in the historical discussion, and with frequent allusion to other conceptions of grace, particularly that of the Roman Catholic Church. We have ventured to include a chapter on Grace and Society, being convinced that our conception must acquit itself in Ethics as well as in Doctrine. Our further division of the material and plan of development can be ascertained by reference to the table of Contents, and therefore is not elaborated here.

We are deeply indebted to a host of authors for innumerable facts and suggestions upon which we have drawn with great freedom. We gratefully acknowledge, also, the assistance and inspiration of many teachers and friends whose wise counsel has guided us through numerous difficulties. However, for the arrangement and development of our position, we are personally responsible.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

CHAPTER I

GRACE IN THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

Christianity is peculiarly the religion of grace. Yet the conception of grace found in Christian theology must not be considered an isolated doctrine entirely unique in the history of religious development and utterly different from all that is set forth in other faiths. A concept of such fundamental importance, dealing with the relationship of God and man, usually has an historical pedigree. This is true of grace. Not only do the living religions of the world all possess some teaching about grace which in this context may be defined as 'God's (or the god's) helpful relation to men dependent upon, and initiated by the Divine', but evidence of this reality is found even in primitive faith.

World-wide sacrifice and prayer, in recognizing that we are dependent beings, bear witness to the universal response of men to Divine influence. This by no means is to be equated with grace in the Christian usage of the term, yet it does indicate a presupposition that the God who evokes such response possesses power to help men if He will, and thus constitutes

a first faltering step toward the fuller view of His willingness to aid. Even animism, which many would not call a religion, shows something of this spirit. Indeed, there seems to be in the life-experience of human beings that which, "prompts the movement of the whole self towards a divine object conceived as ministering to the needs of the subject."¹ From the very earliest times there is in man a confidence and a trust which separate his religion from his magic. This trust is the early response of man to the seeking of God, and Professor Mackintosh is justified in saying, "The Christian thought of grace is heralded in ethnic religions by the wide-spread feeling that the gods are kindred and friendly beings, guardians of morality, and, up to a certain point, able to help man."²

In itself, the very fact that men possess the consciousness that God (or the gods) has any relationship to them is an evidence of grace. Hardly can we think of primitive men turning toward a Power beyond themselves without recognizing that very act as the result of an initiative on the part of God.³ Confidence in a Power Beyond indicates the existence of some Reality toward which this trust is directed. The nature of such an Existent may be a subject of dispute, but its being

1. G. Galloway Philosophy of Religion p. 90. (We would say, a divine Subject).
2. H. R. Mackintosh Article on Grace in J. Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.
3. Cf. T. Phillips The Grace of God and a World Religion p. 30.

admits of no question. Primitive men believe Power Beyond exists. Many and varied explanations of man's incurable religiosity are propounded, but in our opinion, the possession of this sense of a Real Other without,

"Can only be explained from a religious basic element, viz, the feeling of the numinous. This is a primal element of our psychical nature that needs to be grasped purely in its uniqueness and cannot itself be explained from anything else." 4

If this be so our capacity to respond to God is an unearned constituent of our being, a native endowment, and therefore, a gift rather than an attainment.

In every religious attitude or action primitive men are responding to a prior activity on the part of the Divine. Possessing the capacity to act religiously does not imply utilization of this endowment. Religious experience on the part of man, possible because of this God-consciousness, can be evoked by nothing less than a revelation of God, for, being a capacity to respond to Him, it is not evoked by anything else. Thus the movement of primitive men toward God, ^{toward the reality} symbolized in Codrington's word 'mana', represents a response to Someone or Something which compels this particular kind of attention, namely a religious attitude of worship or awe. It seems only right to add that this means God's prior activity in seeking men, for how else could men turn to Him, and from what other

source could come the very desire to look heaven-ward? Examination of representative aspects of primitive religion confirms our contention that this Reality is conceived as helpful to men.

PRIMITIVE RELIGION

One of the commonest elements in primitive religion is sacrifice. Sacrifice, usually, is an indication that men believe the Power Beyond, which prompts such activity, will answer and supply their needs. The needs of men in this regard are of two types, atonement for acts already accomplished, and assistance in contemplated acts.⁵ In both instances the attitude toward the Power Beyond is one of reverence, even of communion, as in the eating of the sacred meal. Because the consciousness of sin is strong with primitive men, and since sins of omission are easy to fall into, the only secure course to follow is continual sacrifice.⁶ Frequently, human beings are offered up among the early peoples as an act of atonement. Likewise, the idea of the Scape-Goat is atonement. The sins of the tribe are loaded on such a person, animal or object, and the Power Beyond is pleased to accept this sacrifice. The idea that such propitiation can be accepted points towards

5. W. G. Sumner and A. G. Keller Science of Society
Vol. II p. 1199.

6. Ibid pp. 1210, 1211.

belief that God, after all, does not desire to punish men, but rather wishes to forgive them, if only He can be certain of their sincere desire for forgiveness. Sacrifice for the purpose of obtaining assistance in contemplated acts looks very much like bribery. We have seen Indians placing food under the grave cloths of their dead to insure a good crop. The natives of Borneo keep evil spirits from entering their dead by offerings.⁷ In South India the demons are coaxed into accepting the blood of a goat in place of that of an individual,⁸ and in many parts of the world the first-fruits and first-born are offered up much in the same manner as is recorded in the Old Testament. While such sacrifices sometimes show the desire to avoid ill-fortune, they frequently indicate confidence that positive help, conceived as available, is sought. Furthermore, even the most primitive sacrifice means more than self-denial. It implies surrender, for sacrifice is ever a religious, a sacred act. Thus only the best can be offered up. All this means that sacrifice seeking assistance from the Power Beyond indicates a belief that God demands such activity; and in the relationship therein established with men, will supply their needs in proportion as their surrender, their sacrifice, is adequate.

Totemism and ancestor worship are found among many peoples: in Africa, Australia, China and North America. While not

7. Sumner and Keller op. cit., p. 1216.

8. Ibid p. 1215.

regarded now as a stage in the development of all religions, totemism is still recognized as widespread and important. Both totemism and ancestor worship are specific applications of spiritism. In totemism great significance is attached to the sacrifice because, in most tribes, the sacrifice now takes on a communal aspect. The African who partakes of his totem once a year at a common meal usually thinks that in this act he is fulfilling the wish of the god and therein receives help. In many instances he definitely believes that in eating his totem in his tribal group, he becomes one with the god. In totemism, therefore, men establish, "an essential kinship between man and the object of his reverence."⁹ This kinship often expresses itself; as, for example, among the British Columbia Amerinds where the totem, be it animal, plant or person, is regarded as the ancestor of the tribe or family group. The deliberate worship of family ancestors or tribal heroes is a cognate form of the totemistic type. In both there is kinship with the object of reverence, and belief that the will of the god or gods is to be obeyed; and that such obedience brings help from the Power Beyond. Further, in totemism and ancestor-worship men or tribes expect a favourable answer to their petitions. The totem is especially the protecting and fostering guide of the particular family or tribe.

9. Galloway op. cit., p. 97 quoting De la Saussaye with approval.

Although sacrifice and certain aspects of totemism appear very much like magic, there are at least two differentiae by which we can distinguish their religious character. Firstly, magic seeks a definite objective, as the healing of a disease, but the religious act has no objective beyond itself. It expresses and at the same time completes. Secondly, magic coerces. It employs force, endeavoring to make the spirits or gods do what the magician desires. The whole effort is to control the gods, regardless of their wishes, in the interests of men. It is precisely such self-elevation which religion denies. In sacrifice and totemism the religious can be separated from the magical by diligent differentiation of motive as dependence or domination. Dependence is the concomitant of grace; for it is throwing ourselves upon the gods in the belief that the faith thus expressed is but an answer to the Divine, who can and will supply our needs.

The prayers and hymns of early or primitive peoples show man's capacity to respond to influence conceived as helpful and Divine. Even the exclusive character of the Amerind prayer, "Pity me, I am very poor; give me what I need; give me success against my enemies,"¹⁰ shows that the Great Spirit reveals Himself as worthy of reliance. When the East African flings a piece of straw to the wind and cries, "Forgive me, gracious

10. Galloway op. cit., p. 106.

follow him. We need not pursue the argument further. What is true of the American continent in this regard is, in some degree, true also of the other continents. Wherever prayer is found, there exists an underlying idea of some object or person desirous of being prayed to, and at least a rudimentary faith in the probability of an answer to the petition. When such prayer reaches the adoration plane, as in the Inca hymn quoted above the revelation elicits a response of dependence and trust.

Even in the most primitive responding of men to God, the Divine initiative is evidenced. What has been said of sacrifice, totemism, prayers, and hymns points towards the truth that primitive men perceive a capacity for helpful beneficence in their gods. We may regard it as man's groping after the Infinite if we will, but the real meaning of this persistently recurring phenomenon seems to be that the Infinite is seeking to reveal Himself or Himself to men. We may say, then, that grace is made manifest in primitive religion in at least three aspects: first, that man possesses a capacity to respond to Divine influence, second, that God (or the gods) reveals Himself in such a way as to call this capacity into action, and third, that God (or the gods) reveals Himself as able and willing to help men. This divinely initiated helpful relation of God to men is seen more clearly as we turn to the consideration of contemporary religions.

CONTEMPORARY RELIGIONS

Hinduism usually is accepted as the oldest living religion. While theoretically professing one supreme omnipresent and all-embracing Reality, in practice a multitude of gods are worshipped. Chief among these are Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver, and Siva the destroyer. In the early nature-worship from which later Hinduism developed, the deity Varuna is kind, merciful and forgiving.¹⁴ Hume calls him the, "most highly ethical of the various Vedic deities."¹⁵ It is not, however, until we examine the Bhagavad Gita, written about 1 A.D., that Hinduism shows any marked development of the conception of the gods as helpers of men. Here Krishna, the hero, is represented as god become incarnate, "for the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, and for the establishment of piety."¹⁶ This ethical purpose is associated with the offer of universal salvation to sinners if they "worship me . . . and . are constantly devoted."¹⁷ Very much later, Ramanuja (12th century A.D.) and Ramananda (14th and 15th centuries A.D.) pro-

14. Phillips op. cit., pp. 32, 33.

15. E. Hume The World's Living Religions p. 21.

16. Sacred Books of the East Vol. 8 p. 59, (for specific titles and translators see the bibliography).

17. Ibid Vol. 8, p. 84. Cf. p. 85, "those who worship me with devotion (dwell) in me, and I too in them." (The whole question of Bakti religion is treated in P. Otto's India's Religion of Grace and S. Cave's Redemption Hindu and Christian, concerning which see Appendix I to this chapter.)

proclaimed salvation through divine grace, which according to the North school is irresistible and according to the South school requires the co-operation of man. In almost all the numerous sects of Hinduism a cosmic power known as karma is acknowledged, existing apart from any deity. "This is an impersonal 'law of the deed', which administers due retribution to every person for his deeds by assigning him in his next incarnation a higher or a lower social status."¹⁸ Even in such a law men bear witness to the interest of the Power Beyond in them, for acts must be valued at the court of this 'law of deed' in relation to Something or Someone who, on this predicate, is assumed to have a relation to men. Hinduism frequently disclaims the permanent worth of the human individual, yet it professes a rule in which men win heaven by deeds deemed worthful in reference to a universal and unfailingly just principle of karma. In the diversity of beliefs present within Hinduism the gods are frequently men's confidants, helpers, and guardians. They are rarely the tormentors of men. Even the destroyer, Siva, is blue-throated because he drank poison in order to save men. Hinduism does not present an unchanging picture of its gods as seeking to help men, but neither does it exclude such assistance. Such aid is sometimes explicitly proclaimed; more often it is the implicit corollary of actions and words which show dependence, or even trust.

18. Hume *op. cit.*, p. 39. Cf. Cave, *op. cit.*, p. 180 ff.

Jainism was the first organized effort to reform Hinduism. Mahavira began by sweeping aside all thought of a Supreme Being and all ideas of praying to such an One. He said, "Man! Thou art thy own friend; why wishest thou for a friend beyond thyself?"¹⁹ It is strange, therefore, that Jains consider it a terrible insult to be called atheists, since their religion acknowledges no Supreme Being. But in this case, as in many others, a religion founded upon the rejection of Power Beyond soon deifies its founder and sets up many other saviours. This fact seems to indicate that men cannot remain satisfied with a noble law which requires much from them but gives no assurance of aid in fulfilling that law. Although in its original form Jainism denies the availability of divine help, worship quickly arises after Mahavira's death, and in a century men set up idols to him who denies the existence of God, and seek favours in the name of one who scorns the possibility of receiving them. Although ascetic in character, Mahavira's life often is gracious in quality. He leaves the comfort and luxury of a princely home to seek salvation: but does not do so till his parents have died, out of consideration for them. On the other hand, he denies the desirability of love. The Angas say, "a monk who loves not even those who love him, will be free from sin and hatred."²⁰

19. Sacred Books of the East Vol. 22, p. 33.

20. Ibid Vol. 45, p. 32.

Yet he brings his followers into a voluntarily entered congregation, denounces caste, and proclaims a universal religion in which no class distinctions hold. Mahavira never forsook Hinduism. He who rejected the gods nevertheless receives his own commission from them, "Ahrat! propagate the religion which is a blessing to all creatures in the world!"²¹ We conclude that Mahavira although denying the existence of deity, is conscious, nevertheless, of this command as from Beyond. Certainly his followers recognize the necessity of super-human aid and do not hesitate to seek such help by prayer, fasting and worship.

Buddhism, like Jainism, is a reform movement in Hinduism. Some authors deny Buddhism the appellation 'religion',²² but if judge by consequent development and the presence of a sense of dependence, the followers of Buddha, and perhaps even the Enlightened One himself, may rightly be termed religious. If at first sight Nirvana seems annihilation, on further examination we realize that, for Buddha and his disciples, the idea is dynamic rather than static, and one of completion rather than annihilation. "Like the 'consumation' of the Neo-Platonists and some of the medieval mystics, no human terms can describe it."²³ The ideal of Buddhism is a *creative* fruition; and one

21. Sacred Books of the East Vol. 22, p. 195.

22. A. Menzies History of Religion p. 353.

M. Monier-Williams Buddhism p. 537.

23. Galloway *op. cit.*, p. 142.

which both founder and creed couch in gracious terms,²⁴ as, "the highest conceivable freedom from all disturbances."²⁵ Nirvana may be attained by human merit under the law of karma, but in Buddhism, "this law of retribution is subject to a higher principle, admitting release".²⁶ The practical spirit of the Western World, wherein Christianity is dominant, often over-shadows by reform activity which runs shallow, the inherent values of that individual communion with the gods which Buddhism counts essential. While espousing this ideal of individual salvation Buddha also made himself one with the common people of his country for more than half a century, seeking to lead them to their salvation. His followers recognize him as saviour,²⁷ and assert that he entered the world to emancipate and redeem men.²⁸ Putting on one side, for the moment, all the higher developments of Mahayana Buddhism in China, and more especially in Japan, even in that which remains the Universe is

24. Galloway op. cit., p. 142.

25. Hume op. cit., p. 72.

26. W. F. Hocking Re-Thinking Missions p. 53. Professor Lewis Hodous, author of various works on the religions of China, writes, in a personal letter, "If I understand Buddha, merit did not have much part in his attainment of Nirvana." But Cf. Monier - Williams op. cit., p. 547, "of all systems, Buddhism is the one which lays most stress on the accumulation of merit by good actions, as the sole counterpoise to the mighty force generated by the accumulation of demerit through evil actions." Buddhism is, "a mere system of morality and philosophy founded on a pessimistic theory of life."

27. Sacred Books of the East Vol. 21, p. 120.

28. Ibid Vol. 21, pp. 40, 46.

regarded as friendly, men are seen as dependent, and followers find kindness, help and mercy in Buddha and his creed. In the later developments, which may be syncretistic in origin, Amida Buddha desires that all shall be saved, the Bodhisattvas rush into hell itself to save men, and salvation is not of merit but a free gift.²⁹ "What the New Testament is to the Old, such is Mahayana Buddhism to its original Hinayana form."³⁰ In original and avowedly non-theistic Buddhism, in Hinayana Buddhism, and particularly in Mahayana Buddhism, there is an abandonment of one's-self to the Universe, to the Power Beyond and later to Buddha as a god, which we see to be trust and dependence. In the Japanese sect of the Amida, this trust becomes so completely the product of the action of God, and of Him alone, that some see here the counterpart of Christian Grace.³¹

Sikhism, also a reform movement in Hinduism, arose in the fifteenth century. Nanak began as a religious ascetic who believed firmly in one God over all; "There is no Hindu and no

29. Professor Hodous writes, "You might make the point quite strong. The Bodhisattva is a denial of the individual salvation of one's self because the Bodhisattva defers entering Buddhahood so that he might remain in the world for the salvation of others."

30. Phillips op. cit., p. 153. Cf., pp. 100, 145, 151.

31. Henry K. Lui, Lectures, Los Angeles, California, 1929. Professor Robert J. Taylor, Lectures, Pomona College, Calif. 1929. Tasuku Hara in Salvation by Faith in Japan says of the Tariki sect, "we rely upon Amida Buddha with the whole heart for our salvation, believing that at the moment of putting our faith in Amida Buddha our salvation is settled." quoted by Phillips op. cit., p. 152. Cf. Appendix I to this chapter.

Musalman!"³² This universal God is supremely interested in helping men: "At the throne of God grace is obtained for two things: open confession and reparation for wrong."³³ Nanak himself, though later venerated, is represented in the Granth as seeking pardon and mercy; "I am a sinner; Thou art the Pardoner,"³⁴ and, "Bestow mercy (on me), have a little compassion, bring (me) across the sinking stones!"³⁵ He taught his followers that God is supreme, absolute and inscrutable, the creator of all and sustainer of all, "if it pleases Him, then He gives honor; if it pleases Him, then He inflicts punishment. . . . What is pleasing to Him, that is done."³⁶ Salvation is all of God for Nanak; "Divine knowledge is not sought by mere words," by God's gift men obtaineth it.³⁷ Speaking of God's love he writes,

"He has awaited for me for countless ages
For love of me He has lost His heart
Yet, I did not know the bliss that He was
so near to me,
For my love was not yet awake."³⁸

Whether by adoption or by originality the religion of the Sikhs presents God as supremely interested in the life of men, desiring and able to bring unto Himself whom He will, and choosing for salvation neither 'Jew nor Gentile', neither 'Hindu or Musalman'.

32. M. A. Macauliffe Sikh Religion Vol. I p. 37 (sic).

33. Ibid p. 47, Cf. E. Trumpp The Adi Granth xiv. (Eng.trans)

34. Trumpp op. cit., p. 503.

35. Ibid p. 220.

36. Ibid p. 585, Macauliffe op. cit., contains many such

37. Ibid p. 638. statements.

38. Phillips op. cit., p. 75.

When Buddhism is brought to China in the first century Confucianism already is almost six centuries old. While Confucianism is chiefly ethical, all its sacred books refer directly to a Supreme Power.³⁹ That Supreme Power is often called by the personal name, Shang-Ti, in conformity with the ancient and primitive worship of China.⁴⁰ There can be little doubt that the ethico-religious system of Confucius includes belief in and worship of a Supreme Deity.⁴¹ Moreover, Confucian ethics are connected definitely with faith in the Supreme Being,⁴² who is recognized as the giver of the tendency in man's nature toward good; "The great God has conferred (even) on the inferior people a moral sense."⁴³ It is, however, chiefly in the sphere of human relationships that this religion shows that quality of mercy which Christianity conceives as flowing from the boundless love of God. The Silver Rule, "what you do not like when done

39. Hume *op. cit.*, p. 119.

40. F. L. H. Pott A Sketch of Chinese History pp. 13, 14.

41. J. Legge The Chinese Classics Vol. I. (1861 ed.) p. 23. "He who offends against Heaven has none to whom he can pray", and p. 70, "My praying has been for a long time." These illustrations might be multiplied many times, but the root difficulty is disagreement in regard to the meaning of the oft repeated word 'Heaven'; which consequently makes estimation of this point exceedingly precarious.

42. *Ibid* Vol. I. p. 218, "Without recognizing the ordinances of Heaven it is impossible to be a superior man." But see also p. 282, "Sincerity is that whereby self-completion is effected, and its way is that by which man must direct himself."

43. Sacred Books of the East Vol. 3. pp. 89 - 90.

to yourself, do not do to others,"⁴⁴ though negative in statement, is yet a noble standard for helpful relationships between men. The gods are conceived as able to aid men in following this rule, but it is chiefly to be kept by the sheer moral determination of the individual. In the process of adaptation by which Chinese religion divides the spheres of the Universe, Confucianism confines itself more and more to life on the earth, leaving heaven to Buddhism and hell to Taoism. Eventually it becomes a state religion whose priests are governmental officials and in which Shang-Ti is approached at the Altar of Heaven only by the Emperor or President, and just once a year. Even this ceremony is observed no longer. Though its emphasis is on the power of men to achieve righteousness by their own strength, Confucianism yet bears witness to the disposition of Shang-Ti towards men as being helpful. Does he not give to men that very nature which makes it possible to do right? Does he not control the universe so that virtue is ever the victor?

Lao-tze is an older contemporary of Confucius. After centuries of interpenetration Taoism and Confucianism are now similar in many respects, but a note of distinctive emphasis persists

44. Legge op. cit., Vol. I. p. 258. Cf. p. 259. "Is it not just an entire sincerity which marks the superior man?" Professor Hodous writes, "There are several positive statements (of this principle) in the Confucian Classics." Unfortunately, we have not found such as yet, but our failure may be due to the vastness of the literature.

in each. Lao-tze does not teach belief in a personal Supreme Being, but millions to-day worship the sage himself. Men appear to be incurably religious, and seem to be ever returning to the idea of a Supreme Person. The Tao-Teh-King, however, speaks of Heaven or Tao, rather than Shang-Ti. Yet even this vague and mystic Power Beyond can be termed, "the one abounding sustaining source of all things,"⁴⁵ able and willing to make the man who knows the Tao the most valuable thing under heaven, free from guilt, and immortal.

"Behind all things is the Tao, the will of the universe, and men attain virtue as they become quiescent and let this will work through their lives. . . . For Tao is spontaneous in its actions; . . . is not evoked by merit or effort, and results in a life of forgiveness and goodwill." 46

He who knows the Tao by intuition has set before him the gracious ethical standard, "recompense injury with kindness."⁴⁷

While later Taoism has degenerated to a sect of magicians and seers whose chief occupation is exorcism and extortion, we have been greatly impressed by the attitude in which the worshipper approaches the incense-loaded altar of a Taoist shrine. It is wonder, or perhaps awe, and most of all expectancy. Every one of the worshippers expects help, guidance or comfort. In its very degradation Taoism clings to the Power Beyond as able to do for men what they cannot do for themselves.

45. Hume op. cit., p. 139. See Sacred Books of the East }
 46. Phillips, op. cit., p. 41. Vol. 39. p. 82. }
 47. Sacred Books of the East Vol. 39. p. 106.

Clement calls Shinto, "a system of patriotism exalted to the rank of religion."⁴⁸ But if the test of worship of superhuman deity be applied, Shinto is most certainly a religion. According to the sacred books, Japan is the first divine creation and the Mikados are direct descendants of the Sun-goddess in heaven.⁴⁹ In popular practice Shinto is a system of nature worship, in which the Japanese, "in spite of their eighty myriad gods, through discovering in the sun the gracious, the bright and the universal, barely missed a radiant monotheism."⁵⁰ The nature gods are interested in men, for in the fourth ritual of Shinto, it is the Spirits of the Storm themselves who chose the Japanese to be their people. The spirits fix the covenant terms by which they become the Gods of the Winds and undertake to ripen the crops in return for the worship of the people.⁵¹ The beneficence of the gods is uniquely present in the islands of the Pacific. The poet Hitomaro, 737 A.D., expresses the idea thus;

"Japan is not a land where men need pray,
 For 'tis itself divine.
 Yet do I lift my voice in prayer."⁵²

In Shintoism the gods are able to aid men, and are especially

48. E. W. Clement A Short History of Japan p. 17.

49. W. G. Aston Nihongi Vol. I. p. 77. The mythology of the first 108 pages of Mr. Aston's translation repeatedly emphasizes these points.

50. Phillips op. cit., p. 43. Cf. Aston op. cit.. Vol. 1. Books I and II.

51. F. B. Jevons The Idea of God in Early Religions pp. 92, 93.

52. Hume op. cit., p. 168 (quoted from Chamberlain, The Classical Poetry of the Japanese).

favourable to Japan. The islands are created by the gods, so are the people; the Emperor is a descendant of the Sun-goddess; and the gods are men's helpers. There is an affinity between human and Divine, and the Divine showers special favours upon His chosen people.

Each of the three remaining contemporary religions has historic associations with Christianity. Zoroastrianism is related indirectly through the Old Testament. Zoroaster preaches a universal religion and seeks to convert the wicked as well as the good. Ahura Mazda is represented as creator, friendly, beneficent and bountiful.⁵³ "Yea, I will regard thee as mighty and likewise bountiful, O Ahura Mazda! when (I behold) those aids of grace (approach me), aids which Thou dost guard and nurture."⁵⁴ There is also Ahriman, the evil one, who stands in opposition to Ahura Mazda; but in the end moral goodness will triumph over evil. The purity and high ethical standards of early Zoroastrianism are prominent among the Parsees of Bombay Presidency to-day. Belief centres in a personal, ethical Deity, interested in helping men to conquer evil. A high value is placed on human personality, and by co-operating with Ahura Mazda, salvation and immortal life are possible. Originally universal in its scope, Parseeism now is confined racially, but still conceives Ahura Mazda as helping all who will worship

53. Sacred Books of the East Vol. 4. p. 5 ff.; Vol. 31. pp. 127, 154, 195.

54. Ibid Vol. 31. p. 100. Cf. pp. 112, 127, 195 - 196.

him. He is definitely the friend of men, beneficent to all who serve him.

In rapidity of growth no world religion is so remarkable as Islam. The reasons for its initial spurt, and continual increase, lie in the simplicity of its creed, the absoluteness of Allah, and the use of military force. Allah is one and supreme. To His followers He is gracious and loving but to others He is vindictive and hateful. From early times the Arabs reverence Allah, "as the giver of rain and good gifts, the controller of destiny, and the avenger of injustice."⁵⁵ Mohammed, founder and inspirer of Islam, maintains, "My sole help is in God. In Him do I trust, and to Him do I turn."⁵⁶ All of the one hundred and fourteen chapters of the Koran, save one, begin with the ascription, 'In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.' The pages of this sacred book contain, "some noble descriptions of the omnipotent and beneficent Creator"⁵⁷ who is inscrutably irresistible, forgiving and loving; loving to those who do good and follow Mohammed. Allah, "guideth whom he will into the right path",⁵⁸ and also is pictured as misguiding whom he pleases.⁵⁹ There are numerous angels and spirits who intercede with Allah on behalf of men,

⁵⁵. Galloway op. cit., p. 139.

⁵⁶. J. W. Rodwell The Koran p. 270.

⁵⁷. Hume op. cit., p. 223.

⁵⁸. Rodwell op. cit., p. 449 et passim.

⁵⁹. Ibid p. 511 and elsewhere.

but, "No one can die except by God's permission, according to the Book that fixeth the term of life,"⁶⁰ and again, "Nothing can befall us but what God hath destined for us."⁶¹ This predestination⁶² helps us to understand why 'kismet' or fate is accepted universally by Mohammedans. However, adoption of such fatalism modifies the purity of Mohammedan monotheism. The demand for utter devotion in complete submission to the will of an omnipotent, interested, forgiving, and loving Allah, is for Islam a dynamic faith which makes it second only to Christianity in present day numerical growth.

Primitive religion and the contemporary religions of the world evidence the reality of the Divine initiative. All religion, from that of the Australian Bushman to the most highly developed Buddhist sect of Japan, witnesses that God's helpful relation to men is dependent upon, and initiated by the Divine. The degrees in which men apprehend God's revelation vary, but though our ability to comprehend develops in progressive stages, the revelation itself remains constant. God is God, and His revelation of Himself is never less than the revelation of God, and consequently admits of no increase. Our possession of the capacity to commune with God, an endowment peculiar to us as

60. Rodwell op. cit., p. 513.

61. Ibid p. 619 (sic).

62. A. J. Wensinck The Muslim Creed. Chapter 4 deals with the question of freewill and predestination in Islam and points to emphasis on Allah's domination as the orthodox attitude. p. 51, Cf. Hughes Dictionary of Islam article on Predestination.

persons, not being an attainment but a gift, is in itself an evidence of grace. All religion points to the reality of this unique possession. Furthermore, in examining primitive religion and contemporary religious systems, we find throughout activity on the part of men in worship, prayer, praise, and action toward other men, which manifests a trustful and dependent attitude toward a Deity or deities conceived to be willing, and even anxious, to help men. Such attitudes and actions are the result of a prior event or events, and not spontaneous effusions toward a self-projection. That prior event (or events) we conceive to be the revelation of God, for, in view of the particular type of attitude and activity evidenced this is the most plausible deduction. If God does not unveil Himself we are incapable of forcing our way into His presence; and since every one of the religions of the world does indicate a deepening of men's insight into the nature of God's beneficence we are justified in holding that this vision is evoked by His revelation.

Recognition of the affinity of all religion does not imply assertion of identity. Christianity did not originate religion and it does not monopolize it now, but the religion proclaimed by Jesus bears a characteristic mark. That mark is a distinctive conception of grace, perceived in a Supreme Revelation which is different from all other revelations because of the Unique Person in whom it is vouchsafed to us. While even the

quarrelling Olympian family had its Prometheus, and though the gods of many sects seek to save men from sin and despair, offering salvation and eternal life instead, the nature, scope, method, and purpose of God's givingness is not perceived clearly or fully therein. Our brief survey of grace in the religions of the world discloses but few faiths proclaiming a revelation at all comparable to that of Christianity. All these, Sikhism, Mahayana Buddhism and Islam are late emergents and can be shown to have borrowed from Christianity. Moreover, even in these the full significance of God as a loving Father is attained neither in theory nor in practice. The Christian conception of grace, in which God reveals Himself as anxious, above all else, for man's salvation, and willing, at tremendous cost, patiently and persistently to seek fellowship with men as His sons, is the veritable point of differentiation between Christianity and all other religions.

It is precisely here that many modern authors fail in comparing Christianity with contemporary religions. To take a single example, Professor Hocking scorns, "a missionary who defines the God of Islam as a God of power, whereas the Christian God is a God of love" because we find, "a Moslem teaching that the compassion of Allah is the same as the love of God."⁶³ Apparently Professor Hocking tends to agree with

63. Hocking op. cit., p. 43, (underlining by present writer).

the Moslem, but the position seems untenable to us. Now, we do not deny that God reveals Himself to Mohammedans as well as to Christians, but we hold that in Islam men do not perceive the fullness of God's grace. Concretely, Allah's compassion is narrow, limited, capricious, militaristic and towards all those without the fold vindictive in the extreme⁶⁴ whereas the love of God in Christ is limitless and loving toward all. Again, contrast the revelation of God in the death of Christ with the conception of Allah *shown* in his representative Mohammed,^{who} dies in the arms of the favourite wife in a large harem. Unquestionably there is a nucleus of truth at the core of every religion, for the intuition of God which comes to the soul of every man is a revelation of the one God. Though this is true, it is also true that in Jesus Christ, and in Him alone, do men perceive clearly and fully the nature, scope, method and end of God's grace.

64. Rodwell op. cit., p. 511.

APPENDIX I

GRACE IN BAKTI RELIGION

Bakti religion is found in Buddhism and Hinduism. This relationship of the believer to the Divine in faith is the closest known analogy to Christian 'grace'. Otto and Cave both assure us, with documentary support in the sacred books and their commentaries, that this is an indigenous development, and the former calls bakti religion, "a competitor which seems to dispute the sole possession by Christianity of that which is its very heart."^A namely, that salvation is free to all, appropriated by bakti (faith) in God's grace, and not through good works.

In the Amida sect of Mahayana Buddhism the conception of grace is not, however, truly theistic. If salvation is personal fellowship with Amida, the Buddhist abrogates his entire system of doctrine, so therefore, this fellowship is regarded only as the last step toward Nirvana, which is not personal salvation in fellowship with a personal God.

The pre-Christian Bhagavadgītā is the first great Indian source of bakti - religion, and its most influential exponent and commentator is Ramanuja.^B Here Isvara, the one and eternal God, leads men to a truly personal salvation. Furthermore, in

A. P. Otto India's Religion of Grace p. 17

B. S. Cave Redemption Hindu and Christian p. 193 ff.

India the idea of grace gives rise to problems parallel to those of Christianity causing division between those holding to synergism (the monkey doctrine) and those proclaiming the absoluteness of grace (the cat doctrine). In addition to this, Indian bakti religion reveals many of the same doctrinal conceptions as Christianity, namely the differentiation between a worldly and a spiritual life, the necessity of perfect trust in God, election, the fall, the use of means of grace, the experience of living in a state of grace, and the lack of merit in good works. Over many of these doctrines the South and North schools are divided in opinion. Otto says,

"The sum of the whole difference is:

The North: The soul gains God for itself

The South: God gains the soul for himself"^C.

In at least five fundamental aspects bakti - religion differs from Christianity in regard to grace. Firstly, as to the nature of the God and His Incarnation; Krishna is clearly a mythological warrior whereas Christ is an historic person who deals with men in love. Secondly, salvation is individualistic in the Indian teaching but social in the Christian. The 'Kingdom', or a comparable conception, is unknown in the East. Thirdly, sin is the 'power which binds'^D to the followers of Krishna, but it is that which estranges from fellowship with

C. Otto op. cit., p. 58.

D. Cf. Otto op. cit., p. 98 ff.

God to the followers of Christ. Fourthly, and following from the doctrine of sin, salvation is release to the Indian and holiness in fellowship with God to the Christian. Finally, Isvara, as the releasing Saviour who frees men from saṃsāra overlooks men's sins, but God in Christ suffers for men's sin, to reconcile by love rather than by overlooking in indulgence.^F These differences do not negate, but indeed emphasize the point we maintain in this chapter, namely, that God has not left Himself without witnesses to His grace in any religious system. As Cave says, "The revelation through the Son should enable us better to appreciate every word of God spoken by the prophets of India as of Judaea."^F

F. Cf. R. Otto The Indian Doctrine of Grace and the Christian in "The International Review of Missions" Vol. 19. p. 333 ff.

F. Cave op. cit., p. 219.

FORERUNNERS OF NEW TESTAMENT GRACE

GRACE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

In our consideration of contemporary religions Judaism¹ is omitted in order that it may be examined more fully in this present context. We do this firstly, because of its position as the direct antecedent of Christianity, and secondly, because of the more lofty conception of grace which we find in the chief sacred books of Judaism. Grace as 'God's helpful relation to men, dependent upon, and initiated by the Divine' receives frequent and noble statement in the Old Testament. Indeed, Divinely initiated and sustained helpful relation with Israel is fundamental to Old Testament religion.

To begin with, the language of the Old Testament contains two words comparable to the New Testament χάρις. In the Authorized Version 'hen' is translated as 'favour' twenty-six times, and 'hesedh' as 'grace' thirty-eight times.² The former usually

1. Judaism is used as a convenient term for Old Testament religion as a whole.

2. H. Townsend The Doctrine of Grace in the Synoptic Gospels p. 8.

denotes a favour extended by a superior to an inferior, while the latter indicates loving-kindness when applied to the relation of God to man. Although the Septuagint uses *χάρις* for 'hen' and *ἔλεος* for 'hesedh',

"it is clear that 'hesedh', not 'hen' is the word which must be interpreted as expressing the motive of God toward Israel as it was realized in the covenant relation; and 'charis' in the New Testament is really in line with the spiritual development of 'hesedh'." ³

The presence of these two words in the Old Testament, especially 'hesedh', testifies to the importance in Judaism of the idea which they represent; for it is significant that a distinction such as that between 'hen' and 'hesedh' can be made. In many religious systems men's partial perception of God's helpfulness simply proclaims 'favour' as the attitude of Deity towards men, but here we are dealing with a conception of God wherein Yahweh is known to be vitally and actively concerned in constantly guiding His chosen people.

It would be a mistake, however, to confine the idea of Yahweh's gracious care for Israel to the specific use, in the Old Testament, of any particular word or words. Many of the great expressions of grace, now to be reviewed, do not contain the word 'hesedh'. Indeed, the note of Yahweh's creatorship

3. Townsend op. cit., p. 13. Also J. Moffatt in Grace in the New Testament, "in the Greek Bible 'hesedh' was not rendered by *χάρις* but by *ἔλεος*, whereas *χάρις* was almost invariably used to translate the word 'chen'." p. 37. Also E. Jauncey, in The Doctrine of Grace et al p. 5.

and purposefulness, sounded in the first chapter of Genesis. is an expression of Divine initiative which rings throughout the entire document. In this noble poem, early polytheistic tendencies are transcended, and, under the combined influence of Euphrates Valley civilization and the great prophet Abraham, the Hebrews perceive that the whole world is created and governed by the Divine in accord with an ideal end. Elohim is the Creator of earth, air, sea and all that in them is. He is the Creator of man; breathing into his nostrils the breath of life. Although the Priestly Code may differ from the Yahwist document in regard to the manner of God's working, both assert His creatorship of and responsibility for the world and man.

But the most significant Old Testament term for the relationship of Yahweh to the Hebrew people is not 'Creator' but 'covenant'. Later writers repeatedly refer to the time when Moses, convinced that Yahweh appeared to him and commissioned him, returns to Egypt and leads his kinsmen forth to Sinai. The cardinal point for us in the subsequent revelation is that Yahweh cares enough for Israel to choose this people above all others to serve Him in accord with certain moral laws; "because He is moral his people must also be moral."⁴ Nothing compels the Kenite Yahweh to select Israel. It is a free, unmerited choice resulting in a mutual covenant relationship in which

4. L. B. Paton History of the Hebrews lectures, Hartford Seminary, 1930.

Yahweh becomes the God of Israel and Israel the people of Yahweh.⁵ This gracious, divinely initiated action of Yahweh is so important in Hebrew thought that hereafter it forms the basis of revelation.⁶

The initial centrality of the covenant relationship is maintained throughout the Old Testament. Israel's historic revelation on the Mount is followed by Yahweh's continued direction of the nation under the covenant, through prophets, leaders and law; and later, in the immediate guidance of the individual. Many times the covenant terms are violated on the human side, but never on the Divine. Moreover, the Old Testament writers realize that Yahweh continues to care for Israel in spite of human infringements. At length, Hosea's attuned spirit understands that He deals with men in loving-kindness⁷ and Isaiah realizes that His greatest desire is the redemption of the sinful.⁸ So too the Deuteronomist, who like his predecessor Hosea, "glories in the free, ungrudging affection of the Lord as the sole help for an undeserving People. The Lord, as it were, has fallen in love with Israel; like a father He

5. T. H. Robinson A History of Israel Vol. 1. "Their connexion was based on a deliberate act of choice by the God and a voluntary acceptance by the people." p. 94. Cf. Moffatt op. cit., p. 37.

6. D. B. MacDonald Reason and Revelation, lectures, Hartford Seminary, 1933.

7. Hosea 6:6; 13:9, 10: 14:4 ff.

8. Isaiah 1:1-18, 25, 27.

cares for the nation."⁹

With increased perception of the nature of Yahweh's helpful relation to men the inadequacy of external ritual laws becomes evident and that idea is displaced by the conception of internal, personal authority. In the consciousness of the later prophets, particularly Jeremiah, Yahweh's gracious relationship is realized as internal rather than external, as individual rather than simply national and ritualistic. Professor Davidson points out that the Old Testament writers realize, right from the first, that Yahweh is interested in the individual; "He calls Moses by name, i.e. He conceives his meaning as a person and a servant. He chooses David . . . He loves Solomon . . .",¹⁰ but nevertheless Professor Davidson admits that, in these instances, "individuals share the benefit of the covenant as members of the nation."¹¹ Thus, although every disturbance of relationship between Yahweh and Israel affects the individual, it does so indirectly. But now, in Jeremiah's great utterance, "I will make a new covenant . . . I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts"¹² the limitation of contact with Yahweh only through the mediatorship of the nation is transcended. Through great personal suffering Jeremiah comes to

9. Moffatt op. cit., p. 43. Cf. Deut. 7:7-11.

10. A. B. Davidson The Theology of the Old Testament p. 178.

11. Ibid p. 241.

12. Jeremiah 31:31-33. (underlining by present writer)
Cf. verse 34.

understand that personal fellowship with God is possible. But we must not think of this as the dominant view of Judaism, even in Jeremiah's time. Usually the idea of a gracious individual relationship to Yahweh is not present, but forgiveness, mercy, pardon and help are available only through the obedience of the nation. Jeremiah, however, insists that personal fellowship with Yahweh also is possible for His chosen people.

The Old Testament consciousness of Yahweh's graciousness to Israel is made still more explicit in Deutero-Isaiah. The great Unknown of the exile feels Yahweh's yearning for the salvation of all Israel. At great cost to Himself He is prepared to keep His covenant and redeem men, even to the extent of suffering with and for them; "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."¹³ The great picture of the Suffering Servant is followed by the assurance, "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."¹⁴ Prophetic exultation over the salvation of Israel by Yahweh rings through every page, till at last, representing Zion as saying, "The Lord hath forsaken me," he flings back the answer, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they

13. Isaiah 43:25.

14. Isaiah 54:10.

may forget, yet will I not forget thee."¹⁵

Turning to the Psalms, we agree with Moffatt when he comments, "Read the Psalms and you will find practically every thing about 'grace,' except the word itself."¹⁶ God's gracious dealing with Israel as a people, and with men as individuals, is recorded in a multitude of passages; "I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me."¹⁷ "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."¹⁸ "He hath delivered me out of all trouble."¹⁹ It is needless to multiply illustrations, for they are contained in many Psalms. There is throughout a recognition of God as the giver of all good gifts and especially of God as the forgiver of sin and bestower of salvation.²⁰ The summation comes in Psalm 145, "The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion: slow to anger, and of great mercy. The Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works."²¹

Finally, in the Book of Daniel and in the Apocrypha the graciousness of Yahweh is presented as invincible and wonderful.

15. Isaiah 49:14, 15.

16. Moffatt op. cit., p. 42.

17. Psalms 13:6.

18. Psalms 18:2.

19. Psalms 54:7.

20. Cf. Psalms 51 and 143. - also Cf. H. W. Robinson The Christian Doctrine of Man "the power of sin could be cancelled by the simple grace of God, in forgiving love and cleansing pardon for the penitent heart." p. 67.

21. Psalms 145:8, 9.

Israel may be besieged or down-trodden now, but there is ever before her a glowing future in the New Jerusalem. Righteousness will triumph. Wicked elders who accuse Susanna falsely will be punished;²² Daniel in the lion's den will not be hurt nor will he starve;²³ "Be of good cheer, O my children cry unto God, and he shall deliver you from the power and hand of the enemies . . . he will save you."²⁴ It may be that we are now under the yoke but, "Behold, the days come, when the Most High will begin to deliver them that are upon the earth."²⁵ "Hear, O ye mine elect, saith the Lord: behold, the days of tribulation are at hand, and I will deliver you from them."²⁶ The great message of the Apocrypha is the good tidings of the ultimate victory of Yahweh. In Judith the long chronicle of his deliverances ends with the imprecation, "Woe to the nations that rise up against my race: The Lord Almighty will take vengeance of them in the day of judgment" and the exultation, "there was none that made the children of Israel any more afraid in the days of Judith, nor a long time after her death."²⁷ So is the final consummation, the victory of Israel of which Tobit prays rejoicing,

22. Apocrypha History of Susanna 61, 62.

23. Ibid Bel and the Dragon 38-42.

24. Ibid Baruch 4:21,22.

25. Ibid II Esdras 13:29.

26. Ibid II Esdras 16:74.

27. Ibid Judith 16:17,25.

"Let my soul bless God the great King. For Jerusalem shall be builded with sapphires and emeralds and precious stones; . . . And all her streets shall say, Hallelujah, and give praise, Saying, Blessed is God, which hath exalted thee for ever." ²⁸

From the creation story of Genesis to the triumphs of the Maccabees the Old Testament and the Apocrypha record Israel's consciousness of a divinely initiated and sustained relationship of favour and active good will maintained by Yahweh with His people. Thus even law and righteousness are but the garments in which He clothes His eternal giving of Himself to Israel. Indeed, "the divine control of human life in the whole of its activities is one of the profoundest conceptions of Old Testament religion", ²⁹ and one which penetrates every aspect of its conception of grace. For the Old Testament writers perceive that, in the exercise of His absolute power, Yahweh is always gracious because He is always righteous, and for them these two taken together constitute the ground of salvation. Even though such redemption is conceived as mediated through the covenant of the nation its implicit objective is the saving of men, and in the later prophets this attitude becomes explicit in the realization of Yahweh's active disposition for good toward persons. Yahweh is invariably recognized as the beneficent, loving, guiding, redeeming God of Israel, and

²⁸. Apocrypha Tobit 13:15,16,18.

²⁹. H. W. Robinson op. cit., p. 63

He is known also as the forgiving, merciful, comforting and compassionate Lord of the soul which trusts in Him.

Even though legalistic Pharisaism endeavours to weave a doctrine of merit around Yahweh's care for Israel under the law, divine initiative and not human attainment continues to be the characteristic Hebraic emphasis. The law is really an evidence of the graciousness of Yahweh,³⁰ for its validity rests on the covenant relation which is established solely by Yahweh's choice of Israel as His people. In other words, the law is recognized as a revelation in which Israel is aware of Yahweh's love for the nation. Although this is a narrow and exclusive idea of grace, similar in range to that of Islam, "Christianity grew up in the soil of the Law, and derived from it some of its most precious elements."³¹

GRACE IN GRAECO-ROMAN PHILOSOPHICAL MOVEMENTS

While the law is being codified, the Apocrypha written, and many of the Psalms composed, Judaism and its environment comes under the influence of Greek culture. One result of Alexander's conquests is a heritage of thought, literature and religion which makes a strong impression in all the Levantine countries, including the land of the Hebrews. But,

30. Cf. E. F. Scott The Gospel and its Tributaries p. 35. also H. Townsend The Doctrine of Grace in the Synoptic Gospels p. 30 f.

31. E. F. Scott The First Age of Christianity p. 30.

"while individual Jews, and doubtless many of them, were drawn away from the faith of their fathers, it is certain that so far as the fundamental tenets of Judaism itself were concerned Greek thought was unable to modify them." 32

Nevertheless, the appearance of the Septuagint marks the beginning of a period wherein Hebrew religion is expressed increasingly in Greek thought-forms. It is important therefore, since this is the milieu of early Christianity, that the relation of the Divine and human in the Greek heritage should be made clear. This is especially true because Greek language, culture and thought are the common possession of the Roman Empire, or what is frequently and perhaps better termed the Graeco-Roman world.

Throughout the Graeco-Roman world, "there was a practically universal faith in the goodness and love of God."³³ The great philosophers of Athens, Socrates and particularly Plato, teach that the Divine is friendly and helpful to men. Plato calls Him, creator, the "maker and father,"³⁴ asserts that He, "is good and is the giver of all good things to mankind,"³⁵

32. W. O. E. Oesterley A History of Israel Vol. II p. 183.

Cf. S. Angus The Environment of Early Christianity pp. 23, 24.

33. Angus op. cit., p. 95.

34. R. D. Archer-Hind translation of Plato's Tinaeus p. 87.
Cf. More The Religion of Plato p. 225.

35. J. S. Hoyland The Great Forerunner p. 69. Archer-Hind op. cit., p. 91, "Let us declare then for what cause nature and this All was framed by him that framed it. He was good . . . he desired that all things should be as like unto himself as possible". B. Jowett translation of Plato's Republic p. 253, "that God, being good, is the author of evil to any one is to be strenuously denied. . . God is not the author of evil, but of good only."

says, "are not the gods, one and all, our chiefest guardians, and the interests they guard our chief interests?"³⁶ and desires to persuade men, "that he who provides for the world has disposed all things with a view to the preservation and perfection of the whole."³⁷ Although Aristotle turns aside from the path of his great teacher, the latter's influence remains dominant in this sphere. Moreover, by the beginning of Roman political supremacy, "the Graeco-Roman philosophies were converted into religions,"³⁸ as Cynics, Stoics and even Epicureans become wandering preachers seeking to meet the universal demand for a satisfying faith, for, "philosophy was to these men not a system of speculation but of salvation."³⁹ Thus, though Stoicism does not explicitly declare the availability of help from God, with Seneca nevertheless, as with Cicero, Plutarch, Epictetus and Aurelius, the providence and goodness of God are proclaimed. Angus therefore, broadly describes the tenets of Graeco-Roman philosophic faith in the words, "God may be trusted to give what is needed and good for us."⁴⁰ But the Epicurean stress on individualistic salvation and the Neo-Platonic conception of an impersonal and abstract 'god' mar the uniformity of the picture.

36. A. E. Taylor translation The Laws of Plato p. 300.

37. Ibid p. 296.

38. Angus op. cit., p. 74.; Scott in The First Age of Christianity p. 40. says, "philosophy was practiced, at least by many of its adherents, in a truly religious spirit."

39. Ibid p. 76.

40. Ibid p. 96.

Nevertheless, with the exceptions already noted, Graeco-Roman philosophic thought, usually couching its conceptions in terms of men's kinship with the gods, bears witness to a helpful relationship between the Divine and human. And if we leave the philosophy of the schools and examine the practical attitude of the people, we find that Greek anthropomorphism and pantheism possess at least the virtue of bringing God and man near to one another. In each philosophic system wherein men perceive the revelation of the Divine as a personal Being (or beings), this Being (or beings) is known to be helpful to men. Further, it is clear in each instance, that any relation of such a Being (or beings) to man must perforce, be Divinely initiated, or God would no longer be God, but instead a man-projected marionette. We may say then, that, "on the whole there was a recognition that man could not face the universe without some support from sources other than his own capacities."⁴¹

At Alexandria, where Jews of the Dispersion mingle with Greeks and Romans, a distinctive philosophic school arises. In the Logos doctrine, Philo, its chief proponent, attempts to bring Judaism and Hellenism into one comprehensive and mutually supporting system, starting from personal religious insight and attempting to scale the metaphysical heights.⁴² This attempt leads Philo away from the doctrine of grace. Two views present

41. Moffatt op. cit., p. 65.

42. A. C. Purdy Lectures Hartford p. 27.

themselves for our appraisal. Professor Manson says, "In Philo . . . the word ($\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$) plays no distinctive part"⁴³

and regards the Divine gifts of which the Alexandrian writes as, "conceived regularly on the natural plane of life."⁴⁴

Professor Moffatt, on the other hand claims, "Nothing is more characteristic of Philo than this emphasis on the grace of God. He loves to use the word, often in a deep meaning."⁴⁵

The difference in estimate is due partially to a divergence of definition. Professor Manson is thinking of grace in specifically New Testament terms, whereas Professor Moffatt uses the word in a wider meaning. Supported by ample evidence from the works of Philo, Professor Kennedy espouses the view that the idea of grace, "obviously belongs to the inmost texture of his (Philo's) devout experience."⁴⁶ He finds that God, for Philo, "is always and continuously the doer of kindness without interruption,"⁴⁷ even to wrongdoers. Thus God gives to men their

43. W. Manson Grace in the New Testament in Whitley (ed) The Doctrine of Grace p. 37 (underlining by present writer).

44. Manson op. cit., p. 37 (underlining by present writer).

45. Moffatt op. cit., p. 47 (underlining by present writer).

46. H. A. A. Kennedy Philo's Contribution to Religion p. 143 See all of chap. V.

47. Ibid p. 145. Cf. C. D. Yonge The Works of Philo Judaeus Vol. I. p. 434, where Philo, commenting on the words, "God everlasting" in Genesis 21:33 says, "The expression, 'everlasting God', is equivalent to, God who bestows gifts, not sometimes giving and sometimes not, but always and incessantly; it is equivalent to, God who does good uninterruptedly". Further, Vol. II. p. 282, Philo says, "the man who is not blinded by self-love, looks upon the only true maker of all things, God, as the cause of all the good things affecting his soul, or body, or his external circumstances."

own highest faculties. Commenting on Genesis 17:4, Philo says,

"There are very many kinds of covenants, which distribute graces and gifts to those who are worthy to receive them; but the highest kind of covenant of all is I myself:

For on some persons God is in the habit of bestowing his graces by the intervention of others; as, for instance, through the medium of earth, water, air, the sun, the moon, heaven, and other incorporeal powers. But he bestows them on others through himself alone, exhibiting himself as the inheritance of those who receive him". 48

Formulating his doctrine of Divine Causality Philo writes,

"Every one who is not conceited will confess that God is the only cause of all good things, whether for the soul or the body or external circumstances."⁴⁹ "We are indeed," says Professor Kennedy, "moving in an atmosphere in which the way of the Lord is being prepared."⁵⁰

On this evidence, Philo clearly possesses a very real conception of 'God's helpful relation to men as dependent upon and initiated by the Divine'. It is clear that he regards the reason which creates and sustains the world as God's reason, subject to Him, and accomplishing His gracious will.⁵¹ It is, in fact, in Philo's philosophy that the Church finds a vehicle for the interpretation of its grace-message to the Graeco-Roman world.

48. Yonge op. cit., Vol. II. p. 249.

49. J. T. Marshall The Odes and Philo Expositor, June 1911 pp. 527-528 (quoting from De mut-nom. 44). This well-documented paper supports our view throughout.

50. Kennedy op. cit., p. 151.

51. Scott First Age of Christianity pp. 211, 212.

GRACE IN THE MYSTERIES

Contemporaneous with the Graeco-Roman philosophical movement we note a directly religious trend. The Mystery religions, coming from Egyptian and Asiatic sources spread rapidly throughout the Graeco-Roman world. Greek cults adopt rituals and festivals, until the intermingling becomes so complete as to obscure the source of any specific practice. The power of these cults resides in their promise of redemption. To a world weary with conflict finally at rest under Roman rule, to people now disappointed and disillusioned by the disintegration of philosophy, and to an Empire degenerating by inner corruption, the Mysteries offer a ray of hope. The individual, isolated by the sheer universalism of Empire, is reassured of his salvation. Gods incarnate look upon the initiated with favour and redeem men from sin to a salvation which sometimes includes personal immortality. Fantastic and crude though they be, (as the Great Mother cult drenching the novitiate with the blood of a slain bullock) these cults bear witness to the deep spiritual idea that man belongs to a higher world and God (or the gods) desires to bring him thither. The Jews, especially those of the Dispersion, could not be immune to this religious movement. Oesterley speaks of Dionysus and Apollo being 'Judaized', notes the assimilation of cult festivals,⁵² and calls attention to the adoption of Graeco-Oriental

52. Oesterley op. cit., p. 307 (speaking of the period prior to Roman control of Palestine).

mysteries by the Jews of Asia Minor.⁵³ Now although these cults do not employ the term 'grace',⁵⁴ they undoubtedly profess the root idea. The hope which they hold out to votaries is a promise of guidance and help.⁵⁵ Osiris is brutal - but nevertheless a man-god who suffers, dies and rises again as the saviour of his devotees.⁵⁶ While expressed in elemental fashion, grace is present in the mysteries. The cults offer strength, spiritual support, sympathy and help to men.

CONCLUSION

The world into which Christianity comes is not devoid of all thought of God's loving-kindness to men. In the Old Testament Yahweh is the covenant-keeping God of Israel, who, by His own initiative, establishes and maintains a beneficent relationship with the nation. Prophetic religion in particular is based on the realization of Yahweh's gracious care for men, which care the Old Testament writers discern especially in the sovereign power and absolute righteousness of the Giver of the Law. This gospel tributary joins the stream of Graeco-Roman philosophic thought in the centuries immediately preceeding the Christian era. Some of the philosophic schools emphasize the

⁵³. Oesterley op. cit., p. 424. Cf. L. Browne Since Calvary p. 23 ff. for an exaggerated account of this influence in the first century A.D.

⁵⁴. Moffatt op. cit., p. 58. "there is no evidence at all that 'grace' was a characteristic term in any of them."

⁵⁵. J. Harrison The Religion of Ancient Greece p. 49.

⁵⁶. E. W. Hopkins The History of Religions p. 342.

capacity and dignity of man to the depreciation of dependence on God, but such groups are not dominant, and are counter balanced by the favourable position of other, perhaps greater, philosophic schools, by the common attitude of the people, and by the fact that many adherents of the various philosophies practiced them in a religious manner. At the confluence of these waters Philo attempts to make the union complete by promulgating the Logos doctrine; holding steadfastly to the Hebraic idea of God's gracious sovereignty, yet accepting also the Graeco-Roman conception of Reason's importance. The Mysteries form a third stream; one in which Divine initiative and helpfulness plainly is maintained. Thus as the result of these three partial insights into the nature of God's revelation, the world in which Christ appears possesses media which can be adapted to express the fullness of 'grace' in the New Testament meaning of the term. But neither in the Old Testament, nor in Graeco-Roman philosophic thought, nor yet in the mysteries is the idea of grace much more than, 'God's helpful relation to men, dependent upon, and initiated by the Divine'.

PART ONE

GRACE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

CHAPTER III

GRACE IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

There is a modern view which holds that Jesus is to be regarded as the last of the great Hebrew prophets. Thus His message is acclaimed as simply another warning to repent and an additional apocalyptic promise; "Jesus of course believed as all Jews did that God is gracious and merciful as well as righteous"¹ but his chief preaching is concerned with divine judgment.

"To call his gospel the gospel of divine forgiveness as is forgiveness were his chief interest, or as if he made more of it than others, is to misinterpret him. So too . . . of the fatherhood of God which has often been represented as the heart of his gospel. Naturally he thought of God as a father as God was commonly thought of by the Jews of that day. But there is no evidence that he went beyond his countrymen in emphasizing the divine fatherhood or that he interpreted it in a novel way." ²

Jesus, in short, is regarded as a loyal Jew. His God is the God of Israel, His law is just Jewish law, His Bible is the Jewish Bible, His coming Kingdom is a Jewish kingdom, and His gospel reveals no unique conception of God's grace.

1. A. C. McGiffert A History of Christian Thought Vol. 1
pp. 3, 4.
2. Ibid p. 4.

It is true that we search in vain for the word *χάρις* upon the lips of Jesus. It is not found in Matthew or in Mark, and occurs only eight times in Luke.³ Furthermore, Findlay says the Lucan passages, "may be set down to the influence of Paulinism on Apostolic speech"⁴ while Professor Manson claims, "in none of its eight occurrences in Luke does it possess its distinctive New Testament value."⁵ By both writers, the word is not regarded as typical of Jesus' message. *χάρις* is here used in its current linguistic interpretation as 'favour', 'goodwill', 'winsomeness' or 'charm'.

χάρις in some of the Lucan passages clearly does mean simply 'favour'. In Luke 1:30 *Μὴ φοβοῦ, Μαριάμ· εὖρες γὰρ χάριν παρὰ τῷ θεῷ*, it is thus used. The Luke 2:52 passage, *καὶ Ἰησοῦς προέκοπεν ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ καὶ ἡλικίᾳ καὶ χάριτι παρὰ θεῷ καὶ ἀνθρώποις*, is also to be interpreted 'favour'. *ποία ὑμῖν χάρις ἐστίν*, used in 6:32, 33, 34, and *μὴ ἔχει χάριν τῷ δούλῳ* in 17:9 both carry a still more colloquial meaning and *χάρις* may be translated here as 'thanks'. There is therefore in none of these passages any allusion to grace in a uniquely Christian sense.

3. Luke 1:30; 2:40,52; 4:22; 6:32,33,34; 17:9.

4. G. G. Findlay article on Grace in Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics Vol. II. p. 313. Cf. Lambert article on Grace in Hastings Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels p. 687.

5. W. Manson Grace in the New Testament in Whitley (editor) The Doctrine of Grace p. 40.



But in two Lucan verses *χάρις* does indicate something specifically Christian. In 2:40, speaking of the child Jesus, Luke says, *καὶ χάρις θεοῦ ἦν ἐπ' αὐτό*, In Acts 4:33 a similar expression describes the early Jerusalem Church, *χάρις τε μεγάλη ἦν ἐπὶ πάντας αὐτούς*. Certainly the idea of 'favour' is contained in the former passage, but it also, especially when compared with the latter, indicates a potent, active quality of life, not merely beauty of form or winsomeness.⁶ This is especially noticeable because the phrase *χάρις θεοῦ* comes immediately after *καὶ ἐκραταιοῦτο πληρούμενον σοφία*, where wisdom means much more than knowledge, being, "divine or religious insight."⁷ It is, however, in 4:22 that Luke presents *χάρις* most fully in its Christian meaning: Here he says, *καὶ πάντες ἐμαρτύρουν αὐτῷ καὶ θαύμαζον ἐπὶ τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος τοῖς ἐκπορευομένοις ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ*. Luke intends us to know that Jesus' words spoken in the synagogue are winsome and

6. G. P. Wetter *Charis* speaking of Acts 4:33 says, pp. 146-7, "Sprachlich ist Lk. 2,40 . . . zu vergleichen: und sachlich fügt sich dann alles aufs beste." Concerning Acts 4:33 he concludes, from the context particularly, "Ich glaube, dass uns dies eine sehr deutliche Vorstellung von den geben könnte, was die Menschen der Antike unter *χάρις* verstanden. Nicht Petrus verhängt die Todesstrafe; sie erfolgt durch eine Gegenwirkung, fast möchten wir sagen: Entladung der in Petrus (oder besser gesagt der in der ganzen Gemeinde) mächtigen Gotteskraft, ein Beweis dafür, dass 'grosse Gnade auf ihnen war'." See also p. 151 where he concludes that *χάρις θεοῦ ἦν ἐπ' αὐτό* means, "Gnade Gottes war über ihm."

7. W. Manson *The Gospel of Luke* p.22.

attractive, but the content shows that he also wishes us to understand that Jesus regards himself as possessing the power to fulfil the commission of the prophecy he has just read.⁸ It is precisely this belief on his part which turns his fellow Nazarites against him. So we conclude that in these two passages Luke uses the word *χάρις* with something of its wider and deeper meaning. It is possible that this usage may be due to Pauline influence. We are not prepared to defend the Lucan originality in these references, but neither are we ready to say without hesitation that Luke's association with Paul per se explains their presence. What we do maintain is that Luke, in these two passages, felt no incongruity in applying the word *χάρις* to Jesus, in a wider and deeper meaning than 'favour', or 'winsomeness'.

8. R. Winkler Grace in the New Testament article in The Church Quarterly Review, Oct. 1933, says, "it is not necessary, to understand in the secular sense of gracious words. . . the words *λόγος τῆς χάριτος* which Jesus . . . speaks in Nazareth; the probability is much greater that Luke wishes to characterize the speech of Jesus. . . as a speech full of power." p. 62. J. R. Cameron The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ art. in Expositor Vol. 5 p. 218-219 (1913) says, "'Words of grace' is a wonderfully apt appreciation of His preaching, of its content, character, effect, of its words from first to last with the thrill, the inspiration, the enraptured personality pervading them." On the other hand, Wetter op. cit., after considering various opinions on Luke 4:22, comes to the conclusion, "Dass man die alttestamentliche Bedeutung von 'gnädigen Worten' der von 'paroles salutaires' vorziehen muss, halte ich auch für richtig." p. 148.

However, our case does not rest on the mere presence of the word *χάρις* in the synoptic gospels. The teaching of the synoptists on grace cannot be exhausted by the most minute analysis of any one term. The word may never be found on Jesus' lips, but in His message and personality He continually reiterates its centrality and truth. If in dealing with other religions we find ourselves driven back from language to action and attitude in order to understand grace-teaching, how much more should we recognize that in Jesus' whole outlook on life, particularly in His attitude towards God and actions towards men on their behalf, we perceive God's grace as never before in the world's history.

Jesus is always conscious that God's relationship to men is full of grace. 'The God and Father' of Jesus is not a contemplative deity possessing an oriental monarch's favourable disposition to all his flattering courtiers. On the contrary, The Father's relationship to His children is the active interest of One who cares for men and women as persons, just because they are persons.⁹ Does He not say that God cares for the little sparrow, and, "Ye are of more value than many sparrows"?¹⁰ In the Old Testament Yahweh creates the whole earth full of loving-kindness. "Jesus gives this gracious aspect of the created order a precedence over every other,"¹¹ says Professor

9. Luke 15:1-7.

10. Matthew 10:31.

11. Manson The Gospel of Luke p. 70.

Manson, commenting on that exquisite verse, Luke 6:35, where Jesus tells us that God, "is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil," impartially sending His rain on the just and unjust alike. Most of all Jesus speaks of, "the will of my Father"¹² to establish His Kingdom. "The thought of the kingdom - obedience to God, and enjoyment of his blessings - is the scheme of presentation, so to speak, carrying the vital, powerful, moral message which Jesus gave".¹³ It is not within our purview to sift the eschatological and ethical ideas of the Kingdom. F. F. Scott points out that Jesus adopts an old Jewish idea, develops it, pours new content into it, combines apocalyptic with ethic, and places Himself in the midst as the Messiah.¹⁴ But the content of the message of which the kingdom concept is the framework, is the gospel of God's free giving of Himself to men. The righteousness of the kingdom is beyond rules.¹⁵ The goodness which God values comes from within,¹⁶ and is positive, not negative in character.¹⁷ The nature of active life in the kingdom is loving, self-giving, service.¹⁸ Is this a message

12. Matthew 7:21; 12:50; 18:14; 21:31. Mark 3:35. Luke 12:32; 22:42; Cf. parable of the faithful and wise steward Luke 12:42-48.

13. H. Branscomb The Teaching of Jesus p. 164. In Matthew 24:14, Jesus speaks of, "this gospel of the kingdom."

14. E. F. Scott The Kingdom and the Messiah pp.3, 109, 122 f. 151 ff.

15. Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28, 38-39.

16. Mark 7:15; 12:41-44.

17. Matthew 25:42-45.

18. Matthew 23:11; 20:26; Mark 12:28-34; Luke 6:31.

concerned chiefly with divine judgment as McGiffert holds? Is it not rather a gospel of grace proclaiming a Father who cares for each person, who has created an earth full of loving-kindness in which men may dwell, and whose will is the establishment of a kingdom founded and sustained by love.¹⁹

Jesus "Himself is in the world to accomplish the Father's will. Paul's words, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all"²⁰ are but the re-affirmation of Jesus' own proclamation, "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."²¹ To the careful reader of the gospel story this is not an isolated assertion rising like a solitary mountain peak in a lesser range. It is the very substance of His entire life. At twelve, when chided for remaining in the temple, Jesus says, "I must be about my Father's business."²² At the beginning of His ministry He rejects all power that is not of God, saying to us in the temptation story,²³ "I will do nothing except of my Father'. In the full vigour of His ministry He is so cognizant of God's will in Him that He can affirm, "All things

19. If Jesus' message is prophetic denunciation why is the quotation from Isaiah 61:1-2 in Luke 4:18-19 cut short, thereby omitting the phrase, "and the day of vengeance of our God"?

20. Romans 8:32.

21. Mark 10:45.

22. Luke 2:49 (Perhaps, "to be in my Father's home.").

23. Luke 4:1-13.

are delivered unto me of my Father."²⁴ In confirmation of this note, for example, the definite prerogatives which Jesus claimed over sin,²⁵ over the Sabbath,²⁶ and to cleanse the Temple.²⁷ Jesus' mission is the furtherance of His Father's will of love. He enters Jerusalem, therefore, confident that through death, even the death of the cross, the Father's grace will reach men's spirits. The Father's approach to men in His Son, seeking their salvation, is all of grace.

Grace describes the motive of Jesus' life among men. In Christ a new note of persistent search and ardent yearning of God for sinners is struck. "Jesus speaks as one who is conscious of a unique mission to those whose need of divine Grace is deepest; and He is the bearer of that Grace."²⁸ At the table of Levi the tax-gatherer He replies to the Pharisees, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."²⁹ Can we see less in these words than a scathing denunciation of Jewish law, so well represented by the Pharisee? Does Professor McGiffert really mean that Jesus stays completely within the Law? Surely not, for He seems to care little about ceremonial

24. Matthew 11:27.

25. Matthew 9:6; Luke 7:46-50.

26. Mark 2:28.

27. Mark 11:15-16.

28. H. Townsend The Doctrine of Grace in the Synoptic Gospels p. 6. see also Appendix I. p. 64.

29. Mark 2:17. Cf. A. W. F. Blunt The Gospel According to Saint Mark pp. 156, 157.

uncleanness, trying by every means possible, to reach those who need God.³⁰ Is not this the concept which Paul expresses in the words, "no man is justified by the law"?³¹ Indeed, the significance of, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"³² is that Christ speaks of Himself as occupying, for believers, the position which formerly they had accorded to the Law. Again, when the servants of the king, "gathered together all as many as they found, both good and bad"³³ from the highways and by-ways there is no indication that they are to discriminate between Jew or Gentile, bond or free. The feast of life is for all who will wear the wedding garment in honour of the Son, not just for the people of Israel, as Professor McGiffert would have us believe. If Jesus stays within the old Law, why utter those words in the upper room, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many"?³⁴ When, as Moffatt translates, Jesus uses the words, "my covenant-blood," surely He means something new and gracious. Divine forgiveness, we are to understand, is available for sinners through the grace of God in Jesus.

Not only is Divine forgiveness available for sinners, but moreover, God's yearning for our salvation is the motive of

30. Matthew 12:9-13; 9:14-17; Mark 7:1-23; 2:15-17.

31. Galatians 3:11.

32. Matthew 11:28. Cf. T. H. Robinson The Gospel of Matthew pp. 105, 106.

33. Matthew 22:10.

34. Mark 14:24.

Jesus' life among men. The calling of the disciples is an example of this Divine initiative; He is not chosen by them, but they are chosen by Him.³⁵ But nowhere does Jesus speak more clearly of the Father's seeking for His children than in the parables. In that of the Sower the type of soil differs but the seed is the same to all.³⁶ The Great Supper teaches that those who have obtained privilege do not thereby enjoy the final reward.³⁷ Both these parables indicate that God's grace comes to men insofar as men respond to the loving invitation. This is similar to Paul's 'grace for all', and 'saved by faith.' There is such a wealth of material on this point that, in order to keep within reasonable space limits, we must let a few representative instances carry the weight of our argument. The great parables of grace are the Lost Coin, the Lost Sheep, and the Forgiving Father.³⁸ In the first two, Jesus sets forth the way in which He and the Father work with men. He reminds His hearers that, "the Son of man is come to save that which was lost," suggesting that the lost really belong to God. He tells them it is, "not the will of our Father . . . that one of these little ones should perish," and that, "there is rejoicing in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." No matter how

35. Mark 1:16-20.

36. Matthew 13:3-9.

37. Luke 14:15-24. Cf. comment in Manson The Gospel of Luke p. 173-174.

38. Matthew 18:11-14; Luke 15:3-7, 8-10, 11-32. Subsequent quotations or references in this paragraph are from these sources unless otherwise stated.

great a sinner a man is, Jesus holds him precious in God's sight, and capable of returning to his rightful inheritance. The younger son wallowed with the swine, but when, "he came to himself," when he, by his own insight, perceived the attractiveness of his father's house, such was the nature of his inmost being and previous experience that he could still say, "I will arise and go to my father." But the great climax of the story is not the son's repentance nor the elder brother's envy. It is the abounding grace of the father's welcome, "when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him," long before he had reached the gates, "and ran," not walked, "and fell on his neck, and kissed him." The old skins of Professor McGiffert's Jewish law, Jewish thought and Jewish gospel cannot hold this new wine. This gospel of Christ is the good news of a gracious Father's boundless succouring-love for all men.

For Jesus prayer is one of the chief channels through which God's grace can come to men. Faced with a crisis in His ministry Jesus sought succour in communion with the Father. It is so apparent to His followers that He gains strength from these hours of fellowship with God that they ask Him to teach them how to pray. Our Lord's prayer on that occasion is saturated with the idea that men may find completion only in and through God; "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven" and, "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and

the glory, for ever."³⁹ "He knew that in such experience the will was not only in contact with Reality, but was inspired and moved by it."⁴⁰ The prayer in Gethsemane is particularly strong evidence of Jesus' submission to the will of His Father; "not what I will, but what thou wilt."⁴¹ Hofmann's masterpiece has caught the true spirit of the occasion. A beam of light from the portals of heaven illumines the brow of the Christ. His face is full of peace and glory; for through what first appears as no more than submission, there shines the light of victory. All that Paul means in the phrase, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:"⁴² and more, Jesus expresses by words and deeds revealing the unity of purpose in His will and that of the Father. At the garden the watching disciples could learn of that strength which brings victory in conflict - the gift of grace through fellowship with God.

It has become evident that grace is concerned with the motives of men. Indeed, it is precisely here that Jesus lays great stress. In our Lord's Prayer, for example, the forgiveness of God is linked with man's forgiving of his debtors. Answering Peter's question, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?"⁴³ Jesus marks out the unlimited scope of inspired human forgiveness. This He follows

39. Matthew 6:9-13.

40. Townsend op. cit., p. 188.

41. Mark 14:36.

42. Galatians 2:20.

43. Matthew 18:21-35. Cf. Robinson op. cit., p. 156.

with the parable of the Unforgiving Servant, showing the implications of Divine forgiveness, "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses." Townsend sums it up thusly, "It is impossible to receive forgiveness from the Lord of the kingdom and withhold it from another penitent soul. In the very nature of Christian experience the man who is forgiven by God must also forgive."⁴⁴ The stories of the farm servant and of the vineyard⁴⁵ illustrate in essence what Paul means by opposing grace and works; for motives of the heart are placed in the fore. God's dealing with men is not by bargaining, but by generosity; so also should be men's dealing with one another. While the Kingdom into which Jesus calls men cannot be earned or merited, in numerous passages He urges strenuous effort on man's part,⁴⁶ indicating the necessity of man's co-operation, though grace is itself the gift of God. But Christ strikes at the root of all legal sanction, for the striving which He requires is in the inner world of motive, as distinguished from the outer world of action. "I believe; help thou mine unbelief"⁴⁷ implying both human and Divine activity, states the

⁴⁴. Townsend op. cit., p. 181.

⁴⁵. Luke 17:7-10; Matthew 20:1-16. Cf. Robinson op. cit., p. 165. "justice is something less than justice unless it is something more." also, Manson The Gospel of Luke p. 195. C. G. Montefiore The Synoptic Gospels Vol. II. p. 700. Commenting on Matthew 20:1-16 says, "It is intended to teach that the 'eternal life' is a result of grace rather than of work."

⁴⁶. Matthew 3:8; 7:13; 24; 24:42; Mark 13:35; Luke 18:24.

⁴⁷. Mark 9:24.

situation succinctly.

The blessedness of the beatitudes is an experience initiated and sustained by God through Jesus Christ. Man's part can be stated thus, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it."⁴⁸ Jesus makes it perfectly clear that His way must be supreme in man's life, if he is to achieve His ideal. Commenting on this verse, Blunt says, "deny himself means more than is now conventionally meant by 'self-denial'. It implies the ignoring of self, the refusal to make self the centre of life."⁴⁹ The destiny of the individual, both now and hereafter, is bound up with his response to the Father's seeking and sustaining love. From the nature of God as our Father and Jesus Christ as His Son we see men as God's children loved and sought at great cost, and now brought to a blessedness, which is free, unmerited, and in which men are sustained by Him. Blessedness is the condition of that man's spirit wherein grace reigns.

From this consideration of synoptic teaching certain conclusions may be drawn. The word $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ is found only in Luke's gospel, and there just eight times. Of these eight, six bear

48. Mark 8:34,35.

49. A. W. F. Blunt op. cit., p. 203.

secular meanings while in two instances a deeper interpretation is required. From Synoptic teaching on grace, not containing the word *χάρις*, it is perfectly evident that, contrary to Professor McGiffert, the message of Jesus was primarily a gospel of man's forgiveness by his heavenly Father. Now we would go further and say that, in the synoptics, divine forgiveness often stands in place of the Pauline *χάρις*.⁵⁰ This is indicated in the parables, in the teaching on prayer, and in the emphasis on motive. Thus grace, used in this sense, refers to a graciously imparted gift. It is also clear that grace is thought of as in the Father - being His disposition toward men, as seen in Christ's consciousness of God as gracious, in the Father's care for men, and in the Father's love in bringing men to blessedness. These two meanings of grace in synoptic teaching, as a 'gift to man', and 'disposition on the part of the Giver', are never separated, being variations of emphasis rather than alternations of definition. The synoptic writers are certain that grace is all of God, and not of men, but they are equally sure that men must be active in doing good to grow in grace. Nowhere is an antinomy between these two concepts recognized; everywhere the grace of God, and grace as given by God and received by men, are correlative.

⁵⁰ Winkler op. cit., p. 56 supports this position.

APPENDIX I

GRACE IN JESUS CHRIST

"His readiness to take part in all the festivities and social functions of everyday life marks Him off clearly to His contemporaries from the ascetic attitude of John the Baptist. His playful, gentle winsomeness that won the children to His knees was a scandal to His disciples. His brotherly attitude towards the diseased and stricken, His generous help, His readiness of sympathy, emboldened leprous, blind, and ashamed humanity to dare the publicity it shrank from, or the menace and rebuke of the crowd, to cast itself at His feet, and throw itself upon His gracious consideration. . . . as well as in such exquisitely human touches as His longing look of love given to the young questioner . . . This peculiar graciousness was displayed in such acts as washing the feet of His disciples, and in His patient tolerance of the scepticism of Thomas."*

*G. Currie Martin Graciousness, article in Hasting's Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels.

Cf. Cameron op. cit., p. 222 ff.

CHAPTER IV

GRACE IN THE WRITINGS OF PAUL

χάρις is a word which is used frequently by Greek and Jewish writers,¹ and it is a term which appears in every one of Paul's letters. But certain connotations of *χάρις* as commonly understood in the Graeco-Roman world are unfavourable to Paul's purpose. Among these there is, firstly, the suggestion of caprice. Mediterranean and particularly Levantine peoples are likely to associate *χάρις* with authority acting according to its dominant whim. Indeed, we have seen previously that this meaning is prominent in the Old Testament, and finds a place in the New Testament phrase, 'find favour'.² Secondly, in Graeco-Roman usage 'attractiveness' and 'charm' are regarded as synonyms of *χάρις*. The Greek gods gave *χάρις*, in this sense, to their favourites. Moreover, "δόξα in the

1. See Chap. II, also N. P. Williams The Grace of God pp. 9, 10; J. Moffatt Grace in the New Testament p. 99 ff, p. 21 ff; and W. Manson Grace in the New Testament p. 34 ff.

2. Some Old Testament instances of this usage are: Gen. 18:3; Num. 11:15; I Sam. 20:29; Neh. 2:5; Esth 5:8; 7:3; 8:5; Deut. 24:1; Prov. 3:4.

sense of popularity or fame"³ is sometimes associated with this interpretation of *χάρις*. Finally, *χάρις* could have a sinister application; for it is used to indicate social and political favouritism.⁴ In spite of these three unfavourable connotations of *χάρις*, Paul seems to feel confident that this term, more than any other, will convey the meaning of the gospel to his hearers or readers. If the word *χάρις* is not often found in the Synoptists, it is never long absent from Paul.

It is partly because of the many varied contemporary meanings of *χάρις* that Paul's conception of grace is often misunderstood. For, when *χάρις* is construed in one or other of the above ways, his meaning is bound to be obscured. Paul takes over a term already present in current speech, and adapts some of its content, but nevertheless, fashions and develops the word till, expressing more than ever before, it can stand for the essence of Christianity as Paul, through his experience and thought, perceives it. It is this Pauline reinterpretation which has stamped the meaning of *χάρις* for all subsequent Christian theology.

What governed Paul's fashioning of *χάρις*? Foremost we place his personal experience, beginning with the Damascus Road conversion. No matter how we may seek to explain,

3. Moffatt op. cit., p. 33.

4. Ibid pp. 34, 35.

interpret or minimize this occasion. It still stands as one of the normative influences of his theology. Paul, a Pharisee intent on destroying Damascene Christians, is convinced thereby that Christ met him as he travelled down from Jerusalem. He who is beforehand so zealous for the Law, by this cataclysmic illumination which he later describes as entirely due to God's gracious disposition toward him in Jesus Christ, is transformed and translated into a dynamic, active, vital power for Christianity. As his experience widens and his thought deepens, Paul increasingly construes his new life as life, 'in Christ'. This is in full accord with his conviction that Jesus met him on the Damascus Road; "For I never received it (the gospel) of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."⁵ Thus, generalizing from his own particular intuition Paul places the experience of being 'in Christ' at the centre of his theology. Everything - his initial conversion, his growth in Christian thought and experience, his ministry, and his hopes for the future - is from God through Christ.

"For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God." ⁶

5. Gal. 1:12.

6. Col. 2:9-12.

When Paul speaks of grace he is thinking of Jesus Christ in relation to it. For he believes that he is called, saved and sustained by the grace of God in Christ.

Nevertheless, Paul sometimes uses *χάρις* in a colloquial manner. Twice in Romans⁷ it may be rendered, 'thanks' or, 'thank'. Thrice in I Corinthians⁸ it is the equivalent of 'thanks' or 'approve'. In 2 Corinthians the colloquial meaning occurs five times,⁹ as 'benefit' in a marginal reading of Fescott and Hort, and as 'thanks' or 'favour' in the other passages. These ten references among a total of eighty-nine in Paul's ten commonly accepted letters¹⁰ have no outstanding significance for Christian theology, though occasionally the apostle implies 'thanksgiving' rather than the casual, 'thanks'.

PAUL'S BASIC POSITION

The remaining seventy-nine grace-references in Paul's writings elucidate his specifically Christian teaching on grace. Here indeed, the word grace becomes a leading term in the language of religion. But, before examining in detail the ways in which he uses the expression *χάρις* we must recognize his fundamental conviction that, 'All is of grace and grace is for all'.

7. Rom. 6:17; 7:25.

8. 1 Cor. 10:30; 15:57; 16:3.

9. 2 Cor. 1:15; 2:14; 8:4,16; 9:15.

10. See Appendix I of this chapter.

'Nothing is of self, all is of God', that is one of Paul's deepest convictions. He is so sure of God's unvarying succouring approach toward men in need of aid, that he does not hesitate to say to the elders of the church at Ephesus, "I set no value on my own life as compared with the joy of finishing my course and fulfilling the commission I received from the Lord Jesus to attest the gospel of the grace of God."¹¹ The gospel itself is of grace. This is particularly evident in the salutation with which Paul opens his letters, and in the benediction with which he closes them. From these places of primary importance in which the apostle uses the word grace, we know that he regards it as the word in which he can sum up the message of Christianity. In his own experience all proves in vain; all but the free gift of God through Jesus Christ on the Damascus Road. Paul himself finds that a new fellowship and a new freedom comes when obedience to law is exchanged for life in Christ through faith. This new freedom is God's gift to men, and, in the new life, men are not good in order to merit Divine favour, rather, filled with His grace, they are good just because they are under grace. Grace is the heavenward pole, faith is the earthward pole, and in the relationship of the two, God succours men. On man's side, faith is, "the humble acceptance of the Lord's offer on his own terms."¹² On God's side, grace is the

11. Acts 20:24, (underlining by present writer), (Moffatt translation).
 12. Moffatt op. cit., p. 132.

free Fatherly reinstatement of sinful men; what Paul is accustomed to call, "life" or, "life eternal".¹³ After his great contrast in Romans six he sums it all up thus, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."¹⁴

'Grace is for all'. We do not know the source of this persuasion in Paul; but the conviction certainly is present. The universalism of Romans is most marked; "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,"¹⁵ "every one of us shall give account of himself to God,"¹⁶ "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him,"¹⁷ and Paul, a Pharisee, regards Abraham as the father of all, "who also walk in the steps of that faith . . . which he had being yet uncircumcised."¹⁸ This burning conviction of Paul expressed in Romans is found in the other letters also; of all within the Church he says, "unto every one of us is given grace,"¹⁹ the benediction of 2 Thessalonians is, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all,"²⁰ and in the sphere of grace he includes, "all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."²¹ The apostle's conception of grace includes all, and is for all, no matter what else it may contain.

13. Cf. Romans chapter 1-6.

14. Romans 6:23.

15. Romans 3:23.

16. Romans 14:12.

17. Romans 10:12.

18. Romans 4:12, Cf. entire chapter.

19. Eph. 4:7.

20. 2 Thess. 3:13, likewise, 1 Cor. 16:23; 2 Cor. 13:14.

21. Eph. 6:24.

A careful analysis of the apostle's writings reveals four ways in which *χάρις* is employed. The first, 'thanks', has distinctive religious significance when the meaning is thanksgiving. The remaining three, 'disposition' in God, God's 'gift' to men, and the 'state' or 'sphere' of the life in Christ, are present with meaning for the Christians to whom Paul writes.

GRACE AS 'DISPOSITION IN GOD'²²

In its primary usage *χάρις* stands for 'disposition' in God. The English edition of Grimm's Lexicon differentiates this sense as, "pre-eminently that kindness by which God bestows favours even upon the ill-deserving, and grants to sinners the pardon for their offences, and bids them accept of eternal salvation through Christ."²³ There are twenty-five instances where *χάρις* is thus used, twelve in Romans, three in 1 Corinthians, one in 2 Corinthians, two in Galatians, five in Ephesians, and one each in Colossians and 1 Thessalonians.²⁴ In these passages, Paul presents grace as the very heart of his message. "The gospel all centred for Paul on the idea of

22. 'Disposition' is to be interpreted in this context as an unvarying active will toward - not as a transitory attitude but as a permanent attribute of God's being.

23. J. H. Thayer Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament n. 666:

24. Rom. 3:24; 4:4, 15; 5:15, 20, 21; 6:14, 15; 11:5, 6.
1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 3:9; Gal. 1:15; 2:21;
Eph. 2:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; 1:6, 7, 8; Col. 1:6; 1 Thess. 3:16.

divine grace."²⁵ What the apostle affirms is that, "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."²⁶ The picture here is a legal situation, and the emphasis is on justification. This is followed by the illustration from slavery, teaching emancipation, and then by that from the sacrificial ritual of the Hebrews, portraying perhaps, the expiation of blood. In these three great metaphors Paul emphasizes grace as God's loving nature in action. He comes to men as a Father who does not deal with His children by rule, who frees men from bondage to sin establishing them in the status of His children, and who therein shows the great love wherewith He loves us in Christ Jesus. Paul is convinced that this care of God for sinful men is absolutely free and unmerited; "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more of grace: otherwise work is no more work."²⁷ He is further sure that this grace is in Christ Jesus, "For ye know the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he

25. E. F. Scott Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians p. 16.

26. Rom. 3:24, Cf. C. H. Dodd, Romans p. 51-61.

27. Rom. 11:5,6, also Moffatt op. cit., p. 246 ff. on this point, p. 190 ff.

became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."²⁸

The apostle is overwhelmed by the love of God. His own unworthiness only serves to heighten the majesty of God's grace, till he cries,

"God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love where-with he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. (by grace are ye saved:) 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 in his kindness toward us through Jesus Christ for by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast." 29

Though now encrusted by the residue from the theological disputations of centuries, Paul's idea fundamentally is quite simple. He holds that it is God's nature to give and man's nature to trust and receive. What is required of man is faith, answering the grace of God seeking to bring him into the fellowship of the Spirit. Grace, in these and kindred passages, refers to the never-changing will of the Father to seek and to save all men.

GRACE AS 'GIFT'

But in Paul's writings, grace also is used to denote a gift to men. Grounded in the primary meaning set forth above, there is another emphasis made explicit in twenty two instances,

28. 2 Cor. 8:9, Cf. Moffatt op. cit., for development of this point.

29. Eph. 2:4-9, Cf. Scott Ephesians p. 164 ff.

six in Romans, five in 1 Corinthians, five in 2 Corinthians, one in Galatians, four in Ephesians, and one in 2 Thessalonians.³⁰ Grimm defines this meaning as, "capacity and ability due to the grace of God" and further, "the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith and knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues."³¹ We agree with the substance of this presentation. Every one of the twenty two passages on which we take our stand in this regard, is substantiated by Thayer and twelve appear, thus used, in Winkler.³² In the fifth chapter of Romans *χάρις* is used with reference to a graciously imparted gift, and this use is differentiated from the primary meaning of 'disposition in God', thus, "For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many."³³ In Christ men are lifted out of the old order of sin with its wages of death and are, through the gift by grace, placed in a new sphere wherein the outpouring of God's love to men is dominant. In many other passages grace is spoken of

30. Rom. 1:5; 5:17; 12:3,6,7,8; 15:15; 1 Cor.1:4; 3:10; 15:10; 2 Cor.4:15; 6:1,2; 8:1; 9:8; 12:8,9; Gal.2:9; Eph.3:2,3; 3:7,8; 4:7,8; 2 Thess.1:12.

31. Thayer op. cit., p. 666.

32. R. Winkler Grace in the New Testament in Oct. 1933 number of The Church Quarterly Review.

33. Rom.5:15, Cf. Dodd op. cit., pp. 82,83.

as given by God, and received by men.³⁴ The apostle does not lose sight of the source of the gift, but he recognizes a difference between gift and giver. He receives his apostolic commission as a gift from God. "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 laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."³⁵ This remarkable passage implies that grace is thought of as an endowment of power, as well as God's active disposition to save men. The same idea is expressed in, "I have written to you more boldly . . . because of the grace that is given to me of God,"³⁶ where, in the midst of an apology, he still feels the reality of his divine commission. The apostle speaks of, those who, "have received grace,"³⁷ "the grace given unto me,"³⁸ "the grace that is given you,"³⁹ and, "the grace God has given to the Churches of Macedonia."⁴⁰ He beseeches the Corinthians to, "receive not the grace of God in vain".⁴¹ He tells the Ephesians, "I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God, given unto me,"⁴² and later adds, "unto every one of us is

34. Rom. 1:5; 5:17; 12:3,6,7,8; 15:15; 1 Cor. 1:4; 3:10; 15:10; 2 Cor. 6:1,2; 8:1; Eph. 3:2,3,8; 4:7,8; Gal. 2:9.

35. 1 Cor. 15:10.

36. Rom. 15:15.

37. Rom. 1:5.

38. Rom. 12:3.

39. 1 Cor. 1:4.

40. 2 Cor. 8:1 (Hoffatt translation).

41. 2 Cor. 6:1.

42. Eph. 3:7.

given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."⁴³ Moffatt catches the meaning of this verse, translating thus, "each is granted his own grace." Paul wants the Ephesians to understand that God in Christ gives a particular spiritual gift to each person, according to his own needs, and therewith each should be satisfied. It is abundantly clear that the apostle uses *χάρις* to indicate a graciously imparted gift.

There is another term which is used to emphasize grace as God's 'gift'. *χάρισμα* occurs fourteen times in Paul's writings, six in Romans, seven in 1 Corinthians, and once in 2 Corinthians.⁴⁴ Grimm defines the term as follows: "in the technical Pauline sense *χαρίσματα* (A.V. gifts) denote extraordinary powers, distinguishing certain Christians and enabling them to serve the church of Christ, the reception of which is due to the power of divine grace operating in their souls by the Holy Spirit."⁴⁵ Green puts it thus; "a divinely conferred endowment."⁴⁶ It is significant that the apostle employs *χαρίσματα* in this connection when the well known *χάριτες* lay close at hand. He nowhere uses the word *χάριτες* nor does any other New Testament writer. After pointing out the absence of *χαρίσματα* in the Septuagint and later wisdom literature, excepting slight use

43. Eph. 4:7.

44. Rom. 1:11; 5:15, 16; 6:23; 11:29; 12:6. 1 Cor. 1:7; 7:7; 12:4, 8, 28, 30, 31. 2 Cor. 1:11.

45. Thayer op. cit., p. 667.

46. T. S. Green A Greek-English Lexicon to the New Testament p. 203.

Philo, Moffatt says, "It was by an instinct for its possibilities that . . . Paul seized the word 'charisma' and shaped it to suit his interpretation of human nature as the recipient of divine favor."⁴⁷ The word *χάριτες* is burdened with a contemporary meaning inimical to the apostle's purpose, being associated with Greek mythology or used to indicate 'charm'. Moreover, *χάρις* in the Christian sense is indivisible while the *χαρίσματα* are various. The differentiation is clear cut; each has, "gifts (*χαρίσματα*) differing according to the grace (*χάρις*) that is given to us."⁴⁸ The gifts may be many, grace is one. Chapter twelve of 1 Corinthians, where *χαρίσματα* occurs five times, bears out this distinction, "there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit."⁴⁹ The whole point of the *χάρισμα* passages, aside from this distinction, seems to be an emphatic declaration that 'all is of grace'. Men are not to count talents as products of their own lives but are to attribute them to God, who is their true source, and are to use them in the service of His Church, for which they were intended. The *χαρίσματα* are always to be thought of as grounded in, and conditioned by the *χάρις* of God.

47. Moffatt op. cit., p. 105.

48. Rom. 12:6.

49. 1 Cor. 12:4.

GRACE AS 'STATE OF LIFE'

χάρις is used also to denote a 'state of life'. This state of life is the result of God's free giving of Himself to men, being rooted in the Father's gracious 'disposition' toward men, and further, being the manifest result in men of His 'gift' of Himself to them in Christ. Grace, in this meaning, occurs sixteen times in Paul's writings; four in Romans, five in 2 Corinthians, three in Galatians, two in Colossians, and one each in Ephesians and Philipians.⁵⁰ Grimm gives recognition to this usage as meaning, "the spiritual condition of one governed by the power of divine grace, what theologians call the 'status gratiae'."⁵¹ Green calls it, "a graciously vouchsafed spiritual position."⁵² "This grace wherein we stand,"⁵³ is a spiritual status, or 'standing' as Moffatt translates, in which we are no more at enmity with God because of sin, but live in such fine accord with our total environment as can be described only by 'peace'. This comes to us because, "God's love floods our hearts through the holy Spirit which has been given to us."⁵⁴ Paul's great psychological argument,⁵⁵ first revealing the apostle's view of men's

50. Rom.5:2,21; 6:14,15; 2 Cor.1:12; 8:6,7,19; 9:14; Gal.1:6; 2:9; 5:4; Col.3:16; 4:16; Eph.4:29; Phil.1:7.

51. Thayer op. cit., p. 666.

52. Green op. cit., p. 203.

53. Rom.5:2; also note 5:1.

54. Rom.5:5 (Moffatt translation).

55. Rom.7:7-25.

inadequacy, rises to a triumphant cry which is the prelude to an appraisal of life in the Spirit,⁵⁶ that is, to a description of life, "under grace."⁵⁷ The apostle's writings often link the Holy Spirit, power, and grace together. In some instances we might replace the word 'grace' by either 'power' or 'Spirit' and still preserve the meaning of the author. This indicates that the state of grace is one of power, in the Spirit, or as Paul more often expresses it, 'in Christ'. "The bestowal of grace is the being filled with the Spirit."⁵⁸ Thus the whole life of the man 'in Christ' is governed by grace, and this power is seen in the activities of those in whom, "as sin hath reigned unto death, even so (now) grace reign(s), through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."⁵⁹ Righteousness characterizes the new life. Paul here is not using righteousness with reference to God, but to men. In a sense, grace as a state is righteousness. In one place he speaks of men being, "made the righteousness of God"⁶⁰ in Christ. Winkler goes so far as to say, "When Paul wishes to express the content of χάρις most concretely, then he speaks of it as δικαιοσύνη."⁶¹ Perhaps we can

56. Rom. 8:5-13.

57. Rom. 6:14, 15.

58. Winkler op. cit., pp. 63, 64, Cf. Moffatt op. cit., pp. 218, 219, "Grace . . . represents the new relationship and order into which men are admitted, as their faith answers to the divine revelation."

59. Rom. 5:21.

60. 2 Cor. 5:21.

61. Winkler op. cit., p. 64.

best describe this aspect of the meaning of *χάρις* as the dynamic power which bears up the whole life of the person who is 'in Christ', that is, the power of God in men. Grace represents a new relationship, in which men are reconciled to God in present experience, and have begun to produce fruits of the Spirit. Surely this is what the apostle means in saying that his conversation is, "not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God,"⁶² in urging the Corinthians to give liberally for the poor saints in Jerusalem, "that ye may abound in this grace also,"⁶³ in recording that the Jerusalem leaders accepted him when they, "perceived the grace which was given unto me,"⁶⁴ and in that remarkable passage, "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how you ought to answer every man,"⁶⁵ so that even in ordinary intercourse grace may mark your very conversation. Grace is the free pardon of men's sins by their heavenly Father, but it is also the gift of Himself, His power, and His presence in Christ which raises man to the status of children of God, and sustains them therein.

62. 2 Cor.1:12.

63. 2 Cor.8:7, Cf., Moffatt op. cit., p. 230, 231.

64. Gal.2:9.

65. Col.4:6; Scott Colossians p. 85 has an excellent note on this verse. see also Eph.4:29.

GRACE IN THE PAULINE SALUTATIONS AND BENEDICTIONS

Each of Paul's epistles opens with a salutation and closes with a benediction using the word $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$. The current Greek term is $\chi\acute{\alpha}\lambda\epsilon\iota\nu$ meaning 'greeting', or 'good health', as indeed occurs in the letter which the authorities at Jerusalem dispatched to the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia.⁶⁶ The apostle rejects $\chi\acute{\alpha}\lambda\epsilon\iota\nu$ for $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$, and, with variations, always opens his letters in these words, "Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ,"⁶⁷ and closes them with, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."⁶⁸ In so doing he gives special emphasis to the conception of grace. But is he using $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ in these twenty instances⁶⁹ to mean 'disposition in God', a 'gift' to men, or man's 'state of life' in Christ? He means all three. Grace describes "of what kind"⁷⁰ is the mutual relation between God and man. With Paul, it is disposition, gift and state, not separately, but together. In each occurrence of the word, particularly in the opening and closing sentences, all three meanings are present, but now one is dominant, now another. The meaning wavers as the emphasis is placed on one or other party of the relationship. Thus grace as a gift never can be thought of as substantival, for the giver is always

66. Acts 15:23, see also James 1:1.

67. 2 Cor. 1:2.

68. Rom. 16:20.

69. The evidence against Rom. 16:24 is strong, Dodd op. cit., p. 245.

70. Winkler op. cit., p. 77.

behind the gift, and in the state. The *δύναμις* of *χάρις* is not infused potency but the *δύναμις* of the living Lord in men's lives. Grace, because it has reference to the inter-relationships of the Divine and human, never can be static but always must be dynamic. In, "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all,"⁷¹ God's will to save men, His gift to them, and the new state of men's lives *ἐν χρίστῳ* are all indicated.

GRACE AND THE THEOLOGY OF PAUL

If we keep these variations of emphasis in view the relation of grace to many of Paul's teachings becomes plain. The sinfulness of sin lies in its breach of the flow of grace from God to man. Only when men are ready to give up self-righteousness by law or merit and have faith in God through Christ can this breach be healed. Such, "faith is nothing else but the grace which has become alive in the heart, (for) grace has an objective side in so far as it is a disposition of God, (and) also a subjective side in so far as this disposition communicates itself to the human heart."⁷² God's communication of Himself to man is by Jesus Christ. The apostle's view of Christ as the personal embodiment of God's saving will rules out all merit. Paradoxically, it may seem, the great evangelist to the

71. 2 Cor. 13:14.

72. Tinkler op. cit., p. 82.

Gentiles stresses again and again the freedom of the life in Christ, and also, the necessity for effort. Once more grace, coming to men by relationship with God, makes Paul's standpoint plain. The new life of freedom is just this being in the sphere or state of grace, wherein we are dead to sin in the body and alive to righteousness in the Spirit,⁷³ for "the Spirit-possessed individual does what is right because he spontaneously desires to do what is right, not because of any external sanction or coercion."⁷⁴ Predestination and election to freedom is selection for service,⁷⁵ for freedom in the new life is not license but the power to follow Christ. In Him the righteousness of God is disclosed and we enter upon the good life by faith which answers God's initial trust in us. He is responsible for the change by which men are freed from bondage to sin and made His children. "The Christian is not to be saved because he is good: he is to be good because he is saved, and his goodness is determined by the will of the Lord who saved him by bringing him into a right relationship to God."⁷⁶ Christ is at the centre of the Christian's life, and when the end comes, our situation and His, if we have been faithful, will be one of glory, for the end of grace in men's lives is the glory of God; "Man's chief end is to glorify God,

73. see Rom. chapters 6-8.

74. Williams op. cit., p. 13.

75. see chapter XIV.

76. Moffatt op. cit., pp. 131-132.

and to enjoy Him for ever."⁷⁷ This end can be reached solely by the grace of God, which is free to all, and the source of all.

Does the Graeco-Roman world mould Paul's grace-teaching? Concerning this question great scholars, and deeply religious men, can be found supporting each side. The Hellenistic environment, with its mystery religions, philosophies, and Roman law, is frequently echoed in Paul's words and phrases. Is it constitutive of his thought of grace? We think it is not. "Paul had indeed thought deeply on the theological implications of the gospel, but behind all his doctrines was that new conception of life which had been set forth in the Sermon on the Mount."⁷⁸ The influence of the 'tradition' which Paul receives at Jerusalem is not insignificant. The changing of *χαίρειν* to *χαρίς* illustrates the way in which the apostle laid hold of Graeco-Roman forms and filled them with Christian content. The conception of grace which we find in Paul does not exist in the mystery religions, in Greek or Alexandrian philosophy, or in Roman law, as we see in chapter two. Paul, finding no ready-made term for God's giving of Himself to men in Jesus Christ, takes over *χαρίς* and recasts its meaning.

77. The Shorter Catechism (answer to question one).

78. Scott Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians p. 97.

PAUL AND JESUS

Is the meaning which Paul pours into $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\varsigma$ in harmony with synoptic teaching? We think it is: "Paul's noble doctrine of free grace is but the amplification of Christ's own teaching."⁷⁹ We have found 'all is of grace, and grace is for all' a fair summary of Paul's basic position. Is this not equally true in regard to the synoptic story? In the parable of the forgiving father 'all is of grace', and in that of the king's marriage banquet 'grace is for all.' Four usages of $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\varsigma$ have been noted in Paul's writings, colloquially, as 'thanks', religiously as 'disposition', 'gift', and 'state'. The synoptic records cannot be minutely dissected to reveal such a term-differentiation, but the same variations of emphasis are evident. In particular, the synoptists record God's gracious, saving purpose toward men and His free gift of forgiveness. These two primary synoptic meanings point towards the third, for is not the returned prodigal living in a new 'state' or 'sphere', when he re-enters his father's home? Many specific teachings testify to the fact that Paul's views are but the further application of thoughts and principles which Jesus expresses by word and deed. Sin is heinous to Jesus, just as it is to Paul. So also, victory comes through faith, as in speaking to the heart-broken father following the transfiguration, or in addressing all men in the words, "come unto

79. W. N. Clarke An Outline of Christian Theology p. 336.

me . . . and I will give you rest."⁸⁰ Jesus uses more intimate, and more personal phrases, but the ideas are, at bottom, the same. Jesus says 'rest' where Paul would probably say 'peace'; both mean that inner harmony of life which comes by faith in the Father. Both associate grace and motive. Jesus tells the sinful woman who washes his feet with her tears,⁸¹ "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Paul never ceases to urge the necessity of right thought and action, as we see amply above. If we accept the Marcan apocalypse,⁸² Jesus speaks of 'the elect' whom God 'hath chosen'. Paul writes about election to service. We find less in common at this point than any other, but according to both Jesus and Paul men are able to repulse the advances of God, (was He not crucified!) and each prepares himself by every choice, as did Judas,⁸³ for his place in God's world. Beyond this we cannot go, for the records do not warrant it. Enough has been said, however, to make it clear that, while *Χρῖς* as a word comes into prominence with Paul, the Christian teaching of grace is not Hellenistic nor Pauline, but has its impulse and direction from Jesus Christ, as Paul would be the first to recognize. This does not mean that every word of Paul is but the echo of the synoptic story. It means that the apostle's conception of grace receives its direction from that of His Lord.

80. Matthew 11:28.

81. Luke 7:36-50.

82. Mark 13.

83. Mark 14:21; Matt. 26:24, see T. W. Robinson
The Gospel of Matthew pp. 214, 215.

APPENDIX I

PAUL'S AUTHENTIC EPISTLES

Since it is aside from our purpose here to enter into the intricate arguments for and against Pauline authorship in regard to various epistles, we have begun with F. C. Baur's four, and added six others on the authority of A. W. McNeille* and E. F. Scott.** Thus our list stands:

Romans	Philippians
Galatians	Colossians
1 and 2 Corinthians	Ephesians
1 and 2 Thessalonians	Philemon

In these epistles *χαρις* occurs fourteen times in the following verses:***

Romans 1:11	1 Corinthians 1:7
5:15	7:7
16	12:4
6:23	9
11:29	28
12:6	30
	31
	2 Corinthians 1:11

* Introduction to the New Testament p. 109.

** Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament p. 111.

*** Moulton and Geden Concordance to Greek New Testament.

APPENDIX I (ctd.)

In these epistles *χάρις* occurs eighty-nine times in following verses: ***

Rom. 1:5	2 Cor. 1:2	Eph.	3:7
7	12		8
3:24	15		4:7
4:4	2:14		29
16	4:15		6:24
5:2	6:1		2:5
15	3:1		7
17	4		8
20	6		3:2
21	7		
6:1	9	Phil.	1:2
14	16		7
15	19		4:23
17	9:8		
7:25	14	Col.	1:2
11:5	15		6
6	12:9		3:16
12:3	13:13		4:6
6			13
15:15	Gal. 1:3		
16:20	6	1 Thess.	1:1
24	15		5:23
	2:9		
1 Cor. 1:3	21	2 Thess.	1:2
4	5:4		12
3:10	6:18		2:16
10:30			3:13
15:10	Eph. 1:2		
57	6	Philemon	3
16:3	7		25
23			

*** Moulton and Geden Concordance to Greek New Testament.

CHAPTER V

GRACE IN THE EARLY CHURCH

The ideas of the early Church are presented in thirteen New Testament writings. Questions of authorship, composition, and authenticity have assailed many of these works, particularly during the last half century. Though this be true, the spirit and thought of the first Christian communities undoubtedly is reflected in them. The purpose of the Acts of the Apostles is to give such a delineation. The Gospel of John is termed, "the ripest fruit of the ripest experience and thinking of early Christianity."¹ The General and Pastoral Epistles are written to encourage churches or individuals in the faith. The Revelation portrays the mind of the Church under stress of persecution and Hebrews reveals the manner in which the new covenant is to be interpreted by the Church. Whether or not the documents were written by those whose names usually are attached thereto, all these works are products of early Christianity, and from them we may expect to discover the place and meaning of grace in the early church.

1. G. H. C. Macgregor The Fourth Gospel. The Background of Christian Experience in Journal of Biblical Literature. Vol. XLIX, Part II., 1930 p. 150.

EARLY CHURCH SALUTATIONS AND BENEDICTIONS

The influence of Paul upon the thinking of the early Church is variously estimated. Certain it is that language and ideas found in the apostle's works are used by other writers also. In the salutations and benedictions of many writings² *χάρις* occurs in its Pauline sense. Indeed, the appearance of these introductory and closing formulae is sometimes urged as a sign of Pauline authorship. It seems more probable to us that *χάρις* is generally recognized and used at this later date as a distinctive Christian term, one which sums up God's yearning for man's salvation, His gift of new life in Christ, and man's state of life in the Father's family. That *χάρις* should continue to occupy such a prominent position is evidence of the great significance attached to it by early Christian writers. Apparently the word is clearly understood, for though used in many different contexts, the primary Christian meaning which *χάρις* takes from Paul's delineation of Jesus' conception of God as our loving, seeking and forgiving Father remains dominant, and does not seem to require explanation.

While thus in fundamental agreement with Paul, in four books these writers add *ἐλεος* to his salutation.³ *χάρις* is the comprehensive term embracing God's relationship to man, *ἐλεος* singles out one aspect thereof, Now in the New Testament 'mercy'

2. 1 Tim. 1:2; 6:21; 2 Tim. 1:2; 4:22; Titus 1:4; 3:15; Heb. 13:25; 1 Pet. 1:2; 5:10; 2 Pet. 1:2; 3:18; 2 John 3; Rev. 1:4.

3. 1 Tim.; 2 Tim.; Titus; 2 John.

is used to emphasize God's intervention, and since the Pastorals claim this aspect of God's activity as one of their special emphases, it is quite probable that the use of *ἑλεος* in the opening salutation marks this accent. The frequent use of the otherwise uncommon phrase, "God our Saviour",⁴ tends to support this interpretation of the word, and points towards an Old Testament origin of it. The phrase does not occur in Paul's epistles and in the New Testament is found elsewhere only in Luke,⁵ but it is frequently employed in the Old Testament.⁶ The pastoral author (or authors) seems to expand the Pauline opening formula in order to add the rich associations which gather about *ἑλεος* in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, undoubtedly familiar to his correspondents. The employment of *ἑλεος* in this manner marks a tendency to segregate one of Paul's meanings for special stress and as such is an indication of future developments.

Three further points of divergence from Paul may be noted in the salutations of the early church. Firstly, in the words, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,"⁷ where the influence of gnosticism is evident. "The central idea is that the progress and development of the Church's life depend on the inward knowledge

4. 1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3; 4:10; Titus 1:3; 2:10; 3:4; Jude 25.

5. Luke 1:47.

6. As in Psl. 106:21; Isa. 43:3; 45:15; Jer. 14:8; Hos. 13:4.

7. 2 Pet. 1:2, (underlining by present writer).

of Christ,"⁸ as opposed to theosophic and mystic interpretations. The point here is, as made clear in the benediction, that the Christian must, "grow in grace,"⁹ that is, enter ever more fully into the sphere of God's fellowship. Secondly, by the statement, "Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love,"¹⁰ a new association is made. This connection is typically Johannine, for in John's gospel love often appears where Paul would probably employ grace. Truth also is a peculiarly Johannine expression, and in this verse defines, with love, the range of the adapted Pauline salutation. Thirdly, the opening formula, "Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne,"¹¹ is the only instance in the New Testament where grace is connected with 'spirits'. Further, where the word 'God' appears in the other writings, an enlarged and quite majestic phraseology is found in the apocalypse. Each of these changes from the Pauline salutation is made to emphasize or harmonize with the particular purpose of the writer: 'knowledge' to combat gnosticism, 'truth and love' to set forth the Johannine points of stress, 'him which is, and which was, and which is to come' and 'seven spirits' to serve the apocalypse.

8. J. Moffatt The General Epistles p. 177.

9. 2 Pet. 3:12.

10. 2 Jno.

11. Rev. 1:4.

THE COLLOQUIAL USE OF *χάρις*

In ten of its fifty-nine occurrences in early church writings in the New Testament *χάρις* means 'thanks', 'favour', 'pleasure', or 'thankworthy'. Three times¹² the meaning is taken from the Old Testament, as the 'favour' of God. Three times¹³ Luke gives the word and even more colloquial turn as 'to shew a pleasure', or 'desire a favour' or privilege. Twice¹⁴ in the epistles to Timothy it is translated 'thank', and is used in a manner quite common with Paul, that is, as thanks to God. Twice¹⁵ *χάρις* carries a rather different meaning as 'thankworthy' or 'acceptable', when Peter seems to imply that patient endurance of undeserved suffering is counted as "a merit" (Moffatt translation) by God; "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully."¹⁶ Thus even in the colloquial use of *χάρις* later New Testament writers evince personal originality. Indeed, if Luke is Paul's companion, an amazing independence appears in his free use of *χάρις* in ways which Paul apparently avoided. Peter applies the word to the pressing problem of slavery without reserve, and even tells us actions prompted by grace are acceptable to God. But let us examine the remaining forty-nine occurrences with reference to the Pauline categories of

12. Acts 2:47; 7:10,46.

13. Acts 24:27; 25:3,9.

14. 1 Tim.1:12; 2 Tim.1:3.

15. 1 Pet.2:19,20. The colloquial use is here passing over into a religious use.

16. 1 Pet.2:19, Cf. 1 Tim.3:13.

disposition, gift, and state to see whether the implicit Synoptic example and the explicit Pauline teaching continue to represent the thought of the early church in regard to *χάρις*.

GRACE AS 'DISPOSITION IN GOD'

χάρις is used of 'disposition in God' in seven passages. In Timothy, God is referred to as He who, "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace."¹⁷ The Pauline stress on 'all is of grace' is strong here and is found also in Luke's description of the Christians of Achaia as those, "who by God's grace had believed."¹⁸ Titus gives us the 'grace is for all' note of Paul in, "the grace of God has appeared to save all men."¹⁹ Here too grace is centred in Jesus Christ, as is apparent from, "Through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved."²⁰ This thought recurs in the Logos Hymn, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."²¹ In Christ, God, "actively loves and blesses"²² men. This passage links glory with grace in much the same way as Paul, though in the gospel the concept is more fully developed. Peter again presents a variant rendering,

17. 2 Tim. 1:9.

18. Acts 18:27 (Moffatt).

19. Titus 2:11 (Moffatt).

20. Acts 15:11, also Heb. 2:9.

21. Jno. 1:14.

22. G. H. G. Macgregor The Gospel of John p. 19.

when he writes of those who, "promised of the grace that should come unto you,"²³ the thought being that the prophets anticipated God's gracious action in Christ for man's salvation. While Paul applies this idea to the admission of the Gentiles as children of God,²⁴ Peter widens its scope to indicate that the whole Christian hope of salvation is known of old, and predestined of God. The adaptation of *χάρις* to the ends of the various authors, while yet retaining its central implications, is once more evident.

GRACE AS 'GIFT'

In eleven passages *χάρις* means 'gift', and *χάρισμα* occurs in three verses. The two words are used by Peter in Pauline fashion thus: "As every man hath received the gift, (*χάρισμα*) even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God (*χάριτος Θεοῦ*)."²⁵ The point is, as with Paul, that we are to exercise responsibility and use talents as gifts of God, designed for His service. The writer of Hebrews says men will, "find grace to help in time of need,"²⁶ meaning that when men's resources are exhausted, God will supply, as a free gift, the strength which is required to overcome temptation. Luke uses *χάρις*, as did Paul, in speaking of apostolic commissioning; "And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they

23. 1 Pet.1:10.

24. Rom.9:25 f.

25. 1 Pet.4:10.

26. Heb.4:16.

had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled,"²⁷ and again, Paul chose Silas, "being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God."²⁸ But while Paul speaks of his commissioning as direct from God, here it is mediated by men. This tendency is still further developed when the author of Timothy writes, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophesy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery,"²⁹ and also, "stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands."³⁰ Timothy's 'gift of God' is the same enabling power of which Paul speaks but the later author conceives it as coming by means of, "the putting on of hands," either those of Paul, or of presbytery. The idea of election to service is found in Peter's use of Proverbs 3:34, "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble,"³¹ for the context shows that it is intended to stress God's gift as a power which must be used humbly, in the service of the Church. A singular use of this same proverb occurs in James where the phrase, "he giveth more grace,"³² precedes the quotation. The general sense of this difficult passage seems to be that the more complete our submission to God's will becomes, the greater is the abundance of grace given to us.

27. Acts 14:26.

28. Acts 15:40.

29. 1 Tim. 4:14, see P. S. J. Parry The Pastoral Epistles pp. 28, 49.

30. 2 Tim. 1:6.

31. 1 Pet. 5:5.

32. Jas. 4:6.

In John's gospel this is also the sense of, "For we have all been receiving grace after grace from his fulness."³³

Macgregor, for example, comments on this verse, "As one wave follows another from the depths of the ocean, so there flows from Christ's fulness 'wave upon wave of grace.'"³⁴ In the verse which follows, reminiscent of Paul, John emphasizes that grace comes to us in Christ; "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."³⁵ Peter likewise holds this view; "hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."³⁶ God's gift of grace to men is in Christ Jesus. In respect of grace as 'gift', therefore, we find that early church writers in the New Testament are in accord with Paul on all the main points, but that each writer presents variations showing the application of the concept to his own particular correspondent or correspondents.

GRACE AS A 'STATE OF LIFE'

χάρις is employed to characterize the Christian life, in nine, possibly ten, instances. The connection of grace, power, and Spirit, which we noted when discussing Paul, is particularly strong in Acts where Luke writes, "great grace was upon them all,"³⁷ just after they are, "filled with the Holy Ghost," and

33. Jno. 1:16 (Moffatt).

34. Macgregor The Gospel of John p. 20.

35. Jno. 1:17.

36. 1 Pet. 1:13.

37. Acts 4:31-33.

Stephen is recorded as being, "full of grace and power."³⁸ Then Barnabas arrives at Antioch from Jerusalem to investigate he sees, "the grace of God"³⁹ there, and later Paul and Barnabas encourage certain Jews and proselytes, "to continue in the grace of God."⁴⁰ What Barnabas sees is grace-filled lives, and that among non-Jews, indicating approval of the international scope of the Christian message. Again, in the exhortation of Paul and Barnabas the scope is international and the intention is to encourage listeners to continue in the life of grace, to hold on to the saving power of God in Christ, which they may just have realized. The Pastorals present this aspect of grace as a sphere or state of life in three passages. Timothy is urged to, "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus,"⁴¹ and these words are attributed to Paul, "the grace of our Lord flooded my life."⁴² The writer of Titus contrasts life before and after faith in Christ, noting, "that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."⁴³ Grace therefore regenerates life, and further it is associated here with Baptism and the Holy Spirit. Evidently Baptism is thought of as the sign of entrance into the life in Christ; which is a life of grace, as in Paul. The writer of Hebrews has his own way of recognizing grace as a

38. Acts 6:8 (Moffatt).

39. Acts 11:23.

40. Acts 13:43.

41. 2 Tim 2:1, Parry op. cit., p. 54 "seems to have special reference to power received."

42. 1 Tim. 1:14 (Moffatt).

43. Titus 3:4-7.

state. He writes about the heart being, "established with grace; not with meats,"⁴⁴ meaning that the Christian life is not succoured by ritual meals, but by God. Here, as in many passages the meaning overlaps and includes 'disposition' and 'gift' as well as 'state'. Our point is clear, however, for these writers employ *χάρις* to characterize the life in Christ, in manner similar to Paul, but yet with their own peculiar emphases.

Grace is sometimes equated with gospel.⁴⁵ The apostle to the Gentiles never actually links these two terms in his epistles, yet Luke, reporting speeches of Paul, does so most explicitly, writing, "the word of his grace"⁴⁶ twice and, "the gospel of the grace of God"⁴⁷ once. Peter seems to have this meaning in view when he speaks of, "the true grace of God wherein ye stand,"⁴⁸ the idea being that his correspondents shall be steadfast in loyalty to the faith. In this respect also, therefore, these early church writers agree with the meaning of *χάρις* which we found in Paul's writings. But since there are certain usages peculiar to the later New Testament writings, we must consider whether or not these materially alter the Synoptic-Pauline interpretation of grace.

44. Heb. 13:9.

45. Cf. J. P. Cameron The Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ Expositor Vol. 5 p. 223 (1913).

46. Acts 14:3; 20:32.

47. Acts 20:24.

48. 1 Peter 5:12.

USES OF *χάρις* PECULIAR TO EARLY CHURCH WRITERS

In Jude *χάρις* is used in controverting heresy. The verse concerning ungodly men who have crept into the church accuses them of, "turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness."⁴⁹ But the meaning of grace here is similar to that in Paul's argument for the freedom of the Christian beyond law in grace, although the use is rather different, being another instance in which the concept is employed for the author's particular end in a manner not found in Paul's writings. We note, however, the continued use of grace in an ethical content, which is strongly Pauline in stamp.

The author of Hebrews uses *χάρις* in two individualistic ways. He says, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy,"⁵⁰ and asserts that the man who does, "despite unto the Spirit of grace"⁵¹ will have heavier punishment than he who rejects the Law of Moses. Underlying the former passage is the author's conception of Jesus as the Mediator of the new covenant in whom we can approach God with confidence. The idea is not Pauline; it rather expresses a development of the Hebrew conception of divine favour, now regarded however as the loving disposition of God towards all men in Christ. Mercy and grace are used as complementary terms, and we are to understand that God is sympathetic and helpful,

49. Jude 4.

50. Heb. 4:16.

51. Heb. 10:29.

for the Hebrew throne of justice is now a throne of grace. The latter passage presents grace as the active love of God for men, as opposed to the Law of Moses. Its point is that rejection of the new covenant in Christ is more heinous than infraction of the Law. 'Spirit of grace' appears to mean the indwelling of the Spirit in man.⁵² Thus this author diverges from the Pauline usage and utilizes *χάρις* according to his particular purpose, but the deviations continue to emphasize the fundamental conception that 'all is of grace and grace is for all'.

Grace appears to have an eschatological turn in Peter's phrase, "the grace of life."⁵³ Moffatt interprets, "'Life' here is eschatological, and one feature of Peter's mind is that he is the first Christian thinker who extends 'grace' to include the eschatological blessings of God."⁵⁴ However, in another place the same author links grace, as used here, with, "the Christian life, the only life worthy of the name."⁵⁵ While the word 'heirs' might indicate an eschatological view, the evidence is far from conclusive. It seems to us that Peter is urging husbands to share the Christian life with their wives here and now, as much as in the future, "being heirs together

⁵². T. W. Robinson The Epistle to the Hebrews p. 147.

⁵³. 1 Peter 3:7.

⁵⁴. Moffatt Grace in the New Testament p. 321.

⁵⁵. Moffatt The General Epistles p. 135 commenting on 1 Peter 3:7.

of the grace of life." There is little, if any, eschatological implication in the phrase 'grace of life', and certainly no marked difference in this passage from what we find in Paul and in the other early church writers.

CONCLUSION

Our survey of the later New Testament, then, reveals in the first place that $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ continues to occupy a place of primary importance, being the key-word in both epistolatory salutations and benedictions. In the second place, and in general accord with the Synoptic and Pauline usage, $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ continues to mean 'disposition in God', 'gift to men', and 'state of life' in God's family. To further confirm this we might also pass in review numerous references concerning grace where $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ does not occur, particularly in the gospel of John. These, however, would not alter the argument, and are omitted in the interests of space economy. The analysis proves, in the third place, that these later New Testament authors exercise personal initiative in varying the application of $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$. The later epistolatory salutations introduce new emphases in accord with their varied purposes, and in Jude and Hebrews there occur usages not found heretofore in the New Testament. Indeed, even in its primary Synoptic and Pauline meanings of 'disposition', 'gift', and 'state' $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ is subjected to alterations. While these of themselves neither contradict nor refute but rather confirm the

fundamental emphases of the earlier New Testament writings, they nevertheless provide possible authority for still later and more serious developments. This is especially true because of the tendencies which we have noted toward reference to the Old Testament, association of grace and merit, commissioning of Christian workers, and linking of grace and the sacraments.

The fundamental position of all New Testament teaching is that 'all is of grace, and grace is for all.' Within this circle three dominant emphases appear; grace as the Father's spontaneous, free, undeserved love to sinful men as His wayward children; grace as the Father's gift of Himself to men personally in Jesus Christ; and grace as the character of the new life of men 'in Christ'. In addition to these dominant points of stress, variations of application and association appear in the later writings, but these variations do not materially alter the fundamental position of the Synoptists and Paul. Moreover, the three accents of grace are never to be thought of as separate in meaning, for each is seen to include the others since God is the giver of the gift and the sustainer of the state. In The Revelation this whole relationship of God and men, in its three chief aspects, is pictured in the words, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."⁵⁶

⁵⁶. Rev.3:20.

APPENDIX I

GRACE AND FREEDOM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

It has often been remarked that no solution of the problem of man's freedom and God's sovereignty is propounded in the New Testament. Indeed, no necessity for a solution is recognized. The New Testament writers assert both sides of the paradox and maintain both as essentials of the faith, apparently unconscious that a conflict between the two could exist. Says Stewart,

"The New Testament closes with its own unsolved antinomy;- human individuality, free, responsible, but sinful and degraded, owing its salvation to the love of Him who is rich in mercy, who first loved us, who despite human weakness and wickedness makes that mercy effectual, and the evil that is overcome redound to the praise and glory of his grace." *

This problem of the centuries Paul waves aside in asserting 'by grace are ye saved' and also, 'work out your own salvation' for it is God that worketh in you.

* A. Stewart Grace article in Hastings's Dictionary of the Bible Vol. II p. 257.

APPENDIX II

GRACE IN LATER NEW TESTAMENT WRITINGS*

χάρις occurs in:

1 Tim. 1:2	Jas. 4:6	Jno. 1:14
12		16
14	1 Pet. 1:2	17
6:21	10	
	13	Acts 2:47
2 Tim. 1:2	2:19	4:33
3	20	6:8
9	3:7	7:10
2:1	4:10	46
4:22	5:5	11:23
	10	13:43
Titus 1:4	12	14:3
2:11		26
3:7	2 Pet. 1:2	15:11
15	3:18	40
		18:27
Heb. 2:9	2 Jno. 3	20:24
4:16		32
10:29	Jude 4	24:27
12:15		25:3
28	Rev. 1:4	9
13:9	22:21	
25		

χάρισμα occurs in:

1 Tim. 4:14
2 Tim. 1:6
1 Pet. 4:10

* Taken, with corrections, from Grimm's Concordance.

PART TWO

HISTORIC AND DOGMATIC STATEMENTS
OF GRACE

CHAPTER VI

THE EASTERN ORTHODOX CONCEPTION OF GRACE

The Orthodox Eastern and Apostolic Church claims to preserve the faith of the early church in unbroken continuity. No Reformation disturbs its line of descent or ruptures its doctrinal unity. There are divisions of the ecclesiastical body on national lines, but in creed, worship, and dogma these national bodies are practically united. Two bases of authority are recognized, the Holy Scripture and the Holy Tradition. By these two channels the Divine Revelation is spread among men, the latter being necessary to a right understanding of the former, to insure the right ministration of Sacraments, and to guarantee the preservation of rites and ceremonies in their original purity.¹ Due to the importance of the Holy Tradition in forming the Eastern Orthodox conception of grace, it is essential to deal briefly with the teaching of the Greek Fathers.

1. W. Palmer The Longer Russian Catechism pp. 6-9.

S. Zankov The Eastern Orthodox Church passim, assures us that Russian Orthodoxy outweighs all other autocephalic churches in representativeness as well as numbers.

GRACE IN THE GREEK FATHERS

The term *χάρις* occurs frequently in the writings of these Fathers. Often the meaning is secular, as in greetings and expressions of thanks, joy or kindness.² In its specifically religious implication *χάρις* emphasizes that 'all is of grace', in that the whole world is God's means of speaking to men. Any good which descends from God to men - all work of God from beginning to end - is a manifestation of grace. The Old Testament, it is held, reveals the working of God's grace towards us in the act of creation, the power of heroes, the law of Moses, and the words of prophecy. In the New Testament grace saves in a higher degree because justification, sanctification, adoption, and the gift of the Spirit, are now added to the Old Testament forgiveness of sins. The Eastern Fathers hold that 'grace is for all', for the salvation of Christ is to be all embracing. Though embodied in the Church, grace extends even to the depths of the underworld.³ Grace is all pervading and all-enabling. The miracles of Christ are works of grace, the apostolic ministry is a commissioning of grace, at Pentecost unutterable grace is given, and grace passing from generation to generation by the laying-on of apostolic hands - after baptism - is available for us. Indeed, everything is of grace; but saving grace comes to all by the

2. N. N. Gloubokowsky Grace in the Greek Fathers in The Doctrine of Grace p. 87. W. E. Williams The Grace of God p. 14.

3. Gloubokowsky *op. cit.*, p. 91.

mediation of the Church.

The Eastern Fathers teach that salvation, though conditioned by the keeping of the law, is God's free gift. Faith, man's primary requisite for salvation, is communicated by the Spirit out of God's grace. 'Faith' and 'grace' cannot be torn apart, but belong together, being in the end one and the same. Our salvation is thus a gift of God. Further, it leads to a new state of life in which men may say that the Spirit is with them, or that Christ dwells in them. Jesus Christ, that is to say, is the revelation by whom salvation comes. Although grace at times appears as One in the Trinity,⁴ it is always regarded as the grace of the Father in His Son. By Him cometh mercy, forgiveness, compassion, knowledge and preservation.

The Fathers feel no inconsistency in asserting the utter freedom of grace as God's gift, and also the necessity for man's effort. Even after reception of the highest grace, freewill is still essential. This is apparent from the fact that men deliberate before acting; "Would it not be absurd", it is argued, "to declare man's most precious endowment superfluous?" Predestination is asserted, but does not seem to be regarded seriously, being really foreknowledge rather than predetermination.⁵

The Church, by the Sacraments, is the special mediator of grace. When a man puts himself right morally, he may receive the perfect grace of baptism and regeneration. The washing by

4. Gloubokowsky op. cit., p. 96f.

5. A. C. McGiffert A History of Christian Thought
Vol. I pp. 317, 318.

water is effective only if there be also an inner cleansing of the soul. By the bath of regeneration men are cleansed from sin, and the Spirit is communicated to them giving the faith by which they are capable of being adopted as children of God. But even after adoption the dangers and demands of the Christian are such that he stands in constant need of renewal. Accordingly, in the Eucharist, administered by ministers who are full of grace, constant succour is afforded to the new-born spirit of man.

The Eastern Fathers connect grace with angels. The slight indication of this trend in one passage of the early church writings in the New Testament expands to include a host of good and evil angels. The good angels are immortal by grace,⁶ and are charged with the guardianship of nations, bringing help to men as it is needed.

In John of Damascus the teaching of the Greek Fathers is summed up.⁷ With him the greatest productive period of the Eastern Orthodox Church closes, and to him the Eastern Churches of to-day turn for verification of dogma and creed. John of Damascus' exposition of the Orthodox faith sets forth the position outlined above, and this may be considered normative, since he is not an original thinker but one who draws together, in representative fashion, the teachings of the Greek Fathers

6. McGiffert op. cit., p. 315.

7. A. Harnack History of Dogma Vol. III p. 283.

as a whole. The Damascene position is enlarged upon in the catechisms, but the fundamental tenets are maintained.

GRACE IN CONTEMPORARY CATECHISMS

According to the catechisms, men are created in the image of God, and God cannot sin.⁸ This natural sinlessness does not exclude the possibility of sinning, but rather leaves men free to occupy themselves with evil or advance in good by co-operating with God's grace. Thus sin comes to man from the devil who deceives Eve and Adam and induces them to transgress God's law. This sin brings death to mankind, because, by disobedience to His will, men are separated from His grace, and so alienated from His life. The death which thus passes on to all men is bodily when the body loses the soul, and spiritual when the soul loses the grace of God.

From the condition of death into which men fall by sinning, God redeems them by Jesus Christ.⁹ He is crucified for us in the sense that He, by His death on the cross, delivers us from sin and death, and gives us grace to continue victorious over them. He does this only as men, of their own free-will, enter into fellowship with Him. God gives men a disposition to love

8. Palmer op. cit., p. 31 (This catechism is taken as the basis of our construction of the Eastern Orthodox conception of grace. With its teachings other documents are compared. Where disagreement occurs, which is infrequent, we follow the catechism). See also footnote 1, p. 108.

9. Ibid p. 38 f.

Himself, and though men sin, there still remains in them a natural disposition toward the good.¹⁰ God has predestined to give to all men preventing grace,¹¹ and means sufficient for the attainment of that happiness which is found in knowing, loving and glorifying God.

Faith is a prime essential for entering into this salvation, but so likewise are works.¹² Faith, to be effective for salvation, must be confessed; for if any man shrinks from such confession he shows thereby that he has not a true faith in God. But with faith in Jesus Christ, and by the grace of regeneration, we may approach God as our Father in prayer, and we may be sure that the Kingdom of God is a kingdom of grace into which we are brought as the Holy Spirit reigns more and more completely in our lives. Faith without love and works is inactive and cannot lead to eternal life. Yet it is equally true that love and works without faith cannot gain the kingdom. It is, in fact, impossible that a man who has not faith should really love God, and it is further impossible for him to do good works, except by God's grace. These three, love, works and faith, are inter-locked one with another, and are all the gift of God by grace. Grace is not only regenerating, but also sustaining. It continues with the believer to enable him

10. Cloubokowsky op. cit., pp. 76,77,81. Harnack op. cit., p. 285.

11. Palmer op. cit., p. 26.

12. Ibid p. 89 ff.

to bring forth good works, though not forcing him to follow in its way.¹³ Our own exertion must be joined with faith, prayer, love, and God's grace if we are to attain blessedness.

Moreover, the Calvinistic view of predestination is regarded as a great error, destructive of all responsibility. While the supremacy of grace is constantly asserted, at no point is the freedom of man allowed to disappear. It is in the co-operation of man's freedom and God's grace that salvation is achieved; but never by the sacrifice of either the one or the other.¹⁴ Man can not be held responsible for acts over which he has no control, nor can any human being be made perfect without his own consent. The foreknowledge of God is not absolute, but is subject to His knowledge and wisdom. In speaking of the process of salvation Chrysostom concurs with Theodore of Mopsuestia in the opinion that man takes the first step, and then is aided by God in the appropriation of the good.¹⁵

The Eastern Orthodox Church catechism holds that everyone participates in original or natural grace. It is here very close to the Pelagian view that grace means, "the natural gift of creation, the possibility of choice itself . . . in short, grace is the external help which makes easier the realization"¹⁶ of natural possibilities. There is a further point of connection

13. H. T. F. Duckworth Greek Manuals of Church Doctrine p.31.

14. Gloubokowsky op. cit., pp. 78, 80.

15. Harnack op. cit., footnote p. 283.

16. H. W. Robinson The Christian Doctrine of Man p. 132.

in that both the Orthodox Church and Pelagius regard grace as something like illumination in the Greek sense, rather than infused power in the Latin sense. The connection is not thoroughgoing, however, because original or natural grace in the Orthodox Church view is not unto salvation. Saving grace is mediated only through the Church itself. While the existence of natural grace provides a basis on which all men may approach God, Eastern theology definitely asserts that the full plenitude of grace through Christ acts only in the Church.¹⁷ That is, grades or degrees of participation in grace are recognized, and full participation is possible only in the Church.

Grace acts on the believer in the Church chiefly by the visible and outward means of the Sacraments. A Sacrament or 'Mystery' is a holy act through which grace, that is the saving power of God, mysteriously works upon men.¹⁸ In Baptism faith is sealed, and man is 'mysteriously' born to a spiritual life being freed from original sin and his own personal transgressions, and being incorporated into Christ and His Church.¹⁹ It is not, however, the outward signs which convey the grace, but rather the presence of the Holy Spirit acting through these tangible means.²⁰ Repentance and faith are required of him who

17. Gloubokowsky op. cit., p. 84.

18. Palmer op. cit., p. 56.

19. C. Callinicos The Greek Orthodox Church p. 25.

20. H. S. Alivisatos The Orthodox Church and Sacramental Grace in The Doctrine of Grace p. 249 f.

seeks to be baptized. When these are present the Spirit is mediated by the water of the Sacrament, but it is the power of the Spirit, not the nature of the water, which brings grace. Although the water does not in itself convey grace, it is yet necessary, because our Lord Himself ordered it, and because the element receives a peculiar character (undefined) by the invocation of the Holy Spirit upon it.²¹ If being baptized, a man shall sin again, he is more guilty than the unbaptized, and can receive forgiveness only by penitence, in which the outward pardon of the priest inwardly releases him from sin by Jesus Christ.

In Unction with Chrism men receive the gifts of grace for growth and strength in the spiritual life.²² This is conveyed by the laying on of hands, and can only be communicated by the heads of the Hierarchy, as the successors of the Apostles. The Sacrament confirms the new life acquired in baptism. Here we see clearly the Orthodox view that all Sacraments are indelible, for the words pronounced at the anointing are, "The seal of the gift of the Holy Ghost."²³ In the prayer of sanctification the anointing is referred to as imprinting God's name on the believer as a perfecting seal and immortal garment.²⁴ The grace

21. Alivisatos op. cit., p. 254.

22. Palmer op. cit., p. 56.

23. Ibid p. 60.

24. Alivisatos op. cit., p. 271. Cf. p. 266 ff. for a detailed statement of the Indelible character of Sacramental Grace.

mediated by the Sacrament, far from being ephemeral, is truly God's grace, eternal and indelible in its character.

In Orders, grace is received, "spiritually to regenerate, feed, and nurture others."²⁵ Herein the inadequacy of human approbation is recognized and divine strength is given to the minister of the Church. The Sacrament of Matrimony gives grace to live together in godly love, sanctifying the married life. It sets up a life long union, which can be broken only in case of fornication, when sin severs the bond. By Unction with oil God's grace is invoked upon the sick. This Sacrament seeks, following the apostolic example, to heal from both spiritual and bodily infirmities.

In Communion the believer is spiritually fed.²⁶ This Sacrament is not simply in remembrance of Christ's death, but involves real participation in His very Body and Blood, by which men receive grace to live His life, and ultimately are brought to everlasting life. Though, as in the case of Baptism, the elements are worth little before consecration, after they are hallowed each possesses a superior grace-conveying character. Because grace for life is received in this Sacrament, Communion is held to be the most important part of Divine service,²⁷ and must be *administered* with ritual exactness, if it is

25. Palmer op. cit., p. 56.

26. Ibid p. 61, Cf. Duckworth op. cit., p. 54 "None can be saved, except he partake of the Eucharist."

27. Palmer op. cit., p. 61.

to be effective. It involves the mysterious transformation of the elements into the very Body and Blood of Christ in order that the believers may actually feed on Him and so obtain grace. The celebration of Communion is the chief function of the Church's weekly meeting on Sunday.

Any Sacramental grace is secured only by correct administration of the Sacraments.²⁸ This is dependent upon the Church as the divinely instituted body of men; for in her grace abides, and, flowing from her, guides men unto salvation. Our assurance that grace abides in the Church rests on the fact that Christ, the Head of the Church is, "full of grace and truth," and on His declaration that the Holy Spirit will "abide with them forever." The Universal Church, known by unity of creed, and by communion in Prayer and Sacraments,²⁹ contains all true believers and it is necessary for salvation to belong to her. She receives her doctrine and authority, "without break or change"³⁰ from the Apostles. Neither laymen, nor heretical clergy can transmit grace, nor yet is sure transmission dependent on the ministrant's personal worth, but rather on canonical ordination and correct administration.

The way in which the rightly administered Sacrament bestows grace is mysterious. Chrysoston says that, "It is called a sacrament because it is not what we see that we

28. Alivisatos op. cit., p. 274.

29. Palmer op. cit., p. 49, (The Church is one, holy, catholic and apostolic).

30. Palmer op. cit., p. 54.

believe, but we see one thing and believe another."³¹ Men cannot comprehend God's manner of communicating His grace to them. They must simply have faith in the Church and believe that through the outward and tangible signs of the Sacraments grace comes to the soul.

What is the grace conferred by the Sacraments? We have seen that each Sacrament conferred a special gift of grace; but what is the nature of the gift? It is the supernatural working of the Holy Spirit enabling man to appropriate what is needful for his present condition. Because man is material as well as spiritual, material means must be used to insure natural and understanding acceptance of the grace given.³² Thus it is that the Holy Spirit is called 'the giver of life,' for by the Sacraments He is communicated to all true Christians.³³ So the gifts of the Holy Spirit are enumerated in the catechism,

"the spirit of the fear of God, the spirit of knowledge, the spirit of might, the spirit of counsel, the spirit of understanding, the spirit of wisdom, the spirit of the Lord, or the gift of piety and inspiration and in the highest degree." ³⁴

The magical transference of an inner potency is avoided by saying that the grace which comes to men by the Sacraments is the Holy Spirit and His power, in each different form corresponding to the particular spiritual need of the moment.

31. quoted in Alivisatos op. cit., p. 256.

32. Alivisatos op. cit., p. 258.

33. This is closely associated with the Eastern Orthodox concept of the Deification of man. Cf. p. 136.

34. Palmer op. cit., p. 47.

SUMMARY OF CATECHETICAL TEACHING

The Orthodox Eastern and Apostolic Church presents a united and ancient conception of grace. Everything accomplished by God's good-will, in creation, providence and redemption, is the work of grace. The grace in creation and nature does not enable men to enter the Kingdom because sin estranges us from God; yet we are not totally depraved and corrupted by sin, but still possess a disposition towards the good, which prepares us for the approach of Saving Grace. This redemption is accomplished by Jesus Christ, and can be appropriated by us through inter-dependent faith, love, and works. Though works are included here the supremacy and freeness of grace is asserted side by side with the strong emphasis on free-will which is a characteristic of Eastern theology. Men can appropriate grace unto salvation by the medium of the Church through correctly administered Sacraments consecrated by hands made holy by apostolic succession. Grace is available outside the Church, but for man's growth in grace unto salvation the Church is essential, and for it, "nothing else can be substituted."³⁵ Each Sacrament bestows grace, in a mysterious way, by the inworking of the Holy Spirit which enables man to meet the needs of his present condition. The Eastern Church, in short, distinguishes between Natural grace and Saving grace, making the latter the activity of God by the Holy Spirit in regenerating and sanctifying men through the medium of the Church in correctly administered Sacraments.

35. Gloubokowsky op. cit., p. 73.

MODERN ORTHODOX TEACHING

Beginning about the middle of the nineteenth century the Eastern Orthodox Church showed signs of awaking from its long dogmatic slumber. This movement toward reform received strong stimulus in the twentieth century from the Soviet Revolution, from contact with western nations during the World War, from the penetration of German theological science, and from conferences held with Protestants and Roman Catholics of the west with a view to church unity. The thought of contemporary Orthodox theologians is presented excellently in two recent volumes.³⁶ While evincing many minor variations in emphasis and interpretation both these presentations maintain the same fundamental conception of grace which we find in the Eastern Fathers and in the Longer Russian Catechism. The two poles of Orthodox thought on grace are the incarnation of God and the deification of man. These are the supreme evidences of grace, which is, in definition, so closely associated with the Holy Ghost as to be, for all practical purposes, merged therewith. Special stress is laid upon the Church (meaning, usually, the Orthodox Church) which is the mystic communion wherein the Holy Ghost operates, chiefly by the media of the Sacraments. The true purpose of the fellowship of the Church is, "to unite the faithful with the supernatural world, with God,"³⁷ which is accomplished by the gift of a, "new natural quality"³⁸ - a Divine quality - received by men from God in Christ. This quality is 'grace'.

36. F. Gavin Some Aspects of Contemporary Greek Orthodox Thought and S. Zankov The Eastern Orthodox Church.

37. Zankov op. cit., p. 107.

38. Ibid p. 51, c.f. p. 56.

CHAPTER VII

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC* CONCEPTION OF GRACE

The Roman Catholic conception of grace finds its first significant exponent in Tertullian. Though later a Montanist, and not now officially recognized as one of the Fathers by the Roman Catholic Church, he exercises a powerful influence upon Western theology. Tertullian has a deep consciousness of sin, which, being a lawyer, he expresses in legal as well as personal terms. He holds a doctrine of original sin, but maintains that man's freedom is not destroyed completely thereby,¹ and that every man is responsible for his own actions. By making all men punishable, because of original sin, even before they are guilty by their own acts, Tertullian establishes one of the lasting points of divergence between the theology of the east and that of the west. "Remission of sins,"² he teaches, in the true synoptic meaning, is a work of grace, but it is

1. The Writings of Tertullian Vol. II (P. Holmes, translator,) p. 505 ff.

2. Ibid Vol. I (S. Thelwall, translator,) p. 243. "But none either pardons sins or freely grants the Spirit save God only."

* Since this chapter is concerned primarily with post-Trentine Latin Catholicism and its antecedents, we venture to use the term "Roman Catholic" here.

now associated closely with baptism, and begins to take on a sacramental character. Repentance and baptism must be followed by obedience and good works, but venial sins, here distinguished for the first time from mortal sins,³ can be pardoned if atoned for by sincere confession and self-immolation.⁴ Mortal sin can not be pardoned. In baptism, forgiveness is accompanied by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Here Tertullian, regarding grace as a power from without which may even over-ride free will, gives rise to the antithesis between 'nature' and 'grace',⁵ for he often regards the power from without as impersonal and material.⁶ Tertullian's teaching on sin, baptism, confession, penance, and the Holy Spirit is the first important presentation of the Roman Catholic conception of grace.

Cyprian, the next Latin Father of importance, follows Tertullian closely. His doctrine of the Church as the only means of salvation,⁷ while not new, is nevertheless important, for the principles of his doctrine continue to prevail. Grace unto salvation is henceforth mediated by the Church, through her rightly ordained ministers in correctly administered sacraments. Impartation of the Holy Spirit tends to be separated

3. The Writings of Tertullian Vol. III (Holmes, Thelwall, and Wallis tran.) p. 112, "there are some sins of daily committal, to which we all are liable . . . Of these, then, there will be pardon."

4. Ibid Vol. I p. 273.

5. Ibid Vol. II pp. 460-461.

6. Ibid Vol. I pp. 235 - 236.

7. The Writings of Cyprian Vol. I (R. E. Wallis, translator). p. 284.

off from baptism with water,⁸ the former being reserved to the bishop. The Eucharist is regarded as a sacrifice for sin as well as spiritual food⁹ for the believer. Penance is also exclusively connected with the Church. In all these respects Cyprian contributes the underlying idea that grace comes to men in and through the Church Catholic, and by her alone.

In the century after Cyprian's death only a few new developments of the conception of grace need be noted. Lactantius gives a transitory emphasis to works, holding that righteousness can be earned,¹⁰ but not outside the Church.¹¹ Ambrose prepares the way for Augustine, "emphasizing the necessity for prevenient grace without which no one can turn from evil."¹² Jovinian rejects the idea of meritorious works, believing that faith, not rites, is the condition upon which grace can be received.¹³ In this he is opposed by Jerome, later the strong supporter of Augustine. The century contributes a growing acceptance of the Church as the mediator of grace, and a first postulation of prevenient grace.

8. The Writings of Cyprian Vol. I p. 281. Vol. II p. 406 ff.

9. Ibid Vol. I pp. 232, 210 ff.

10. The Works of Lactantius Vol. I (W. Fletcher, translator) pp. 272, 355 ff, 389. Vol. II p. 163.

11. Ibid Vol. I pp. 288-289, Cf. p. 114 ff.

12. A. C. McGiffert A History of Christian Thought Vol. II p. 56.

13. Ibid p. 66.

AUGUSTINE

Augustine is peculiarly the theologian of grace. From him Roman Catholic doctrine springs, and to his position much of the Reformed theology can be attributed. In his early life lust and pride are too strong to be overcome in his own power. But after some time spent under the inspiring preaching of Ambrose Augustine finds the answer to his soul's quest.

"Overcome with self-condemnation, he rushed into the garden and there heard the voice of a child from a neighbouring house, saying: 'Take up and read.' He reached for a copy of the epistles that he had been reading, and his eyes fell on the words: 'Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, . . .'. From that moment Augustine had the peace of mind and the sense of divine power to overcome his sins which he had thus far sought in vain." 14

To this personal experience much of the Doctor of Hippo's doctrinal scheme must be traced. It is because of his attempt to harmonize the received teaching of the Catholic Church with his own life story that many inconsistencies arise.

A deep consciousness of sin is basic in Augustine's theology. God creates men to have fellowship with Him, but man of his own free choice, turns his back on God, through sin.¹⁵

14. W. Walker A History of the Christian Church p. 177.

15. Anti-Pelagian Works of St. Augustine Vol. I (P. Holmes, translator) p. 238, note the difference between 'damnable' and 'venial' sins p. 330.

Sin, a perversion of man's will chiefly through pride,¹⁶ enthralls man's will and makes him incapable of doing good, even if he so desire.¹⁷ This terrible condition of man is explained in the doctrine of the fall. Adam, created in pristine perfection, forfeits his righteousness by disobedience in eating the forbidden fruit. Since all men are in Adam, his sin is seminally passed on to the race, and we are all, therefore, guilty of sin and under condemnation for it. We are a mass of perdition,¹⁸ all, down to the new born babe, deserving everlasting death.

In spite of their degradation, men are not beyond salvation. They cannot save their own deteriorated and tainted natures, yet they are not essentially evil. Redemption comes to men only in Jesus Christ¹⁹ who is the supreme manifestation of God's grace to men.²⁰ There is absolutely no way in which men can gain salvation for themselves. It is free and unmerited. Christ, by his humility and death, ransoms men from pride and sin.²¹ In Him God comes to men, adopts them and saves them, - all by His grace and not at all by man's acceptance or rejection.

16. Anti-Pelagian Works of St. Augustine Vol. I pp. 261, 262 ff. The Confessions (J. G. Pilkington, translator) p. 51.
17. Ibid Vol. I pp. 282-283, Vol. III pp. 252-254, Confessions pp. 185-188.
18. Anti-Pelagian Works Vol. II p. 78, J. C. Ayer A Source Book for Ancient Church History p. 439.
19. Anti-Pelagian Works Vol. II pp. 76-78.
20. McGiffert op. cit., p. 106, "Christ seems to have been of value to Augustine chiefly as the most notable example of the grace of God."
21. Anti-Pelagian Works Vol. II pp. 79-80.

Faith, the initial virtue of the Christian life, is first aroused by grace.²² Without 'prevenient' grace men could never raise themselves out of the slough of sin. By the rooting out of sin and the implanting of faith accomplished by prevenient grace, men enter the circle of the Church, being freely pardoned and accepted by God. 'Subsequent' grace, the divine energy which inspires every good work after conversion, is found in the Church. Both prevenient and subsequent grace are the gifts of God, and in no way earned by men.

As a single prevenient act, God's grace is immediate. But since post-baptismal sins are common, God provides also subsequent grace in which ever renewed forgiveness may be found, and which continually provides new loving gifts of God to men. As such, grace is, "the infusion of love by the Holy Spirit,"²³ and is a power, gift, or help which God puts into the souls of men that they may be made perfect. Sanctifying grace is given only to the elect, and the works which are accomplished by its power are rewarded as if they were men's own merits, though actually they are the good works of God in men.²⁴ Such works, together with love to God, are both the result of grace, and the evidence of men's possession of grace. The more men are freed from sin by sanctifying grace,

22. Anti-Pelagian Works Vol. III pp. 31, 42, 43.
Enchiridion (J. F. Shaw, translator) p. 193.

23. Walker op. cit., p. 182, c.f. N. P. Williams
The Grace of God p. 22.

24. Anti-Pelagian Works Vol. III p. 32.

the closer they come to mystical fellowship with God, which is blessedness.²⁵

Predestination may be to punishment or to salvation.²⁶ Those who are predestined to punishment have no complaint to make for they receive only what they justly deserve. The elect, whose number is fixed,²⁷ give all glory to God, for their salvation is totally undeserved and entirely free. Why some are saved and others damned is a mystery which man cannot fathom. To preserve man's freedom and still hold to double predestination, Augustine develops his famous will psychology, including the gift of perseverance. Only the elect, who are awarded the gift of perseverance, can endure to the end, and therefore only they will be saved. To the elect, moreover, such a gift of grace is irresistible.²⁸ Nevertheless men are possessed of real freedom of choice.²⁹ The antinomy is supposed to be solved by the following ingenious reasoning. Will is primary,³⁰ and will never decides without a motive. By determining the first perceptions of

25. J. Nørregaard Grace in Saint Augustine in The Doctrine of Grace p. 124, McGiffert op. cit., p. 99.
26. Enchiridion pp. 245, 246, Ayer op. cit., p. 441, 442. The City of God Vol. II (M. Dods, translator) pp. 49-51.
27. Ayer op. cit., p. 442.
28. N. P. Williams op. cit., p. 26, "It is true that the actual word irresistible does not, according to Loofs, occur in St. Augustine: but the idea seems to be unmistakably expressed."
29. Anti-Pelagian Works Vol. I p. 290, Vol. III p. 14 ff.
30. Ibid p. 190, men are transgressors, "by their mere will", Cf. Vol. III pp. 100, 101. Enchiridion p. 197 f.

men,³¹ God presents motives which are so fitted to the particular individual that he, in perfect liberty, chooses to follow them. God, and He alone, determines the fate of man,³² but He does this in such a way that Judas voluntarily chooses the bad,³³ Peter voluntarily chooses the good. To the elect God presents motives so well adapted to the needs of the individual, and so intrinsically attractive that they, of their own accord, choose to follow them. This gift of God's is, "perseverance in good to the end,"³⁴ without which man cannot be saved, and with which his salvation is assured and irresistible. The difference between the grace which is granted to the elect and that which comes to all members of the Church differs not in quantity but in essence, the specific character of the two Augustine expresses under the terms 'sufficient grace', that which is given to all who are in the Church, and 'efficacious grace', given only to the elect.³⁵

While maintaining the utter dependence of man on God, Augustine can not discard the idea of merit; for already it has become too deeply imbedded in the Church tradition to be

31. M. P. Williams op. cit., p. 31.

32. Anti-Pelagian Works Vol. III pp. 59-62, 112, Vol. II
p. 72 ff. Aver op. cit., p. 441.

33. Cf. Ibid Vol. I p. 240.

34. Ibid Vol. III pp. 70, 171 ff.

35. Ibid Vol. III p. 102, "Moreover, the helps themselves are to be distinguished. The assistance without which a thing does not come to pass is one thing, and the assistance with which a thing comes to pass is another."

easily swept aside. Indeed, the local tradition of the African Church assigns an especially high value to merits.³⁶ Then too, Augustine's insistence on the reality of man's freedom compels him to find a place for merits. This he does by allowing the meritorious quality of good works done after the grace of regeneration is received and under the inspiration of subsequent grace.³⁷ These good works are, as we have seen above, entirely due to God's grace, but nevertheless are counted as merits of man. By works of almsgiving, penance and prayer men may atone for venial but not for damnable sins.³⁸

Augustine couples his conception of grace with a very high valuation of the Church.³⁹ He seems to make no clear distinction between sacramental and providential grace.⁴⁰ In baptism men receive the grace of regeneration, and there is no salvation for all who are outside the Church.⁴¹ Yet the Church is not a separated communion found in one centre but rather, the visible universal communion spread over the whole world;⁴² in other words, the Body of Christ. In the heart of the Pelagian controversy Augustine admits that some men are predestinated outside the Church, namely certain Old Testament

36. N. P. Williams op. cit., p. 40.

37. Enchiridion pp. 198-199. Anti-Pelagian Works Vol. III pp. 29-30.

38. Anti-Pelagian Works Vol. I p. 330.

39. Enchiridion pp. 16-17, Ayer op. cit., pp. 454, 455.

40. N. P. Williams op. cit., p. 33.

41. On the Donatist Controversy (J. R. King, translator) p. 15, Ayer op. cit., p. 447.

42. Enchiridion pp. 215-216.

characters.⁴³ He holds it possible that men might be elected to salvation outside the confines of the Church, but stresses the historic evidence of such possibility and at the same time credits the salvation of any such individuals entirely to the grace of God.⁴⁴ In at least one passage he goes so far as to say that 'salvation' and 'life' are received in baptism and the Lord's Supper,⁴⁵ both of course, in the Church, to which the Holy Spirit belongs.⁴⁶

The efficacy of the sacraments depends upon God.⁴⁷ Concerning the Lord's Supper Augustine holds that the sacrament is the visible and outward sign of the inward and transforming reality.⁴⁸ In his support of the efficacy of infant baptism we have ample proof that he believes the sacrament to be much more than mere sign or symbol, but yet regards grace as, in some unfathomable way, conveyed by the visible and outward sign. It is readily seen that the necessity of the sacraments is a point of, "severe limitation on his idea of the relation between God and man and seems inconsistent both with his own experience of direct communion with God, . . . and also with his doctrine of predestination."⁴⁹

43. Anti-Pelagian Works Vol. I pp. 352, 353.

44. Ibid Vol. I p. 338 f. Vol. II p. 72 ff.

45. Ibid Vol. I p. 35.

46. Enchiridion p. 215. On the Donatist Controversy pp. 69-70.

47. Anti-Pelagian Works Vol. I p. 63.

48. The City of God Vol. I p. 388, S. D. Salmond On Catechising; On Faith and the Creed p. 330.

49. McGiffert op. cit., p. 113.

What are we to say of the nature of grace as seen in Augustine's works? At least two usages may be distinguished in all that we summarize above; grace as the term which best describes God's free, spontaneous love for sinful men, and grace as an infused divine power which enables men to choose God and live for Him. The former is a true New Testament usage of the term, while the latter is Augustine's unique contribution. Grace in the peculiarly Augustinian sense is a communication of the divine energy which proceeds from God's omnipotence, and is so absolute in operation that it can be described as prevenient, operating, co-operating and irresistible in its several relationships. This absoluteness of God's grace is, "the culminating point of Augustinianism."⁵⁰ The citizen of the City of God is, "predestined by grace, elected by grace, by grace a stranger here below, and by grace a citizen above."⁵¹ From this great Doctor the Catholic Church receives a heritage which is not soon disregarded. Though many of his positions are not accepted by his contemporaries, and though the entire body of his doctrine is not the authoritative creed of any church to-day, Augustine moulds the thought of Western Christianity for centuries and leaves a permanent mark on the Roman Catholic communion.

50. H. W. Robinson The Christian Doctrine of Man
p. 191.

51. Ayer op. cit., p. 441.

PELAGIUS

Pelagius, a British monk of great learning and intense moral earnestness, opposes Augustinianism. While Dr. Jauncey presents Pelagius (as indeed Augustine himself does in early writings), as an upright and high-minded moralist,⁵² he later gives him a terrific lashing throughout the chapter entitled "The Pelagian Controversy". He insinuates that Pelagius is underhanded, sly, subtle, and plays a double role, showing one face to the Church councils and another to his disciples.⁵³ Pelagius denies the idea of original sin,⁵⁴ affirms the integrity of human nature,⁵⁵ and regards the human will as free; "We have implanted in us by God a possibility for acting in both directions,"⁵⁶ either for good or evil. He does not reject grace, but enthusiastically proclaims its helpfulness and even necessity,⁵⁷ but grace does not mean for him what it means for Augustine. For Pelagius the grace of God is the gift of free-will,⁵⁸ the forgiveness of past sins,⁵⁹ the law, preaching and example of Christ,⁶⁰ the illumination of the mind by doctrine,⁶¹ adoption and regeneration in infant

52. E. Jauncey The Doctrine of Grace et al p. 178.

53. Ibid e.g. pp. 220, 231, 251, 239-241. This is Augustine's view in The Grace of Christ Book II.

54. Ayer op. cit., p. 460.

55. Ibid pp. 458, 459.

56. Anti-Pelagian Works Vol. II p. 19.

57. Ayer op. cit., pp. 457, 458.

58. Ibid p. 459.

59. Anti-Pelagian Works Vol. I p. 267.

60. Ibid Vol. II pp. 3, 4.

61. Ibid Vol. II p. 31.

baptism,⁶² and eternal life, which is the reward given to merits.⁶³ The Augustinian emphasis on infused power is specifically rejected in the words, "grace, moreover, assists the good purpose of everybody; but yet, it does not infuse the love of virtue into a reluctant mind."⁶⁴ Justification is by faith alone, through baptism, and since it is possible to live a sinless life thereafter, Pelagius makes less of penance than his contemporaries. The teachings of the British monk express the need for moral effort and continue to find supporters in Christendom although officially rejected by both East and West.⁶⁵

The Council of Carthage, called to decide the Pelagian-Augustinian controversy, does not represent a triumph of the entire Augustinian system of doctrine. Certain Pelagian teachings, notably those supported by the extremist Collestius, and the able Julian of Echanum, are anathematized, but on the other hand Augustinian positions are not made authoritative. The Council holds⁶⁶ that Adam's fall makes men mortal, that children should be baptized for remission of sins and assistance against committing future sins, that only by grace can man fulfill the divine commandments and that sinlessness in

62. Anti-Pelagian Works Vol. III p. 281.

63. Ibid Vol. II pp. 31, 32.

64. Ibid Vol. III p. 281.

65. Council of Carthage 418; Third General Council in Ephesus 431.

66. Ayer op. cit., pp. 464-466.

this life is impossible. With the approval of these canons by Zosimus of Rome, Pelagianism's doom is officially sealed.

THE SEMI-PELAGIAN CONTROVERSY

The Semi-Pelagian controversy next stirs the West.

Cassian, Vincent of Lerins, and Faustus of Riez support a position which is neither Pelagian nor Augustinian, but probably represents the common sentiment of the contemporary Western Church.⁶⁷ With Augustine, these men accept the fatal effects of Adam's sin, and assume original sin, seminal identity, and original guilt.⁶⁸ But they reject his conception of predestination and substitute for it the idea that God wills all men to be saved.⁶⁹ Man is regarded as not completely corrupt, still possessing the capacity to turn toward God.⁷⁰ In this respect first grace is prevenient in instances of sudden conversion, but co-operant in other and more usual cases of conversion. It is necessary that God provide the opportunity and call to redemption, but it rests with man to accept or reject His invitation.⁷¹ The Pelagian stress on merit is rejected

67. McGiffert op. cit., p. 136.

68. N. P. Williams op. cit., p. 46.

69. Ayer op. cit., pp. 467, 468, "if He willeth not that one of His little ones should perish, how can we think without grievous blasphemy that He willeth not all men universally, but only some instead of all to be saved."

70. Ibid pp. 468, 469.

71. Ibid p. 469, "the will always remains free in man, and it can either neglect or delight in the grace of God."

and the necessity of grace as power affirmed.⁷²

"Nevertheless, we ought to be most firmly convinced of this, that, however unwearying the efforts with which we practice every kind of virtue, we can never attain to perfection (except) through the Lord's co-operating with us and directing our heart towards that which is right." ⁷³

Semi-Pelagianism differs from Augustinianism in its rejection of strict predestination, its milder view of sin, and its co-operant theory of the God-man relation by grace.

The canons of the Second Council of Orange⁷⁴ are the official Roman Catholic pronouncement on Semi-Pelagianism. Caesarius of Arles, the chairman and moving spirit of the Council, being opposed to the teaching of Faustus, now seeks to deal it a final death blow. The chapters of Orange hold⁷⁵ that all men are so weakened by Adam's sin as to be incapable of loving God except as grace first comes to them; that after baptism men are able, with the co-operation of God, to accomplish what is necessary for the salvation of their souls; that predestination to evil is a heresy; that all good works come from God who without any previous merit of ours, inspires us with faith and love; and that grace is not the result but the inspiration of humility, obedience and faith. Thus many of the main points of Augustine are approved, but certain

72. Ayer op. cit., p. 469.

73. W. P. Williams op. cit., p. 48.

74. 529 A.D. The Council was attended by only fourteen bishops and eight lay dignitaries, but receives authority because of its confirmation by Pope Boniface II.

75. C. J. Hefele A History of the Councils of the Church Vol. IV pp. 152-166.

features regarded by him as essential are absent, such, for instance as irresistible grace and unconditional predestination. Although the Council of Orange practically ends the Semi-Pelagian controversy it by no means marks the disappearance of Semi-Pelagian thought. Aside from officially ending the dispute, the Council of Orange forges an old link, the connection of grace with the sacraments, more strongly than ever. From this time forth the Roman Catholic Church binds the initial reception of grace to baptism,⁷⁶ and puts the merit of good works in the foreground.⁷⁷ By preserving human freedom and responsibility after baptism, and insuring man's utter dependence on the Church as the mediator of grace, Rome becomes an Augustinian Church with Pelagian members.⁷⁸

From the Second Council of Orange to Thomas Aquinas developments in the conception of grace are neither numerous nor of great importance. Gregory the Great⁷⁹ follows Orange rather closely, increasing the emphasis on baptism, works and penance and clarifying Catholic doctrine in regard to confession, purgatory, and the Eucharist as a sacrifice for sin. John Scotus Erigena⁸⁰ connects grace so closely with the

76. Hefele op. cit., p. 159.

77. Ayer op. cit., p. 475.

78. B. J. Kidd A History of the Church Vol. III pp. 160-161.

79. E. G. Gardner The Dialogues of Saint Gregory pp. 249 f, 232 f, 257, McGiffert op. cit., pp. 151-159.

80. W. Bett Johannes Scotus Erigena p. 71 f., "Grace brings some of the existent, beyond all existence, into union with God" p. 73.

consummation of all things that its end is radiant glory - really deification. He distinguishes between 'nature' as God's gift and 'grace' as God's boons. The condemnation of Gotteschalk⁸¹ by the Council of Mainz for maintaining the doctrine of double predestination, is^a fresh flaring up of the old dispute and illustrates the Roman Catholic acceptance of the canons of Orange rather than the actual teachings of Augustine. Anselm finds grace in God's redemption of men⁸² by providing in Christ that satisfaction for men's sins which is essential, but which could never be provided by mere human beings. God's love is the sole cause of redemption and may be identified with His grace. The satisfaction theory is really a logical application of the doctrine of penance by which the achievement of the sinless Christ is allocated to sinful men. For Bernard of Clairvaux,⁸³ as for Anselm, grace is associated with the love of God, coming to men especially in Jesus Christ, who by His complete freedom of will from sin, misery and necessity is able to bestow on men the freedom of nature, grace and glory. The will is the seat of the operation of grace, and while all is of grace, grace is accepted by free will. Peter Lombard⁸⁴ identifies grace, the Holy Spirit, and

81. Walker op. cit., p. 211, N. P. Williams op. cit., p. 60.

82. Anselm *Cur Deus Homo* passim.

83. W. W. Williams *St. Bernard's Concerning Grace and Free Will* pp. 14-18, 52 ff. 80 ff.

84. F. Gavin *The Medieval and Modern Roman Conceptions of Grace in The Doctrine of Grace* p. 142 f.
McGiffert op. cit., p. 250 f.

love, implicitly rejecting grace as infused habit. Merits are all of grace, but free will is staunchly asserted. The sacraments are differentiated as seven in number - baptism, confirmation, the Lord's Supper, penance, extreme unction, ordination, matrimony - instituted by Christ and in some sense grace-conveying. Hugo of St. Victor⁸⁵ makes the relationship of the sacraments and grace still more intimate, holding that the rite of itself contains, by sanctifying power, invisible and spiritual grace. Hugo makes a place for mysticism in his conception of grace, saying that the eye of contemplation is restored by divine grace. Albert the Great,⁸⁶ a devotee of Aristotle, holds that man, by nature, requires God for fulfillment of himself. This perfection can be found only by means of grace, which establishes a vital relationship between God and man. None of these men wander far from the beaten path of accepted doctrine as set forth at the Second Council of Orange, but each adds interpretations or emphases which are important, and all together constitute the background for the work of Albert's most famous pupil.

AQUINAS

By declaration of Pope Leo XIII., in 1879, the Summa Theologica of Thomas Aquinas is the basis of present theological

85. Gavin op. cit., p. 144; McGiffert op. cit., pp. 241-248.

86. J. Sighart Albert the Great pp. 107, 315, 400, 401, 403.

instruction in the Roman Catholic communion. In the Prima Secundae of the Summa Theologica, Aquinas' teaching on grace is summed up under three headings ; first, grace in itself; second, the causes of grace; and third, the effects of grace.

Grace in itself is necessary.⁸⁷ Without grace, man can know the truth as to a variety of things, but he cannot act without the motion of the First Mover, namely God.⁸⁸ Man, by nature, possesses intelligence which is, "efficient as to certain determined acts proper to its particular self"⁸⁹ but beyond these it cannot go except by some superadded forms, or principle of motion, that is, grace. Without grace, man, not being totally corrupted but weakened in his natural powers, can will and do naturally many good things. Before the fall man could love God and fulfill the law naturally, but in his fallen state he requires divine assistance to these ends. Since eternal life is an end which exceeds the proportion or measure of human nature it cannot be gained by man's merits, but by grace, and the merits of grace working in man. The preparation of the will for the reception of grace is by God, gratuitously and interiorly moving the soul of man, yet conversion is effected by man's free-will. It is not possible for

87. C. A. Pellan St. Thomas Aquinas On Grace (translation of Prima Secundae of the Summa Theologica) pp. 1-27.

88. Ibid p. 2, "Hence, however, perfect a creature, corporeal or spiritual, may be, it cannot act, unless moved by God".

89. Ibid p. 3.

man to arise from sin or live free from sin without grace.⁹⁰ Nor is he who obtains grace able to do good and avoid sin of himself. To live righteously man needs the habitual gift, "as a new habit infused,"⁹¹ and also actual grace, a special, transient gift of divine motion. Perseverance in grace unto glory is given to some; but not necessarily to all, who receive actual and habitual grace.⁹² Thus grace is necessary for our conversion, sustenance, perseverance, and will be essential, "even in the state of Glory."⁹³

Grace in itself is a quality of the soul.⁹⁴ Sometimes it designates God's Eternal Love, "inasmuch as it involves the pre-destining, or electing, of some creatures, gratuitously, utterly irrespectively of all merit of theirs".⁹⁵ Usually, grace means certain supernatural qualities infused into the soul by God. These are not to be confused with virtues acquired by human acts, but are rather in the very essence of the soul, being, however, more noble than the soul itself and grounded on participation in the divine nature. Habitual grace inheres substantially in God Himself, accidentally in the soul of man.

90. Pellán op. cit., p. 21, "Man can avoid acts of sin, severally considered: not at all; unless aided by grace."

91. Ibid p. 23.

92. Ibid p. 26, "For to many is granted grace to whom is not granted perseverance in grace."

93. Ibid p. 24.

94. Ibid pp. 27-38.

95. Ibid p. 29.

Grace in itself may, for clarity, be divided in various ways.⁹⁶ There is the distinction between that by which man himself effects his union with God, gratum faciens, and that by which one man aids another, toward God, gratis data. Grace as the arbitrary and sole result of God's Moving is gratia operans, while in cases when man's mind is both Mover and Moved the operation is spoken of as gratia co-operans. As it is effected in time, grace is prevenient or subsequent, but this in no way affects its essence. Even the subsequent grace which effects Glory is not a grace other than prevenient grace. Grace as gratis data is seen in three aspects, fulness of knowledge, power to confirm and prove teaching, and the ability of a man to convey what he conceives to hearers. Lest grace gratis data be tinged with man's merits it is roundly asserted that gratum faciens is much more excellent.

Since no being can act beyond its 'species', and since the gift of grace exceeds every facility of the created nature, then grace is caused only by God.⁹⁷ Nevertheless, the sacraments cause grace, but only as instruments, the principal cause being the power of the Holy Spirit working in well-nigh magical fashion, through the sacraments. If the prime Mover, God, desires any man to attain to grace, he must infallibly do so. God, and He alone, can give; the creature merely can receive or not

96. Pellan op. cit., pp. 38-52. The distinction between actual and habitual grace has been noted above.

97. Ibid pp. 52-63.

receive. Aquinas holds to Augustinian double predestination, which he deduces from the divine goodness.⁹⁸ If, however, man does all that is in his power to do, God grants him grace. By special revelation man can be sure that he is in grace, but nevertheless of himself man cannot judge whether he has or has not grace, except in a conjectural manner as he perceives himself feeling delight in God and contempt for all worldly things.

Thomas Aquinas' conception of grace is based on Aristotle and Augustine. God, the Unmoved Prime Mover, is the source of all grace which is universally necessary and strictly irresistible. Aquinas' contributions are the attempt to define the nature of grace, the consequent distinction between actual and habitual grace, the affirmation of the grace conveying character of the seven sacraments,⁹⁹ and the summing up of all previous teaching in a manner so acceptable to the Roman Catholic Church as to form the basis of theological instruction six centuries after it was penned.

THE SCOTIST CONTROVERSY

It is as a reviser of Augustinianism, rather than as an opponent of Aquinas, that Duns Scotus is important. Though

98. N. P. Williams op. cit., p. 70 f. in a lengthy quotation from the Summa Theologica.

99. Aquinas holds that the superabundant merits of Christ and of the saints can be transferred, by the Church, to the needy sinner.

Harris claims for him a native significance,¹⁰⁰ McElffert and others, with whom we agree, find the Scotist contribution rather meager. Duns Scotus¹⁰¹ attaches increased importance to free will, holding that men must prepare themselves for first grace; and even without habitual grace, they are able to conform to divine commands. He equates grace and love, and holds that, "no proof of the necessity of supernatural Grace can be adduced."¹⁰² He teaches that natural goodness is not forfeited by original sin, which sin is simply the loss of supernatural grace, not corruption of man's nature. While defending Augustinianism in words, Scotus ventures far toward Semi-Pelagianism, and in reality substitutes an ethical system for a religious truth, since merit may precede grace.¹⁰³

As the Roman Catholic Church formally weathered the wave of Pelagianism at the Council of Carthage and that of Semi-Pelagianism at the Second Council of Orange, so at the Council of Trent the wearisome hair-splitting of Scotism is officially passed. The Tridentine faith was a compromise, based chiefly on the Thomist-Augustinian position. The canons and decrees of Trent¹⁰⁴ hold to original and corrupting sin propagated

100. C. R. S. Harris Duns Scotus Vol. II introduction.

101. A. Harnack History of Dogma Vol. VI pp. 302-310.

G. P. Fisher History of Christian Doctrine pp. 229-262.

102. Harris op. cit., Vol. I p. 298.

103. Robinson op. cit., p. 208.

104. P. Schaff Creeds of the Greek and Latin Churches chapter IV, section 1.

from Adam to all his posterity. This sin and guilt can only be taken away by the merit of Jesus Christ conveyed to men in baptism. Not nature or law but adoption as sons of God by Jesus Christ justifies men. Such justification is derived from the prevenient grace of God, without any merit on man's part, yet man must of his own free will, co-operate, "with that said grace."¹⁰⁵ The instrumental cause is the sacrament of baptism, the sacrament of faith, without which no man is ever justified. Having been justified freely men are advanced from virtue to virtue by penance and obedience to God and the Church, yet it is not possible for men to know they are of the elect, for that is a Divine secret. "Those who, by sin, have fallen from the received grace of Justification,"¹⁰⁶ can be reinstated by contrition, confession, and penance, through the absolution of the priest.

Justification is not by faith alone, nor is it simply the favour of God, nor yet confidence in the divine mercy. The fruits of Justification are meritorious good works, by which man may merit an increase, "of grace, eternal life, and the attainment of that eternal life, - if so be, however, that he depart in grace".¹⁰⁷ The Council anathematizes all who accept the idea of predestination to evil or the indefectability of the saints. It states that, "all true justice either begins

¹⁰⁵. Schaff op. cit., p. 92.

¹⁰⁶. Ibid p. 104.

¹⁰⁷. Ibid pp. 117, 118.

or being begun is increased, or being lost is repaired"¹⁰⁸ through the Sacraments of the Church. These Sacraments, the Lombard seven, are all regarded as instituted by Christ, are not equal in worth, contain the grace which they signify, convey that grace to all men who receive them rightly, and are effectually administered only in the Roman Catholic Church, the mother of all the churches. It is now officially held that the Sacrifice of the Mass is "truly propitiatory"¹⁰⁹ both for the living and for the dead.

The Tridentine position is a compromise. It affirms both the reality of free will and the universal necessity of grace without resolving the antinomy. Through their prerogative as the sole exponents of the Tridentine Decrees, the Popes have continuously maintained this position and Rome remains an Augustinian Church with Pelagian members.

Great diversities of experience and thought find toleration within the Roman Church. Ignatius Loyola¹¹⁰ finds salvation by personal experience in its bosom, and grace for him is of practical consequence as the motivating power of his new life - a position quite close to that of the Reformers. Within the Society of Jesus, Molina¹¹¹ develops the theory that

108. Schaff op. cit., p. 118.

109. Ibid p. 179.

110. Gavin op. cit., p. 159 f.

111. W. P. Williams op. cit., p. 96 f. Harnack op. cit., Vol. VII p. 91 f. J. Pohle and A. Preuss Grace, Actual and Habitual p. 255 ff.

God foresees that if grace is given, the recipient will most certainly use it. This, of course, really abolishes the distinction between sufficient and efficacious grace, since any grace is efficacious if accepted and otherwise merely efficient. Molina's views are attacked with such vigour by the Dominican Banes that a special Congregation is called for consultation. The issue is a declaration, in harmony with the now firmly established Roman tradition, in which Pope Paul V. declares that both Thomism and Molinism are legitimate interpretations of the Catholic doctrine of grace. Since this edict of toleration, both schools continue to develop their particular tenets, the Jesuits being Molinists, the Dominicans Thomists, and, "Theologians who do not belong to either of these great orders (are) divided on the point."¹¹² Only the Jansenists do not remain within this ample fold.

THE CONTEMPORARY ROMAN CATHOLIC CONCEPTION OF GRACE

This toleration of all views which recognize the authority of the Church characterizes the present-day Roman conception of grace.¹¹³

Grace, "désigne en général les faveurs et les dons qui ont pour objet la sanctification de celui qui les reçoit, et spécialement un don surnaturel et gratuit que Dieu accorde à l'homme pour le conduire à sa fin, et sans lequel il ne peut être sauvé." ¹¹⁴

112. E. Towers Actual Grace p. 79.

113. Ibid p. 85, "In these discussions every Catholic is at liberty to take whichever side he prefers, provided that he is always ready to submit to any decision which the Church may make."

114. Dictionnaire Universal Vol. V p. 736.

Three chief divisions of grace are recognized. Actual Grace is a supernatural gift of an internal and passing nature whereby God helps us to avoid sin or perform actions tending toward eternal life.¹¹⁵ Sanctifying Grace is a supernatural gift of real quality, poured forth upon us and inhering in the soul, making men worthy of God. It is, "a positive reality superadded to the glorious natural endowments of the soul."¹¹⁶ Habitual grace is an increase of that sanctifying grace whereby men pass from the state of mortal sin to the state of being just.¹¹⁷ Grace does not destroy free will, yet man can do nothing which would help him to attain eternal life without the aid of grace, which is given without any merit on his part, but through the merits of Christ. Grace is given principally by means of the sacraments, which always convey grace if rightly received. Baptism and Penance confer the first grace of sanctification, while the remaining five increase grace in those who possess it already. The Eucharist, greatest of all sacraments (though it is not listed among those, "most necessary for salvation") actually contains grace.

As in the Eastern Orthodox Church, so here too, the sacraments have become virtually the only 'means of grace.' By baptism we become Christians, and original sin is cancelled;

115. Towers Actual Grace p. 11.

116. E. Towers Sanctifying Grace p. 3, Cf. pp. 5, 11, 12.

117. The Catholic Faith p. 66, a translation, authorized by Pope Pius X, in positive form, from the official Catechismo Maggiore for use, "in higher classes of schools in the province of Rome."

and without baptism there is no salvation. Judiciously leaving room for all, baptism by blood, i.e. martyrdom, and baptism by desire,¹¹⁸ can take the place of water Baptism. By Confirmation the Holy Ghost is received, virtues given in Baptism are perfected, and the seven gifts¹¹⁹ bestowed. Aided by these virtues and gifts the Christian can produce Christian virtues and avoid vices. Confirmation can be received at seven years of age! The Eucharist is spiritual food, the transubstantiated elements being the Body and Blood of Christ. To partake rightly of communion men must, "have a conscience pure and clean from all mortal sin,"¹²⁰ fast from the previous midnight and know and believe what is taught about the Catholic Doctrine. If rightly received and rightly administered, the sacrament effects in the recipient an increase of grace, remission of venial sins, spiritual consolation, weakening of passions, an increase of charity and gives a pledge of future glory. The Sacrifice of the Mass honours, thanks, and appeases God, and obtains all necessary graces; nevertheless, the assistance of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints may be invoked to obtain from God more abundantly the graces we need.

118. The Catholic Faith n. 70, "an act of perfect love of God or of contrition, if it is united with a desire, at least implicit, of Baptism . . . can take the place of Baptism," as such.

119. Ibid n. 71, "Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, and the Fear of the Lord".

120. Ibid n. 77.

Penance is necessary for the salvation of all who commit any mortal sin after Baptism. Its conditions are contrition, confession, satisfaction of the penitent, and the absolution of the priest. Its effects are forgiveness of mortal sins by sanctifying grace, restoration of the merits of good deeds done prior to commission of the mortal sin, forgiveness of confessed venial sins, and a renewal of peace of conscience. Confession entitles men to the treasure of indulgences by which satisfaction can be made to the justice of God, and heaven can be gained more quickly and easily. Extreme Unction confers an increase of sanctifying grace, cancels venial and even mortal sins, removes languor toward the good, gives strength to bear illness patiently and may help to restore health of body. Holy Order gives the grace necessary for the exercising of the ministry. Matrimony gives its recipients, "grace to love one another holily and to bring up their children as Christians."¹²¹

Grace is always supernatural. While the natural is that which, "belongs to the very essence or nature of a thing"¹²² grace is a positive reality superadded to the soul from above. Of course, there is the usual definition of terms by which all shades of belief are encompassed, for things may be 'relatively' or 'absolutely' supernatural, supernatural in se or supernatural quo ad modum. Calling St. Peter, St. Augustine and

121. The Catholic Faith p. 103.

122. Towers Sanctifying Grace p. 9.

St. Thomas Aquinas to witness grace is declared to be a wholly supernatural quality given to men, "which makes us to be of the same nature as God"¹²³ Himself. In the state of grace men are separated from God only by the thinnest veils, and, "That veil is being worn thinner and thinner as the supernatural life of the soul increases."¹²⁴

Grace is always necessary. Without grace man remains guilty of original sin and even after baptism he still must sin. To bridge the chasm between this deterministic view and man's free will, which is ever asserted, a distinction is drawn between physical impossibility and moral impossibility.¹²⁵ Failure because of the former is not sin, but the latter carries guilt with it, because all the means for right are indeed present, but not used by men. Men are therefore responsible for sin. Yet they can not so much as turn to God without divine grace;¹²⁶ faith is altogether the gift of God, as held by the Second Council of Orange. Here too, the distinction between sufficient grace and efficacious grace¹²⁷ is employed, for it is one thing to have the power to do a thing but quite another thing to do it. Consequently men must receive from God not just sufficient graces (note plural) but

123. Towers Sanctifying Grace p. 12.

124. Ibid pp. 33-34.

125. Towers Actual Grace p. 17 f.

126. Ibid p. 22 f.

127. Ibid pp. 37, 38.

also efficacious graces, so, therefore, following the Council of Trent, Final Perseverance is set forth as the 'great gift' which is finally efficacious, and of which we can never be certain. If He so desired, God could arrange all men's lives so that they would be saved; yet their damnation is all their own fault. All this, concludes Towers, "is indeed a great mystery."¹²⁸

Grace can be merited. The strong emphasis on the supernatural quality and universal necessity of grace does not obscure the necessity of works. Men cannot merit anything of themselves alone; prevenient grace, to use a term of the Fathers, is all of God. This does not deny that grace can be merited. It can. If God gives men prevenient and sanctifying grace then, by using that grace, men can merit still further grace, according, it is asserted, to the teaching of the Second Council of Orange, the Council of Trent, the Fathers, and the Apostle Paul.

Grace is bestowed through membership in the Roman Catholic Church.¹²⁹ Christ gave to men the Holy Catholic Church, which is His Body. The Church, by sacraments, rites, and prayers is able to confer actual and sanctifying grace. Outside the Church, actual grace is given to men only that

128. Towers Actual Grace p. 63.

129. Ibid pp. 12, 51, 75.

they may be drawn to the fold. The Church is the ark of salvation unto men.

The Roman Catholic conception of grace is now before us. It is rooted in Tertullian's views as perpetuated by Cyprian. In three great movements and counter-movements, Augustinianism, Pelagianism, Semi-Pelagianism, Thomism, Scotism, it is developed, discussed and defined. Each controversy is officially ended by a Council of the Church, but the actual result is a series of compromises in which Augustinian dependence on God is retained as regards the Church, but Pelagian reliance on works is affirmed in respect of the members.

CHAPTER VIII

REFORMATION CONCEPTIONS OF GRACE

The works of Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli, Calvin and their disciples are so extensive that we can present here only a brief summary and estimate of their teaching concerning grace. Yet this seems quite possible. The Reformers are thoroughly at one in many aspects of their conception of grace, and it is the consideration upon which their views remain fairly constant. A distinctive emphasis on the relationship of God and man as all of grace and grace for all who have faith in Christ marks the break with Roman Catholicism.

LUTHER'S CONCEPTION OF GRACE

Luther's conception of grace is the fruit of his personal experience. Other chief sources of his views are the Scriptures (especially Paul's epistles), the works of Augustine, and the writings of the medieval mystics.¹ While acknowledging his debt to these, we must affirm also the central importance

1. A. Harnack History of Dogma Vol. VII p. 182 f.

of his own vital experience, which, though not entered upon in as stormy and sudden a manner, is as determinative for Luther as Paul's conversion was for Paul. This experience centres in a deep conviction of sin, from which Luther seeks to escape in the customary medieval fashion by entering a monastery. Luther, like Paul, is zealous in performing the duties of the 'law' but finds no satisfaction therein. His sense of utter estrangement is so complete that he can not be reconciled to God by the current methods of salvation through meritorious acts, penances, and satisfactions. By the time Luther lectures on the Psalms ² he is convinced that salvation is a new relation to God based on trust in Him, and not at all on man's merits.

The conviction that 'all is of grace' is the solution to Luther's problem of sin, which is the starting point in his theology, as it is also in his experience. Sin consists chiefly in want of fear, love, and trust in God.³ It is ever present with man, right from birth, and is wholly corrupting. Hence original sin is really the chief sin, from which man needs must be saved. Yet this teaching differs from that of

2. W. Walker A History of the Christian Church p. 338, gives the date of these lectures as 1513 - 1515. T. M. Lindsay History of the Reformation Vol. I pp. 203, 204, seems to place this realization earlier in Luther's life.
3. Cf. P. Schaff Creeds of the Evangelical Protestant Churches pp. 74-77.

the conservative Schoolmen; for it is native sinfulness rather than imputed guilt which Luther stresses.⁴ By sin all actions of will pleasing to God become impossible.⁵ It follows that by grace, through repentance and faith, and by grace alone, can the heinousness of sin be overcome.⁶ Thus salvation is all of grace, freely bestowed.⁷ Men are called, enlightened, sanctified and preserved in faith, through grace, by the Holy Spirit,⁸ which is God at work in men. The doctrine of double predestination follows from these premises, and Luther, unlike Augustine, does not hesitate to ascribe both good and evil to God, as being the ultimate Source of all.

With such a doctrine of free grace the scholastic merit teaching is incompatible. In opposition to contemporary Catholic theologians who teach that the sinner is made righteous by a process of gradual and substantial change accomplished by meritorious works performed on the basis of infused divine grace, Luther asserts that salvation is entirely the

4. G. P. Fisher History of Christian Doctrine p. 282.

5. Schaff op. cit., p. 80, "I can not, by my own reason or strength, believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to him." N. P. Williams The Grace of God p. 76, "fallen man has no real freedom of choice at all."

6. F. Middleton, Luther's Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians p. 11, "for there is no means to take away sin, but grace alone." Works of Martin Luther Vol. III p. 46 (Philadelphia edition, translated by various Lutheran scholars).

7. Works of Martin Luther Vol. III p. 58.

8. Schaff op. cit., p. 80.

free gift of God to those who have faith in Jesus Christ. Any works which the Christian can do are due wholly to inward righteousness, given by God in Christ, which is to be regarded as the source, and not the consequence of them. Good works are the necessary fruits of faith, and at the same time, the highest of all good works is faith in Christ, freely promised and given by Him.⁹ Thus Luther holds, in his theory of the enslaved will,¹⁰ that only the Christian is truly free, because he alone transcends the law. This freedom, which we might describe as the freedom of the life under grace, is not empty emancipation from law to license; it is the assurance that if God be for us nothing can conquer us. The Christian, released from the bonds of law, finds true freedom in fear, love, and trust in God - a voluntary doing of His will. Yet, as the Shorter Catechism¹¹ evidences, Luther does not discard law, but like Paul, regards it as a school master to bring men to Christ. His position is summed up thusly,

"By doing the law I reject Grace. The law is good and holy, but not for righteousness. He who performs the law with a view to righteousness rejects Grace, refuses Christ, does not want to be saved by His sacrifice, but to make satisfaction by himself and the law, by his own righteousness; he tramples on the glory of God." 12

- 9. Works of Martin Luther Vol. I pp. 187, 189, 196, 203.
- 10. Ibid Vol. II p. 312.
- 11. Schaff op. cit., p. 74 f.
- 12. H. Hermelink Grace in the Theology of the Reformers in The Doctrine of Grace p. 191, (translated from Luther's Romans).

The righteousness of the Christian is entirely a free gift of God in Christ. 'All is of grace.'

Luther holds, further, that grace is for all who have faith in Christ. His three central thoughts are summed up in the words grace, justification, and faith.¹³ We are justified by faith through grace. In the ninety-five theses Luther declares the papal right to remit penalties or release from purgatory, "talen habet quilibet episcopus et curatus in sua diocesi et parochia specialiter."^{14^{a, b}} It is but a short step from this to his later position that all men must stand before God as individuals justified by personal faith rather than Church-mediated good works. In the disputation with Eck this position is more clearly defined, and Luther comes to realize that he is differing from Rome on a fundamental point.¹⁵ This leads to the conception of faith as the primary gift of grace. Such faith is not passive, but active.¹⁶ Here again, Luther discards contemporary definitions which make faith a kind of knowledge, and returns to the conception of faith as, "a divine work in us, through which we are changed and regenerated by God", and a, "living, deliberate confidence in the

13. Lindsay Vol. I op. cit., p. 436.

14a R. J. Kidd Documents of the Continental Reformation p. 22.

15. Lindsay Vol. I op. cit., p. 239.

16. Works of Martin Luther Vol. III p. 136.

14b. The entire thesis might be translated as follows, "such power as the Pope has over purgatory in general, such has every bishop in his own diocese, and every curate in his own parish, in particular." This I take to be an assertion that papal power in this regard is not different in kind from that of bishop or curate. If the thesis be so interpreted it seems to me to be a fore-runner of the position declared by Luther in his disputation with Eck, and an indication of the more developed concept of the priesthood of all believers.

grace of God, so certain that for it (men) could die a thousand deaths."¹⁷ Faith is no longer regarded as adherence to traditions and rules of the Church; it is a throwing of one's self on God; it is a certainty of forgiveness and a knowledge of communion which renews the soul.¹⁸ In the daily life of the Christian the activity of this faith is out to the test, for the Christian is at one and the same time a sinner in himself, and a righteous man in Christ by grace. Thus Luther affirms in extravagant terms the Pauline statement that where sin abounds there grace does much more abound.¹⁹ It is by such faith, then, through the grace of God, that men are justified. Justification²⁰ is a religious experience wherein the man of faith appropriates to himself the righteousness of Christ. According to Luther our faith is imputed by God for righteousness because of the union of the believer and Christ. In this union man's personality does not disappear but is maintained inviolate. Here too,

17. Harnack op. cit., Vol. VII footnote p. 185, (translated from Luther's Romans).

18. Works of Martin Luther Vol. III p. 54 f.; Vol. II p. 320. Lindsay op. cit., Vol. I p. 451, "The faith, however, which is the gift of God makes the believer see in the Christ Who is there before him a revelation of God's Fatherly love which gives him the sense of pardon, and at the same time excites in him the desire to do all manner of loving service." Cf. p. 449 ff.

19. Hermelink op. cit., p. 190, quoting from one of Luther's letters to Melanchthon, "from Him sin could not tear us away, even though we commit fornication or murder 1000 times, 1000 times in one day."

20. Lindsay op. cit., p. 444 ff.

men come into the knowledge that their salvation is assured.²¹
 All who have faith in Christ, then, receive justification without merit, by faith, as a free gift of God for Christ's sake,²²
 which remits sins, imputes righteousness and produces good works.

Luther's conception that grace is for all who have faith in Christ strikes right at the heart of the contemporary Roman Catholic ecclesiastical system, namely, at sacramental grace. Disclosing the fallacies of the idea that the free grace of God can be dispensed at the behest of pope or priest, he proclaims that the sacraments are useless without faith. Baptism thus accomplishes forgiveness of sins, delivers from death, and gives eternal salvation, "to all who believe".²³ In the Sacrament of the Altar remission of sins, life and salvation are received by him "who believes".²⁴ In further recognition of this teaching Luther proffers the cup to laymen, declaring that all baptized persons are really priests in the sight of God.²⁵ He also abolishes the sacrificial and private masses, and holding that transubstantiation is magical, substitutes the view which is commonly termed consubstantiation. He retains infant

21. Works of Martin Luther Vol. II p. 320.

22. Hermelink op. cit., p. 192, "God is gracious and merciful for the sake of the fulness and inexpressible Grace of ... Jesus Christ." Cf. Works of Martin Luther Vol. I p. 299.

23. Schaff op. cit., p. 86, "It is not water, indeed, that does it, but the Word of God which is with and in the water, and faith, which trusts in the Word of God in the water."

24. Schaff op. cit., p. 92, "he is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words: 'Given, and shed for you, for the remission of sins.'"

25. Works of Martin Luther Vol. II pp. 67, 179, 136.

baptism but maintains that the faith of the parents is accepted of God,²⁶ and suggests, in the Larger Catechism, that there may be a nascent faith on the part of the infant. In place of the extremely important Roman Catholic sacrament of penance Luther enjoins repentance,²⁷ centering in contrition, confession, and absolution. The latter is conditional upon faith: "As thou believest, so be it unto thee."²⁸ By restricting the effect of absolution to eternal guilt, Luther removes the temporal abuses of penance, and sets aside the subtle and corrupting doctrines of the applied merits of the saints and indulgences.²⁹ We may further note the semi-sacramental character of preaching; "Uerbum, inquam, et solum uerbum est uehiculum gratiae."³⁰ Preaching is the sacrament of the personal Word by which grace is distributed to men. "Though Christ were given and crucified for us a thousand times, it would all be in vain, unless the Word of God came and distributed it and gave it to me and thee."³¹ No sacrament is fulfilled by being performed, but only in being believed, therefore faith and the Word belong of necessity to the efficacy of the sacrament, and to the reception of grace.

26. Works of Martin Luther Vol. II p. 236.

27. Schaff op. cit., p. 87 f.

28. Ibid p. 90; Works of Martin Luther Vol. III p. 51.

29. Works of Martin Luther Vol. III p. 52 ff.

30. Williams op. cit., p. 79 (quoting Luther's Galatians).

31. Hermelink op. cit., p. 201 (quoting from the Weimar edition of Luther's Works XVIII pp. 202, 22 f.).

Luther's stress on scripture as the Word of God³² or the Word of Grace led to a limited use of grace in the primary New Testament sense of 'disposition in God'. On one occasion he said, "I take grace here strictly for the favour of God, as it should be taken, - not for a quality of the soul, as is taught by the most recent of our doctors."³³ At a different time he speaks of, "the gracious power of God that helps the elect".³⁴ Luther holds that God's gratuitous giving of Himself to men in Christ is the epitome of this good will; and to give grace is solely the work of God the Father.³⁵ It is in Christ that the Reformer perceives most clearly the beneficence of God. Indeed, so true is this that he says, "Grace is identical with Christ, who is Grace, the way, life and salvation."³⁶

32. Although Luther feels himself specially tied to the authority of the scriptures ("Scripture, without any gloss, is the sun and the sole light from which all teachers receive their light." (The Works of Martin Luther Vol. III p. 333.)) he is not bound literally thereto. Hermelink quotes a number of passages wherein Luther understands by 'scripture' Christ and the Christian faith, the individual books of the Bible being authoritative for faith insofar as they, "deal in Christ" (Hermelink op. cit., pp. 204, 205). On this point see also Fisher op. cit., p. 279, and The Works of Martin Luther Vol. I pp. 113, 306; Vol. II pp. 76, 452; Vol. III pp. 324 f., 333 f.
33. Hermelink op. cit., p. 179; Cf., Schaff op. cit., p. 82.
34. Ibid p. 178 (quoting Luther from Weimar edition Vol. III pp. 111, 30).
35. Middleton op. cit., p. 16.
36. Hermelink op. cit., p. 178 (Weimar edition Vol. III p. 269, 17): Cf., Middleton op. cit., p. 12 f.

The conception of grace as a gift is variously employed by Luther, and he is not always consistent. Usually grace is the free gift of forgiveness of sins, and peace of conscience, which comes to all who have faith.³⁷ To have faith is to have grace; and by God's grace our faith is evoked as we apprehend the grace of the Father in His Son. While Luther does not employ the term 'state of grace' he is obviously describing this New Testament reality when writing about Christian Liberty.

We conclude then, that in the teaching of Luther the New Testament stress on 'all is of grace' is emphatically reasserted, and the Roman Catholic doctrine of merit vigorously denied. We must note also, however, that the great Reformer does not re-establish the New Testament conception of grace in its entirety. The 'grace is for all' emphasis is modified very seriously, thus affecting our whole conception of the nature of God. Luther holds that 'grace is for all who have faith in Christ', because he believes that Christ changes the attitude of God toward man from that of an angry Judge to that of a beneficent Father. Grace thus, is the disposition of God toward the elect, but not toward all men. It would be misleading to credit Luther with relinquishing completely the

37. Middleton op. cit., p. 12; Lindsay op. cit., Vol. I p. 210, "God's grace is really His mercy revealed in the mission and work of Christ; it has to do with the forgiveness of sins, and is the fulfillment of His promises."

traditional and accepted viewpoint. Lindsay says, "Of all the Reformers, Luther was the least removed from the mediæval way of looking at religion."³⁸ Prominent ideas of the Roman Catholic Church concerning the nature of grace linger on; namely, that grace is the arbitrary work of omnipotence, and that its bestowal as a gift is linked inseparably with the 'Word in scripture, preaching and sacrament', that is, with the Church.³⁹ Of this tendency to slip into the time-honoured conception of grace as power, the doctrine of irresistibility is authoritative testimony. Luther rejects the Pelagianism of Rome, but he does not break away entirely from its paganism. In the Roman Church grace is, by God's unsearchable decree, available to all members; in the teaching of Luther, by the same inscrutable omniscience, grace is accorded to the elect.

MELANCHTHON AND THE SYNERGISTIC CONTROVERSY

Melanchthon, who at first follows Luther at every point, soon comes to differ from him in certain respects. He is by nature more affable and conciliatory; in fact he tends to give too much ground to his opponents, as is seen in the attempts at reconciliation with Rome after Luther's death. It

38. Lindsay op. cit., Vol. I p. 348.

39. A. Ritschl Justification and Reconciliation p. 162, notes that Luther held the, "idea that baptism guarantees our standing in grace".

is quite understandable therefore, that Melanchthon, in the successive editions of the Apology and the Loci, moves toward a synergistic doctrine.⁴⁰ This position is crystallized in the words of the Augsburg Confession,

"man's will hath some liberty to work a civil righteousness, and to choose such things as reason can reach unto; but it hath no power to work the righteousness of God, or a spiritual righteousness, without the Spirit of God." 41

In the same article outright Pelagianism is specifically condemned. Melanchthon's ethical feeling leads him to stress the necessity of good works, although grace can not be merited thereby.⁴² Good works are the necessary fruits of the new affection into which our hearts are brought by the Holy Spirit.⁴³

A second point of divergence between the two Saxon Reformers is the conception of the sacraments, Melanchthon tending more and more toward the Calvinistic position that Christ is received spiritually in the Eucharist.⁴⁴

With the maturing of Melanchthon's views a new controversy is born. The growing tendency to attribute to man the power to accept or reject grace soon finds both opposition and support. Flacius⁴⁵ leads the ultra-Augustinian group,

40. Fisher op. cit. p. 293.

41. Schaff op. cit., p. 18.

42. Ibid p. 21.

43. Ibid pp. 24, 25.

44. Ibid p. 13, footnote. Article X is amended in the edition of 1840 and reads, "De coena Domini docent quod cum pane et vino vere exhibeantur corpus et sanguis Christi vescentibus in Coena Domini."

45. Williams op. cit., p. 81 ff; Fisher op. cit., p. 296.

affirming that original sin effects a change in the soul's substance, that fallen man is passive (under Luther's figure of the log or stone), that conversion is catastrophic, that man's acceptance of the gospel is all of grace, and that grace is irresistible. Strigel,⁴⁶ a follower of Melancthon, supports the synergistic position, holding that, while fallen man is weakened and incapable of spiritual good, he is able to co-operate with God under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that conversion is gradual and equable, and that grace is not strictly irresistible.

At length the Formula of Concord⁴⁷ is drawn up to settle this controversy (together with certain other disputes outside our province here). The Formula affirms the corrupting influence of original sin which leaves nothing in body, mind, or soul untainted. It rejects the external impediment conception of Strigel on the one hand, and the teaching of Flacius that original sin is, "the very substance, nature, and essence of fallen man",⁴⁸ on the other hand. Of free will it states that the unregenerate is hostile to God and incapable of gaining spiritual life, save by the Holy Spirit⁴⁹ made available

46. Williams op. cit., p. 81 f; Fisher op. cit., p. 296.

47. Schaff op. cit., p. 93 ff. (the Formula was completed in 1580).

48. Ibid p. 103.

49. Ibid p. 109, "For if the grace of the Holy Spirit is absent, our willing and running, our planting, sowing, and watering, are wholly in vain."

by preaching. Pelagianism, Semi-Pelagianism and Synergism are emphatically and explicitly repudiated in favour of purely passive receptiveness. Luther's tenet regarding the imputation of righteousness is upheld, but it is affirmed that the appropriation of that righteousness is by faith and also by confession and virtuous acts; "independently of their (good works) being present man cannot be justified."⁵⁰ Good works must assuredly follow faith, but they can never precede or merit regeneration. Moreover, faith in Christ can be lost because of sin; the Holy Spirit will depart, even from the elect, if they persevere in, "adultery and other crimes."⁵¹ The strong affirmation of the necessity of works, and the many subtle inferences of the importance of the 'Church of God' confirm our opinion that what we have here is not so much a departure from Rome in regard to the meaning of 'grace', but rather a difference regarding the sphere in which it operates. Harnack's long section on, "The Catholic Element"⁵² in Luther's theology makes this particularly clear with reference to the sacraments. Luther, as we have seen, well knows that the Christian lives through communion with God, and not on certain means of grace. Yet here, infant baptism is held to be a means

50. Schaff op. cit., p. 121.

51. Ibid p. 126.

52. Harnack op. cit., Vol. VII p. 230 ff.

of grace, penance is a gracious reinitiation, and the real presence of Christ, by His, "omnipotent power"⁵³ is held to be the essential part of the Eucharist. Concerning predestination and election, which are affirmed, the Formula adheres to the old scholastic distinction between foreknowledge and predestination, holds that election is to salvation and not to destruction and places all guilt for sin squarely upon the shoulders of recalcitrant men.

The Formula of Concord continues to be the authoritative presentation of the Lutheran conception of grace. The Augustinian position, which appears to dominate the document, is modified by the important qualifications concerning predestination and good works. Luther's view of the sacraments as special media of grace is retained.⁵⁴ The emphasis on all of grace and grace for all who have faith in Christ, which promises to lead us to a new relationship between God and man and a dynamic conception of grace, wanders back into the old pathways of Rome, putting the authority of Scripture in place of that of the Church, making the elect the sphere of grace instead of the Roman Church, but leaving the conception of grace as the faith which justifies still linked to power rather than person.

⁵³. Schaff op. cit., p. 138, Cf. pp. 13, 14.

⁵⁴. While the Formula does not itself enlarge upon the sacramental aspect of this matter, it accepts the Augsburg Confession as authoritative.

ZWINGLI ON GRACE

Zwingli differs from Luther in many respects, but as Reformers the two have much in common. For both, grace is not a separate doctrine but the whole message of Christianity. In the sixty-seven brief articles which the near-humanist Zwingli published in 1523⁵⁵ it is affirmed that the gospel is its own testament, that the mass is not a sacrifice but a commemoration, that Christ is the only mediator, that confession is for advice not absolution, that purgatory is un-scriptural, and that salvation is by faith. Zwingli agrees with Luther in regard to the authority of the Bible,⁵⁶ predestination,⁵⁷ the centrality of faith,⁵⁸ the freeness of grace,⁵⁹ the baptism of infants,⁶⁰ the impossibility of salvation by works,⁶¹ the equation of the person and work of Christ and grace,⁶² and the linking of grace with forgiveness of sins.⁶³ He disagrees with the Saxon Reformer in holding that all good men will be found in heaven,⁶⁴ that original sin does not involve guilt⁶⁵ and that the Eucharist is purely commemorative.⁶⁶ The Swiss

55. Kidd op. cit., p. 411 ff.

56. Walker op. cit., pp. 361, 362.

57. B. B. Warfield Predestination in the Reformed Confessions p. 53.

58. Kidd op. cit., p. 424.

59. Hermelink op. cit., p. 220 (Lexicographical section).

60. Kidd op. cit., pp. 423, 424.

61. Ibid p. 412.

62. Hermelink op. cit., p. 222.

63. Ibid p. 225.

64. Fisher op. cit., p. 283.

65. Ibid p. 283; Ritschl op. cit., p. 373 f. has an interesting paragraph on this point.

66. Kidd op. cit., pp. 443, 444.

Reformer tends to connect the operation of grace in the hearts of men with the activity of the Holy Spirit.⁶⁷

Of all the Reformers, Zwingli is the most removed from the theology of Rome, as Hermelink shows in his excellent Lexicographical Section⁶⁸ dealing with Zwingli's use of gratia and Gnade. We do not feel, however, that the Systematic Section⁶⁹ of Hermelink finds adequate support in this lexicographical material. In the 'all is of grace' emphasis the Reformers are agreed. With both Luther and Zwingli grace is the heart of the gospel; for we can know God only because of His gracious revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ. Moreover, sola gratia means that even man's faith is to be attributed to God; there is and can be absolutely no movement of man toward God. Luther's conception that 'grace is for all who have faith in Christ' is to be compared with Zwingli's view that grace comes to all elect men everywhere and in every age. Now Hermelink maintains that this is not deterministic, arguing that sola fide insures an activity on the part of man. Perhaps this is true, but it is nowhere proven that Luther or Zwingli resolved the difficulty in the manner here suggested. It appears to us that the Reformers are religious determinists, and that the term can be

67. Hermelink op. cit., p. 226.

68. Ibid p. 219.

69. Ibid p. 209.

applied with justice to Zwingli, since he espouses the idea that only the predestined elect are saved. Furthermore, Zwingli's conception of grace can not be described correctly as a, "personal act . . . appropriated only in a personal act",⁷⁰ as long as grace is the direct, irresistible action of an omnipotent God. Whether mediated by the Roman Catholic Church or received directly by the individual, grace is conceived as an overwhelming operation of power. Its sphere of operation is differently understood, but the conception of its nature is unaltered.

Anabaptism carries the views of Zwingli and Luther to more radical conclusions. Hubmaier⁷¹ holds to the unqualified authority of the Bible and opposes infant baptism. The Anabaptist conception of grace centres in their view of the Bible as the true law of individual, church, and state, through obedience to which the favour of God may be found. Though condemned by Roman Catholics, Lutherans,⁷² and Zwinglians⁷³ alike, the movement gains considerable headway in Germany and the Netherlands, and bears fruit in the Baptists, Congregationalists and Quakers of later years.

70. Hermelink op. cit., p. 213.

71. Walker op. cit., p. 367; Kidd op. cit., p. 451 f.

72. Schaff op. cit., pp. 13, 17, 18.

73. Kidd op. cit., p. 453.

CALVIN AND CALVINISM

At the invitation of Farel,⁷⁴ Calvin first settles at Geneva, being appointed to the post of lecturer at the Cathedral. He has experienced a sudden conversion,⁷⁵ and is afire with his message. After three years of enforced exile from Geneva the three councils beg him to return⁷⁶ and accord him ever increasing authority in the city. With his position as a theologian already well established by the 'Institutes' and his fame as an exegete widespread because of 'Romans', Calvin now enters on the course which makes him the only one of the Reformers whose work shortly becomes international in scope.

By Calvinism we mean a theological school in the Reformed Churches. The conception of grace held by this school is largely Augustinian; Calvin himself quotes Augustine, nearly always with approval, more frequently than all the other Greek and Latin Fathers combined.⁷⁷ The fixed pole around which all of Calvin's theology radiates is the absolute sovereignty of God.⁷⁸ God is the source of all good, but of no evil;⁷⁹ though he uses Satan to instigate the reprobate. In the Scriptures,

74. Kidd op. cit., p. 544.

75. Ibid p. 523.

76. Ibid pp. 586, 587.

77. P. Schaff The Swiss Reformation Vol. II p. 539.

78. Every chapter of the "Institutes" bears witness to this fact.

79. H. Beveridge The Institutes of the Christian Religion by John Calvin Vol. I pp. 268, 41, 171 ff.

to which Calvin applies textual criticism⁸⁰ and the testimony of the Spirit,⁸¹ God's word and will are revealed to those whom He chooses. Add to the phrase 'sovereignty of God' the term 'election' and the main tenets of Calvin are before us.

For Calvin there are two kinds of grace. Choisy calls these 'General Grace' and 'Special Grace',⁸² but really, the distinction seems to differ little from that of the Schoolmen, namely efficient and efficacious grace. In the Institutes he speaks of, "an inferior operation of the Spirit"⁸³ working in the reprobate so that they, "recognize his (God's) grace,"⁸⁴ but yet this present grace with which He enlightens them, later, "proves envanescent."⁸⁵ In Romans this view is maintained and enlarged. Calvin holds that the Head of the Church, "invites all people in common . . . yet he does not internally draw (almost the language of Aquinas) any except those, who are known by infinite Wisdom to be his own,"⁸⁶ and in at least one passage he actually says, "the grace of God was not equally efficacious in all"⁸⁷ instances. Efficient grace acts on all

80. F. Sibson Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans by John Calvin pp. 418-419, 404.

81. Beveridge op. cit., Vol. I p. 63.

82. E. Choisy Calvin's Conception of Grace in The Doctrine of Grace p. 228.

83. Beveridge op. cit., Vol. I p. 478.

84. Ibid p. 479.

85. Ibid p. 479.

86. Sibson op. cit., p. 446.

87. Ibid p. 373 (underlining by present writer).

men, not unto salvation, but simply as a restraint upon sin, and as the cause of all that is good in men who are not elect. The absoluteness of God's sovereignty drives Calvin to this position, for he sees that there is good among the heathen and yet he must attribute all such good to God's free grace.

Efficacious grace comes only to the elect⁸⁸ and is entirely dependent upon the free favour of God.⁸⁹ Thus no works can in any way whatsoever merit salvation, and the small number⁹⁰ who are saved owe everything to God's grace; "we must believe the righteousness of works to be completely annihilated whenever the name of grace is taken into our lips."⁹¹ Even Abraham, before Christ's birth, gains salvation through no merit of his own, "save the acknowledgment of misery, which seeks for mercy."⁹² Not even the foreknowledge of merit is the cause of predestination.⁹³ Nor yet have men any cause to grumble at God's electing some to salvation and some to destruction,⁹⁴ for all, absolutely all, deserve destruction, being innately the utterly corrupt children of Adam; "not possessed of a single particle of righteousness."⁹⁵ Why some are destroyed

88. Beveridge op. cit., Vol. I pp. 239, 240, 264, Vol. II p. 222.

89. Ibid Vol. I p. 262; Sibson op. cit., p. 450.

90. Sibson op. cit., p. 450.

91. Ibid p. 451.

92. Ibid p. 187.

93. Beveridge op. cit., Vol. II p. 221.

94. Sibson op. cit., pp. 396, 397.

95. Ibid p. 375; Beveridge Vol. I pp. 214, 215.

is concealed from men and known only to the inscrutable counsel of God, but we can at least be sure of this, that the destruction of the wicked shows and confirms the extent of the divine goodness toward the elect.⁹⁶ There being absolutely no obligation imposed on God by the merits of any human person, there can be therefore no injustice in God's double predestination,⁹⁷ but rather we should glory in such love and infinite mercy by which, "we are all without exception snatched and delivered from the very depths of the abyss of death, by his gratuitous kindness and clemency."⁹⁸ From election springs holiness of life,⁹⁹ and certainty of salvation; since none who are effectually called can perish or fall away from the faith.¹⁰⁰

Men alone are responsible for sin, which is the, "depravation of a nature formerly good and pure",¹⁰¹ though the, "beginning of their ruin and condemnation (arises) . . . from their being forsaken of the Lord."¹⁰² The difficulty is solved, supposedly, by making the perversity of man's nature, when forsaken of God, responsible; but in the end Calvin is forced to, "do nothing else but admire the incomprehensible counsel and

96. Sibson op. cit., p. 397 (note that the door is open for elect even among the heathen, pp. 449, 399).

97. Ibid pp. 484, 485.

98. Ibid p. 440; Beveridge Vol. II p. 241.

99. Beveridge op. cit., Vol. II p. 214.

100. Ibid Vol. II p. 246 ff.

101. Ibid Vol. I p. 214.

102. Sibson op. cit., p. 453.

purpose of God,"¹⁰³ for within his system there is no place for free will as a present possession man, though man does possess such an endowment prior to the fall.¹⁰⁴

Men are justified by faith, but that faith is in no sense a merit, being the gift of grace; "faith, therefore, itself is a part and portion of divine grace."¹⁰⁵ We receive the remission of sin and peace of conscience,¹⁰⁶ which, as in Luther, are the marks of justification, by embracing God's goodness offered to us in the gospel; "and we are therefore just, because we believe that God is propitious to us in Christ."¹⁰⁷ Faith is produced in men by the preaching of the Word.¹⁰⁸ Faith proceeds from election¹⁰⁹ and is thus the gift of God's free grace. It is defined as, "a firm and sure knowledge of the divine favour toward us, founded on the truth of a free promise in Christ, and revealed to our minds, and sealed on our hearts, by the Holy Spirit."¹¹⁰ Thus God works on His elect outwardly by the Word and inwardly by the Spirit.¹¹¹

103. Sibson op. cit., pp. 455, 379, "For the predestination of God is truly a labyrinth, from which the human mind cannot easily extricate itself."

104. Beveridge op. cit., Vol. I p. 169.

105. Sibson op. cit., p. 407; Beveridge op. cit., Vol. II p. 223.

106. Beveridge op. cit., Vol. II pp. 57, 68, 70.

107. Sibson op. cit., p. 425.

108. Ibid p. 435; Beveridge op. cit., Vol. I p. 473.

109. Beveridge op. cit., Vol. I p. 257 f.

110. Ibid Vol. I p. 475.

111. Ibid Vol. I p. 277.

Calvin holds that the sacrament consists of, "the word and the external sign."¹¹² The word is that which, heard in faith, helps us to understand the meaning of the visible sign, and a sacrament is not complete unless it is accompanied by the word. Though the signs be held out to the non-elect - to unbelievers - they are signs of grace only to the believers.¹¹³ On this basis transubstantiation is only a figment of the imagination, contrary to scripture, and of semi-magical character.¹¹⁴ Grace comes by the sacraments only when faith is aroused by the preaching of the Word and the witness of the Spirit. Baptism, even of infants, attests the forgiveness of sins, and teaches that by union with Christ men have newness of life.¹¹⁵ The Lord's Supper brings us into true spiritual communion with Christ, effecting redemption, justification, sanctification, eternal life and all other benefits which Christ can bestow upon men.¹¹⁶

In Calvin's conception of grace absolutely everything but evil is due to God. Here, if anywhere, we find omnipotence directed in a straight line by omniscience, and the result is the complete negation of man's free will. This indicates that Calvin, in common with Luther and Zwingli, does not alter

¹¹². Beveridge op. cit., Vol. II p. 493.

¹¹³. Ibid Vol. II p. 495.

¹¹⁴. Ibid Vol. II pp. 566, 493.

¹¹⁵. Ibid Vol. II pp. 512 ff. 531 ff.

¹¹⁶. Ibid Vol. II pp. 563, 564, 571.

the conception of the nature of grace, but rather changes the sphere of its operation from the visible Roman Church to the invisible elect of God. In at least one place he writes, "Christ transfuses into us the power of his own righteousness."¹¹⁷ Grace is sometimes the gracious disposition of God, but in general, it still retains the notion of a power super-added to man's natural endowment.

The central conceptions of Calvin are incorporated, with but slight modifications, in a long line of important church documents. The First Helvetic Confession,¹¹⁸ the Second Helvetic Confession,¹¹⁹ the Heidelberg Confession,¹²⁰ and the Thirty-Nine Articles¹²¹ differ fundamentally in regard to predestination, only in being silent concerning reprobation while affirming election to salvation. In the French,¹²² Belgic¹²³ and Scotch Confessions¹²⁴ an infra-lapsarian form of the doctrine is found. In the Lambeth Articles,¹²⁵ the Irish Articles,¹²⁶ the Canons of Dort,¹²⁷ and especially the Westminster Confession¹²⁸ the Calvinistic position receives full endorsement and

117. Beveridge op. cit., Vol. I p. 215.

118. Schaff Creeds p. 211 f.

119. Ibid pp. 252, 253.

120. Ibid p. 307 f.

121. Ibid pp. 497, 498.

122. Ibid pp. 367, 368.

123. Ibid p. 401.

124. Ibid p. 445.

125. Ibid p. 523.

126. Ibid p. 528.

127. Ibid p. 582.

128. Ibid pp. 608, 609.

classic expression. These great theological works perpetuate the Calvinistic conception of grace. They hold the sovereignty of God first and foremost. By God and by Him alone, by His eternal and inscrutable decree, certain individuals are elected to salvation through no merit of their own but by His gratuitous favour. Men are justified by faith, which is itself a gift of God, by Jesus Christ; and good works are the necessary result of faith in Him. In the reading of the Scripture, preaching of the Word and rightly received Sacraments, grace, by the working of the Holy Spirit, is bestowed upon believers.

Modern Calvinism, as represented by church doctrines, maintains in large degree the position of its founder. In the Congregational, Baptist, Presbyterian and Episcopal declarations, confessions and articles gathered together by Schaff,¹²⁹ Calvinism is dominant. Predestination to election is invariably affirmed; though widened in a few instances to the position that God elects all to salvation. Predestination to damnation is not mentioned, glossed over, or explicitly rejected. In spite of Semi-Pelagian modifications, the depravity of man, necessity of redemption, and the absolute freeness of God's gift of salvation by His grace, continue to find strong expression. Other changes dictated by the necessity of

129. Schaff Creeds p. 706 ff.

emphasizing man's moral responsibility are cautious and guarded in every document of importance. The conception of grace as a force acting upon men at the instigation of omnipotence directed by omniscience, though shaken, still stands.

ARMINIANISM

The Calvinistic conception of grace finds early opposition. Pighius¹³⁰ marshals the usual Semi-Pelagian arguments, chiefly emphasizing the destruction of morality and free will. A more potent attack comes from Bolsec,¹³¹ who maintains that election depends on faith, that predestination to damnation insults God, that grace is universal and that Paul means election to discipleship, not election to salvation. Against these and other opponents Calvin fights zealously and victoriously. But all previous opposition to Calvinism is of little account compared to the movement in Holland under the inspiration of James Arminius. In the Remonstrance,¹³² presented to the States of Holland in 1610, the Arminian teaching is concisely stated. The Remonstrants hold that election depends on the foreknowledge of faith ("those who, through the grace of the Holy Ghost, shall believe . . . and shall persevere" are

130. Schaff The Swiss Reformation Vol. II pp. 596, 597.

131. Ibid n. 615 ff.

132. Schaff Creeds pp. 545-549, subsequent quotations from the Remonstrance refer to this edition.

saved), that Christ, "died for all men and for every man . . . yet that no one actually enjoys this forgiveness of sins except the believer," that men can do nothing truly good unless they, "be born again of God in Christ", that grace is universally essential but, "not irresistible," and that men may co-operate with grace by the Holy Spirit after conversion. The perseverance of all believers is pronounced doubtful, though later Arminians maintain that believers may finally fall from grace. This controversy, which is now brought to a focus, shakes all Holland and reverberates throughout seventeenth century Protestantism. Although the Arminian position gains many and prominent supporters, including the great Hugo Grotius, the majority hold to strict Calvinism.

At the Synod of Dort¹³³ Calvinism is triumphant. The presence of representatives from the Netherlands, England, the Palatinate, Hesse, Bremen and Switzerland gives an almost ecumenical character to this gathering. The Canons of the Synod assert original sin, absolute double predestination (which is quite just since all men deserve destruction), the assurance of election, the indefectibility of the saints, that the atoning death of Christ benefits only the elect, and that God's sovereignty is the beneficent source of election (which expresses his gratuitous grace). The adoption of an

infra-lapsarian view of predestination, and the assertion that the grace of regeneration neither deprives men of their will nor does violence to the same, are concessions to moderatism; but it is firmly maintained that even faith is in no way due to man's free will but is entirely the gift of God who, "produces both the will to believe and the act of believing also," and, "infuses new qualities into the will."

The Arminian cause, ousted from Holland, finds a congenial home in England. During the century following the restoration of the monarchy Arminianism is the watchword of those in the English Church who oppose strict Calvinism; but it is with the advent of John Wesley that the positive note becomes dominant. In answering the question, "What is an Arminian?"¹³⁴ Wesley makes it clear that he agrees with the Calvinist in regard to original sin¹³⁵ and justification by faith,¹³⁶ but disagrees in three other respects; holding that predestination is conditioned on faith,¹³⁷ that grace, though it may be irresistible at some moments, is in general resistible,¹³⁸ and that true believers may fall from grace and ultimately perish.¹³⁹ With the Calvinists he agrees that

134. The Works of the Rev. John Wesley Vol. X pp. 358-361.

135. Cf. Schaff Creeds n. 808; Works Vol. VI pp. 215-224, 54-65, 68.

136. Cf. Works Vol. VI n. 49; Schaff Creeds n. 809.

137. Works Vol. X pp. 204-266; Vol. VI pp. 225-230.

138. Ibid Vol. V pp. 280-281.

139. Ibid Vol. X pp. 284-298.

men can do no good works of themselves because of their condition after the fall of Adam; yet, though good works are the fruits of faith, he holds that they are, "pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ."¹⁴⁰ But the greatest utterance of Wesley on grace, and perhaps the most scathing denunciation of the Calvinist position ever voiced, is the sermon on Free Grace.¹⁴¹ Starting from the position that, "Free Grace is all in all" he maintains first, that it is, "free in all," depending in no wise on the good works or righteousness of the receiver, and second, that it is, "free for all," not just the elect. Next, the content of the doctrine of double predestination is elaborated and Wesley vehemently asserts; "Call it therefore by whatever name you please, election, preterition, predestination, or reprobation, it comes in the end to the same thing . . . one part of mankind are infallibly saved, and the rest infallibly damned," because, if it is not possible for any man to be saved unless he is elected, and if some are non-elect, surely the non-elect are thereby damned whether we admit it or not. Predestination is denounced as a blasphemous and horrible unscriptural decree which makes God a murderer, Christ unnecessary and preaching vain, destroys holiness, Christian happiness and zeal for good works, overthrows Revelation making the gospel a travesty, and

140. Schaff Creeds p. 809; Cf. Works Vol. VII pp. 127-138.

141. Works Vol. VII pp. 373-386.

sets up an omnipotent and almighty tyrant in place of the God of love and mercy. Only as men, "suffer Christ to make them alive" are they elect; "Ye cannot charge your death upon him!" but rather you must lay it to man's misuse of his free will.

Methodism is the fruit of Wesley's labours. Its origin is practical and its theology stresses the necessity of action on man's part. This emphasis is never lost. The Methodist holds that men must strive to attain perfection in this life,¹⁴² feeling that increase in the Christian virtues is of primary importance. Accordingly, the means of grace, by which such growth can be attained, are of utmost significance. These means are prayer, searching the scriptures, the Lord's Supper, fasting and Christian Conference.¹⁴³ From the time of William Pope's¹⁴⁴ formulation of the doctrine of prevenient grace as the influence of the Spirit on men prior to their personal acceptance of Christ there has been no significant addition to the Methodist doctrine. Man's ability to resist grace, which is free for all and free in all, is the distinctive teaching of the largest branch of English speaking Christianity.

142. E. D. Soper Grace in Methodist Tradition in The Doctrine of Grace pp. 280, 281.

143. Ibid pp. 282, 283.

144. Ibid p. 290.

SOCINIANISM

In addition to Lutheranism, Anabaptism, and the Reformed Churches, the Reformation era brings forth Socinianism. Lailius Socinus, and more especially Faustus Socinus are its leaders. To the latter is due the strong unitarian church in Poland, which issues from Racow, the authoritative summary of Socinianism known as the Racovian Catechism.¹⁴⁵ Luther starts from man and his sin, Calvin from God and His sovereignty, but Socinus with eternal life and how it is to be attained. The first answer in the Racovian Catechism tells us that, "the Christian Religion is the way of attaining eternal life;" while the second informs us that, "the Holy Scriptures; especially those of the New Testament," teach us how to attain it. God is a Being who possesses supreme dominion over all things. Through His Son we have remission of sin under the New Covenant¹⁴⁶ which promises reward in this world and eternal life in that which is to come. In some respects Socinianism is a most unusual combination of Catholicism and radicalism. The Holy Spirit, for example, "is a virtue or energy flowing from God to men, and communicated to them" by a Being who is

145. T. Rees The Racovian Catechism This Catechism is chiefly the work of Faustus Socinus and was first published one year after his death.

146. The Covenant Idea here set forth is comparable is comparable to that of later date though the end in view is different. Cf. Rees op. cit., pp. 280-284.

professedly Lord of all, yet, men must give themselves up wholly to trust and obey God in order to obtain salvation. Adam's fall brought sin upon Adam, but not upon his posterity. It follows that men are by no means so depraved as to be deprived of liberty and the power to obey or disobey God, rather, by the external assistance of God's promises in the New Covenant and the internal assistance of his 'spirit', men are able to be saved. Predestination is declared untenable because it destroys all religion, making exertion and application superfluous, and is incompatible with God's nature, since it attributes injustice, hypocrisy, imprudence and wickedness to Him. 'Elect' is applied to those who give their assent to the gospel and regulate their lives by it, not to some chosen for salvation before the foundation of the world by an eternal and immutable divine decree. Human activity is essential. No man can be, or ever has been, justified without faith in God, dependent merely on His grace; but faith in the Socinian sense is an activity on the part of man by which he hopes to gain eternal life, and the true, invisible church is composed of those who, "confide in Christ and obey him" finding thus, in God's appointed manner, the way to salvation. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are retained simply as historic symbols. In England, and more particularly in The United States, Unitarianism is, in recent years, a potent factor in theology, not only because of the denomination springing from Channing of

Boston, but more particularly because it enters into the thinking of liberal theologians in many other branches of modern Protestantism.

SUMMARY

The Reformation marks a break with Rome in regarding man's relationship to God as all of grace and grace for the elect who have faith in Christ. Although justification by faith is not invariable in meaning with the Reformers and those who follow them, it at least means that man now stands personally before God as an individual and not as an ecclesiastically fenced-in member of the visible Roman Catholic Church. Saving faith, so frequently the Reformation term for grace, is an individual relationship of man to God, but in dealing directly with the individual instead of indirectly through the Church, the mode of manifestation is, none the less, the mechanical operation of overwhelming power. Further, with varying degrees of thoroughness, the Reformers all condemn the Roman Sacramental system which dominates the Christianity of the preceeding centuries. In so doing they hold that grace is not strictly and exclusively sacramental but is available also through other channels. These new channels, variously called the Word, reading the scriptures, preaching, and prayer do not materially alter the meaning of grace, but simply change the sphere of

operation from the visible Roman Catholic Church to the invisible church of the elect, composed of individual believers. Grace continues to be either the action of Wesley's 'almighty tyrant' or means no more than man's increase in moral virtues; and the authority of an ecclesiastical Holy Catholic Church soon is succeeded by the rule of a dogmatic Holy Scripture.

CHAPTER IX
THE EMERGENCE OF THE
MODERN EVANGELICAL CONCEPTION OF GRACE

RATIONALISTIC TENDENCIES

Socinianism prepares the way for Rationalism in which supernatural religion is declared a myth, and the reign of superstition is abrogated by the clear light of reason. Under this influence the Scriptures are no more than a valuable presentation of morality and natural religion, miracles are myth and Jesus is a great moral teacher whose character and work is shrouded in legend. On these premises grace as a supernatural energy is rejected, and when the word is retained, it means no more than man's natural endowments, his understanding of the Christian faith and the influence of home, school and Church upon him.¹ Rationalism is essentially Pelagian, affirming, as in Wolff and Lessing, that man can win his way to immortality, which is regarded as the true end of real religion. In stark intellectual honesty it champions a position diametrically opposed to the Roman Catholic Church

1. W. P. Paterson The Rule of Faith pp. 317-318.

doctrine, and far removed from the Reformation faith. Nevertheless, Rationalism bequeathes a valuable legacy in disassociating grace and infused power, radically 'tis true, but, perhaps because of that, more clearly, explicitly and consistently than did the Protestant Reformation.

SCHLEIERMACHER ON GRACE

The Romantic movement ends the reign of Rationalism. In theology, under the leadership of Schleiermacher - "a prince among theologians"² - Pelagianism once again gives way to an Augustinian emphasis. Religion is differentiated from all else and defined as, "the consciousness of being absolutely dependent,"³ and among the religions of the world Christianity is particularized, "by the fact that in it everything is related to the redemption accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth."⁴ While holding man to be utterly dependent on God, Schleiermacher by no means accepts the whole Augustinian position. If only we could separate philosophic speculation and Christian piety we might better discern his thoughts. This much appears to be clear, redemption is necessary because men cannot attain God-consciousness by their own efforts,⁵ and

2. G. P. Fisher History of Christian Doctrine p. 502.

3. F. Schleiermacher The Christian Faith p. 12 (English translation by Mackintosh and others).

4. Ibid p. 52.

5. Ibid pp. 54-55.

that redemption is supremely achieved in the Christian communion through faith in Jesus as the Redeemer.⁶

The great fact of redemption is the antithesis of sin and grace. Man was originally perfect,⁷ but self-consciousness now attests an inner state of sin⁸ which separates him from God. Everything, "that has arrested the free development of the God-consciousness"⁹ is sin, and the state of sin recognized by self-consciousness is prior to the emergence of the disposition to God-consciousness.¹⁰ Yet the original perfection, from which God-consciousness in man flows, precedes sin,¹¹ and sin may, therefore, be regarded as a derangement of man's nature. Here Schleiermacher makes a keen distinction. He differentiates man's consciousness of sin as, "partly, having its source in ourselves, (and) partly . . . outside our own being."¹² The latter, original sin, is present from the very first,¹³ implies complete incapacity for good,¹⁴ and as a corporate act, is really the personal guilt of every man.¹⁵ Nevertheless, original sin does not deserve punishment or remove the capacity for appropriating redemption. Grace must be appropriated, not by co-operation

6. Schleiermacher op. cit., p. 68.

7. Ibid p. 245.

8. Ibid p. 271.

9. Ibid p. 271.

10. Ibid p. 273.

11. Ibid p. 277.

12. Ibid p. 279.

13. Ibid p. 282.

14. Ibid p. 283.

15. Ibid p. 285 f.

but by yielding the self to its operation.¹⁶ In all men original sin produces actual sin.¹⁷ The only essential distinction amongst actual sins is between those of the regenerate, which have no contaminating power being vanquished by personally and spontaneously implanted God-consciousness, and those of the unregenerate which are detrimental to the spiritual life of both individual and community.¹⁸ Now, since sin and grace are opposed to one another in man's self-consciousness, God cannot be assumed, "the Author of sin in the same sense as that in which He is the Author of redemption"¹⁹ but He does ordain the existence of sin as that which makes redemption necessary.²⁰ Sin and grace are inseparably linked together in Christian self-consciousness, for they represent the same moment in Christian thought; yet the consciousness of sin is anterior to that of grace, since sin presents the need for redemption, and therefore of grace.²¹ Sin, alienation from God, always originates in man, but whatever fellowship with God man has, rests on God's grace in Christ.²²

The Church is the medium of grace, as the fellowship of believers and the sphere in which the Holy Spirit operates.

16. Schleiermacher op. cit., pp. 283-284.

17. Ibid p. 304 f.

18. Ibid p. 313.

19. Ibid p. 326.

20. Ibid p. 335.

21. Ibid p. 266.

22. Ibid p. 262.

Its redemptive, grace-conveying character is derived from its Founder,²³ through the communication of His sinlessness by which men may approximate blessedness in this life. Grace is God's free gift in Christ, and is creative of a 'state of grace'.²⁴ Christ by His own act brings man freely into the fellowship of His life and activity, yet man must act too, for without living receptivity no man can be saved.²⁵ If we continue in the fellowship, that is in the state of grace, impulses flow from Him to us until we find that He has become the source of our activity.²⁶ Since in the actual life of the Christian, God and Christ are always found together,²⁷ every relation to Christ is a relation to God, for all Christ's activity has its source in the being of God in Him.²⁸ Finally, Schleiermacher arrives at the significant conclusion:

"It follows (then) that He can influence what is free only in accordance with the manner in which it enters into His sphere of living influence, and only in accordance with the nature of the free. The activity by which He assumes us into fellowship with Him is, therefore, a creative production in us of the will to assume Him into ourselves, or rather - since it is only receptiveness for His activity as involved in the impartation - only our assent to the influence of His activity." ²⁹

Consciousness of sin brings us into the sphere of His influence

23. Schleiermacher op. cit., p. 361.

24. Ibid pp. 369, 371.

25. Ibid pp. 425, 371.

26. Ibid p. 425.

27. Ibid p. 261.

28. Ibid p. 426.

29. Ibid p. 426.

and our redemption is wrought by Him in living relationship to us; He active, we passive.

The Christian self-consciousness regards the life of grace under the two aspects of regeneration and sanctification. In the first, conversion is a changed form of life re-orientated around repentance and faith;³⁰ and it is, "an arbitrary and presumptuous restriction of divine grace,"³¹ to connect this change of heart only with 'sudden' conversions, or with the act of baptism. Conversion is likely to be a slowly increasing God-consciousness, but it is all and always the work of grace, and not of man.³² Man is passively receptive, not as an inanimate object but as a person, and the moment he is received into fellowship with Christ, the grace that effects conversion changes his passivity into spontaneous activity.³³ Justification, the second term in regeneration, is concerned with man's changed relation to God, whereby unworthy men are forgiven for their sins, released from consciousness of guilt, and accepted as His children.³⁴ "The application of the universal divine justifying act to the individual is bound up with and conditioned by the dawn of faith."³⁵ The state of sanctification or grace is produced

30. Schleiermacher op. cit., pp. 478, 483, 486.

31. Ibid p. 487.

32. Ibid p. 493.

33. Ibid pp. 494-495.

34. Ibid pp. 478, 496.

35. Ibid p. 503.

by living fellowship with Christ,³⁶ in which the regenerate place their natural powers at His disposal. Only thus can their lives become truly free and akin to His. In this 'state' sins carry their forgiveness with them.³⁷ Although civil righteousness is possible for the unregenerate,³⁸ only the regenerate can produce good works, which are, being the effects of faith, objects of divine good pleasure;³⁹ but which, being simply an expression of our living fellowship with Christ,⁴⁰ merit no reward. Holding that all is due to God, Schleiermacher retains election, which he equates with predestination.⁴¹ Rejecting the scholastically developed doctrines of both Calvinism and Lutheranism, he points to the sola gratia Dei and sola fide hominis relationship as the real basis of election: in fact he postulates foreseen faith as the basis of election.⁴² Of those outside the state of grace or sanctification he says, "they cannot so affect us as to give us reasonable cause to make any statement about them in this connexion."⁴³

Schleiermacher regards the Holy Spirit as the common spirit of the Church.⁴⁴ In the Church there exists something

36. Schleiermacher op. cit., p. 505.

37. Ibid p. 510.

38. Ibid p. 284.

39. Ibid p. 517.

40. Ibid p. 520 ff.

41. Ibid p. 546.

42. Ibid p. 553.

43. Ibid p. 547, Cf. pp. 548, 722.

44. Ibid p. 535.

divine, and it is this which continues the communication of grace from generation to generation. The essential features of the Church through which this communication is mediated by the Spirit are, the Scriptures, the Word, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, Power of the Keys and Prayer.⁴⁵ The New Testament is the normative revelation,⁴⁶ but the Old Testament does not share this dignity.⁴⁷ By the Holy Spirit the preached word strengthens and confirms the faith of the weak.⁴⁸ Baptism signifies the reception of the individual into the fellowship and is at the same time the channel of divine justifying activity.⁴⁹ The faith of the baptized person is a necessary precondition for the reception of salvation by divine grace in regeneration. But

"the meaning is not that the outward performance works even in the faintest degree ex opere operato . . . but that it works solely in union with the Word . . . and thus links up the act of the Church with what is going on in the individual soul." 50

Infant Baptism, magical conceptions being definitely barred out, is complete Baptism only when consummated by personal faith.⁵¹ The primary purpose of the Lord's Supper is as a means of fellowship with Christ.⁵² The Supper also confirms

45. Schleiermacher *op. cit.*, p. 586.

46. *Ibid* p. 604.

47. *Ibid* p. 608.

48. *Ibid* p. 613 f.

49. *Ibid* p. 619.

50. *Ibid* p. 632.

51. *Ibid* p. 633.

52. *Ibid* p. 651.

anew the forgiveness of original sin,⁵³ but only because it is a living relationship to Christ. The Church, by the 'Power of the Keys,' has the right to define the Christian Faith,⁵⁴ and is assured that 'Prayer in Jesus' Name' will be heard.⁵⁵ Thus, in all these ways, the Christian Church is, in each successive age, the medium in which the grace of God in Christ becomes available to men.

Schleiermacher opens a new epoch in the theology of grace. With all his fear of anthropomorphism, he gropes toward the personal, ethical idea of God's dealing with men as free moral personalities. His theology starts from the Christian's own consciousness - his own experience of dependence on God in Christ, and thereby leads the way back from the abstract reasoning of Rationalism to the concrete facts of life. Not always consistent, nor yet invariably well-defined, Schleiermacher's view of the Church as the medium by which Christ lives on from age to age and conveys grace to men has at least the virtue of connecting grace as personal suggestion with the personal activity of God and man. It is in living relationship with Christ that the gift of grace is received, and it is in the fellowship of His Church that the state of grace is maintained. In "The Christian Faith" the seriousness of sin is underestimated

53. Schleiermacher op. cit., p. 652.

54. Ibid p. 662.

55. Ibid p. 671 ff.

and the immanence of God is overstressed, but, though starting from the human, Schleiermacher re-emphasizes the Divine, and man's consciousness of reliance on God is termed the 'feeling of absolute dependence.'

THE INFLUENCE OF COLERIDGE

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, sometimes called the 'English Schleiermacher', was probably the greatest theological force in early nineteenth century England. In many respects a debtor to his German training, he is also a brilliant original thinker, who, deploring the spread of Arminianism in England,⁵⁶ comes to the support of a reinterpreted 'Luthero-Calvinism' with deep insight and profound philosophic apprehension. Reason (characterized by fixity, autonomous authority, contemplation and intuition), as opposed to understanding (differentiated by discursiveness, delegated authority and reflection), is the organ of spiritual perception,⁵⁷ and, "Christian faith is the perfection of human reason."⁵⁸ Man's heart is made for God, and must remain restless till it meet with Him⁵⁹ who cares for every creature so fully that, "He hath made (each) with a convenient good to which it tends, and in the obtainment of which it rests and is satisfied."⁶⁰ The

56. S. T. Coleridge Aids to Reflection (7th edition) pp. 156-157, 165.

57. Ibid pp. 215-216.

58. Ibid p. 58.

59. Ibid p. 122.

60. Ibid p. 121.

soul of man being cut to the largeness of communion with God can never be satisfied with less. That which prevents man from achieving this end is sin; "a sin is an Evil which has its ground or origin in the Agent, and not in the Circumstances."⁶¹ It is spiritual evil, arising from the corrupt and sinful nature of the human will;⁶² and the essential attribute of a will is self-determination.⁶³ In the will of Adam, the adequate archetypal representative of all men, responsibility is present, and subsequent to his fall, we all fall.⁶⁴ This doctrine of original Sin is common to all religions that retain, "the least glimmering of . . . faith in a God infinite, yet personal,"⁶⁵ but the remedy and solution of the difficulty is found in the Christian doctrine of redemption, and in Christ the Redeemer.

By repentance and faith in the love of Christ man receives the power of God;⁶⁶ but the very ability to have faith is itself a consequence of redemption and, "a free gift of the Redeemer".⁶⁷ Faith is not to be accounted as a good work of man.⁶⁸ Christ's incarnation, life, death, resurrection, intercession, and gift of the Holy Spirit, are the efficient cause and

61. Coleridge op. cit., (7th ed.) pp. 256-257.

62. Ibid (10th edition edited by D. Coleridge) pp. 217, 228.

63. Ibid (10th ed.) p. 230.

64. Ibid (10th ed.) p. 235.

65. Ibid (10th ed.) p. 228.

66. Ibid (7th ed.) p. 305.

67. Ibid (7th ed.) p. 311.

68. Ibid (7th ed.) pp. 125 f., 191.

condition of redemption.⁶⁹ Becoming partakers of this redemption men are sanctified, liberated from the consequences of sin in the world to come, endowed with a 'Seed of Life' capable of surviving this natural life, vivified with a new Spirit, and accompanied by, "gifts, graces, comforts, and privileges of the Spirit."⁷⁰ Baptism is not regenerative.⁷¹ No communication of Spirit, "as of a power in principle not yet possessed"⁷² can be condoned, though Coleridge does not deny the reality of the Spirit's influence, even on an infant, in baptism. Of this he is certain, that faith in Christ, not ceremony, form or rite, is necessary to salvation.⁷³ Concerning the Eucharist his opinions coincide with those of Bucer.⁷⁴ Election he holds as a necessary inference from the fact that some are believers and many are non-believers,⁷⁵ but it is held as a practical doctrine of Christian assurance, not as a theoretical conception which condemns unbelievers.⁷⁶ Coleridge clarifies our view of the sphere of grace, and indicates the method of its operation, but, so far as I know, he nowhere treats explicitly of the nature of grace. In his insistence on the personality of God,

69. Coleridge op. cit., (7th ed.) pp. 327, 313, 190.

70. Ibid (7th ed.) p. 191, Cf. pp. 190, 327.

71. Ibid (7th ed.) p. 331 f.

72. Ibid (10th ed.) p. 318.

73. Ibid (7th ed.) p. 361.

74. Ibid (7th ed.) p. 332.

75. Ibid (7th ed.) p. 165.

76. Cf. the quotation from Leighton (Ibid (7th ed.) p. 63 f.) which reprobates all who remain unholy and without faith.

presentation of communion with God as man's true destiny, rejection of all magical conceptions of infused power, emphasis on personal responsibility for sin, and affirmation of the centrality of faith, he bequeathes a rich legacy to all subsequent Christian thinkers.

McLEOD CAMPBELL'S CONTRIBUTION

Thirty-one years after the "Aids to Reflection" was first published, John McLeod Campbell's epoch-making work on "The Nature of the Atonement" is issued. Campbell bases his thesis on the Fatherliness of God.⁷⁷ All ideas of rewards and punishments are rejected.⁷⁸ God's great gift to men in Jesus Christ is free,⁷⁹ being the, "outcoming of fatherliness"⁸⁰ as it issues forth in grace toward all men.⁸¹ It is love in God that begets love in us,⁸² and we, by faith, "receive this gracious constitution of things (reconciliation by Christ's atonement) in the light of the love that has ordained it,"⁸³ Faith is the 'Anen' of our individual spirits to God in Christ, by which we are justified.⁸⁴ Baptism is administered to those who are capable

77. J. McLeod Campbell The Nature of the Atonement and its Relation to Remission of Sins and Eternal Life pp. 212, 234 ff. et passim.

78. Ibid p. 191.

79. Cf. Ibid p. 153 f.

80. Ibid p. 212.

81. Ibid pp. 359, 64 ff.

82. Ibid p. 337.

83. Ibid p. 206.

84. Ibid p. 225.

of apprehending the gospel, and to infants only on the assumption that they are interested already in the gospel,⁸⁵ but baptism does not bring us per se into a spiritual relation to Christ. That which is needful is a personal relation to Him,⁸⁶ wherein the Christian is, "a living Epistle of the grace of God,"⁸⁷ being re-established as an heir in the Father's household, and at peace with his fellowmen as brothers.⁸⁸ Thus Christ Himself was, "a living epistle of the grace of God"⁸⁹ to us, and His incarnation, the basis of the atonement, finds its source in the Father's love for men, and is but the witness to God's grace. We cannot but recall the New Testament teaching concerning grace as disposition, gift, and state when Campbell speaks of, "Fatherliness in God originating our salvation; the Son of God accomplishing that salvation by the revelation of the Father; (and) the life of sonship quickened in us".⁹⁰ These are the conceptions which illuminate the nature of the atonement as, "that by which God has bridged over the gulf which separated between what sin had made us, and what it was the desire of the divine love that we should become."⁹¹

85. Campbell op. cit., p. 363.

86. Ibid p. 364.

87. Ibid p. 359.

88. Ibid p. 368, "If we refuse to be in Christ the brothers of men, we cannot be in Christ the sons of God."

89. Ibid p. 129.

90. Ibid p. 341.

91. Ibid p. 150.

THE TEACHING OF THE GERMAN SCHOOLS

While Coleridge and Campbell labour in Britain, German theologians divide into Liberal, Orthodox and Mediating Schools. All claim some degree of relationship to Schleiermacher, and all contribute something to systematic theological thinking. The Liberals, of whom Baur, Strauss, Biedermann, Pfeiderer and Lipsius are representative, hold, in general, that God is not personal, that the world, including all evil, is merely an emanation of God,⁹² and that sin is simply a necessary step in human experience.⁹³ On this purely naturalistic basis Christianity loses its distinctive emphasis on grace. The Orthodox School, of which Hengstenberg, Hofmann and Frank are members, is strictly Lutheran and creedal. To these Confessionals the experience of re-birth is central and personal;⁹⁴ yet grace must be conveyed by the channels of Word, Church and Sacrament. They recognize that the assurance of salvation is not given once-and-for-all in conversion but rather, is attained gradually by the gracious and dynamic working of God with men.⁹⁵ Neither of these Schools contribute greatly to the emergence of the modern evangelical conception of grace.

92. J. Oman Faith and Freedom pp. 339, 340.

93. Fisher op. cit., n. 534.

94. Oman op. cit., pp. 345, 347.

95. G. Wobbermin The Doctrine of Grace in Evangelical German Theology from Schleiermacher Onwards in The Doctrine of Grace p. 314.

The Mediating School, largely influenced by Schleiermacher, is represented by Nitzsch, Rothe and Dorner. Among these theologians a wide variety of theological opinion may be found, but for our purposes, Dorner may represent the group as perhaps its most significant contributor to the development of the conception of Grace. Dorner holds that sin, as opposition to God and His holy precepts, embraces both individual and race.⁹⁶ It is an inherited consequence of the fall. Guilt, however, is not imputed to the individual until he has become able to resist evil.⁹⁷ Pelagianism, Semi-Pelagianism and Synergism are explicitly rejected.⁹⁸ So also is absolute predestinationism.⁹⁹ By grace, God's gift (inspiring even our disposition to faith in Him), men are saved.¹⁰⁰ Calling is universal, just as is the need and capacity for redemption,¹⁰¹ and there is no election which gives absolute assurance of eternal salvation. Such assurance would exclude freedom of acceptance or rejection and replace it by an almighty volition.¹⁰² To those who do not come face to face with the gospel in this life that opportunity will be presented hereafter. By repentance man is justified before God and prepared for regeneration, which concerns the faith, both active and receptive, wherein

96. I. A. Dorner System of Christian Doctrine Vol. II p. 313.
 97. Ibid Vol. II pp. 346 f. 374 f.
 98. Ibid Vol. II p. 338; Vol. IV pp. 177 ff, 169 ff.
 99. Ibid Vol. IV p. 183.
 100. Ibid Vol. IV p. 165.
 101. Ibid Vol. II p. 336 f.; Vol. IV pp. 96 f. 183 ff.
 102. Ibid Vol. IV p. 185.

103

man appropriates the justification already provided. Sanctification relates to the new life of fellowship with Christ in the Church, in which man's whole personality grows in sonship to God and service toward others.¹⁰⁴

Such conversion and renewal is the work of the Holy Spirit, but this effect is also ascribed to the Word of God, the Holy Spirit being the agent of operation, and the Word, especially Holy Scripture, giving faith its object.¹⁰⁵

The sacraments are sacred actions, personal acts of Christ to persons, in which, under outward signs, invisible grace is dispensed. "The benefit of this offered grace is personally appropriated by faith."¹⁰⁶

Baptism lays the foundation for continual growth in grace, the unfolding of which is part of the effect of baptismal blessing;¹⁰⁷ yet it is not, "absolutely necessary to salvation."¹⁰⁸

Infant baptism is commended because Christian grace should cover all of life, not just the adult years; and the child can begin in faith where he is and advance as he grows older.¹⁰⁹

The Lord's Supper is an act of personal communion with Christ, who - "at once Giver and gift.-imparts His body and blood to His guests in order to the closest union with Him and with each other."¹¹⁰

103. Dorner op. cit., Vol. II p. 121 ff.; Vol. IV p. 209 ff.

104. Ibid Vol. IV p. 238 ff.

105. Ibid Vol. IV pp. 258-261.

106. Ibid Vol. IV pp. 270, 274, 275.

107. Ibid Vol. IV p. 291.

108. Ibid Vol. IV p. 292.

109. Ibid Vol. IV pp. 296, 302.

110. Ibid Vol. IV p. 306.

Grace in all its aspects is entirely the free gift of God in Christ,¹¹¹ and its end is holiness, begun here,¹¹² and completed hereafter.¹¹³ The Mediating School consolidates the gains of Schleiermacher, retains much that is valuable in the creedal position, accepts and uses the results of liberal thinking, and combines the whole in a system which, if not invariably consistent, is always suggestive. Dorner's attempt to present man's freedom and God's sovereignty as different aspects of one personally unified whole is a significant stride forward.

RITSCHL ON GRACE

Ritschl, a younger contemporary of Dorner, sent forth (1870 - 1874) a work of which it has been said, "Not since Schleiermacher published his Christliche Glaube . . . has any dogmatic treatise left its mark so deeply upon theological thought . . . throughout the world."¹¹⁴ In this great treatise 'grace' is a term which recurs again and again; and the conception of grace is ever regarded as fundamental.

We can know God and the operations of His grace aright, says Ritschl, only through Christ; and we can apprehend Him only as members of the community of believers.¹¹⁵ The

111. Dorner op. cit., Vol. IV pp. 212, 234 f.

112. Ibid Vol. II p. 123 f. Vol. IV p. 240.

113. Ibid Vol. IV pp. 430-432.

114. A. Ritschl The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation Editor's Preface p. v.

115. Ibid pp. 7, 120.

justification and reconciliation of sinners, held as the leading features of Christianity, "can be correctly examined and explained in the case of the individual only when at the same time we take note of his place in the Christian community."¹¹⁶ A practical interest pervades the whole work, and is expressed particularly in the analysis of God's sovereignty and man's freedom. Rejecting all mechanical explanations of either Ritschl proclaims that both justification and the 'Kingdom of God' express operations of Divine grace manifested, "solely in activities which exhibit the form of personal independence."¹¹⁷ Justification, a positive operation of God which gives those who believe in Christ their peculiar religious character,¹¹⁸ is equated with forgiveness of sins.¹¹⁹ The consciousness of guilt is a stage toward reconciliation¹²⁰ - that is, restored fellowship with God¹²¹ and earthly evils are punishments for sin in so far as they are recognized as such by sinners.¹²² Forgiveness removes the separation which has entered between man and God because of sin. Yet even after we are forgiven the consciousness of sin continues to be operative,¹²³ but that consciousness is no longer a barrier to

116. Ritschl op. cit., p. 28, Cf. pp. 13, 130.

117. Ibid n. 33, Cf. Oman op. cit., n. 356.

118. Ibid p. 38.

119. Ibid pp. 65, 70, 85.

120. Ibid p. 49.

121. Ibid pp. 78, 53.

122. Ibid n. 50.

123. Ibid n. 60.

moral fellowship with God. In imputing the righteousness of Christ to sinners God is not to be conceived as a Judge but as a Father; and justification is the gift of grace and love rather than the meting out of legal justice.¹²⁴

Justification finds its correlative in faith, which is the new direction of the will evoked by reconciliation.¹²⁵ The essence of faith is love to God,¹²⁶ by which sinners appropriate His gift of forgiveness; "through trust in God's grace the alienation of sinners . . . is removed."¹²⁷ Where men have become reconciled to God they are free from the law.¹²⁸ Works can never gain this freedom; it has nothing to do with ceremonial rites or Pharisaic actions, but is grounded in God's grace.¹²⁹ Nor can we attribute our salvation to an eternal predestinatory decree, for, the "Eternal election of individuals is neither a Biblical idea nor a religious conception."¹³⁰ The work of Christ, indeed, is the expression of God's gracious will to redeem and justify the whole human race,¹³¹ and 'election' can be used rightly only in reference to the Christian

124. Ritschl op. cit., pp. 87, 97, Cf. p. 108, "The ground of justification, or the forgiveness of sins, is the benevolent, gracious, merciful purpose of God to vouchsafe to sinful men the privilege of access to Himself."

125. Ibid p. 100.

126. Ibid p. 105.

127. Ibid p. 108.

128. Ibid p. 115.

129. Ibid pp. 117-119, 494.

130. Ibid pp. 121-122.

131. Ibid p. 124, Cf. comment in Paterson op. cit., pp. 375-376.

community.¹³² In our reconciled relation to God we are entirely dependent on His grace. But this is not a purely passive situation. Faith is active. By religious value-judgments or personal conviction we must respond to the proffered salvation. Individual assurance comes, "in and through trust in God (to) . . . him who through his faith in Christ incorporates himself into the community of believers."¹³³ Such activity on man's part is not Pelagian self-sufficiency but involves the necessary combining of God's grace and man's self-dependence.¹³⁴

The grace of God is the expression of His nature. Ritschl stresses the idea of God as a Person,¹³⁵ characterized by a 'loving will' toward men. Grace is not an accident of God's justice, as the Scholastics affirmed, and 'merits' cannot be ascribed even to Christ (and through Him to man) without infringing upon the unity of the Divine world-order. Grace is the outpouring of Love and all Christ's work for men is an expression of this grace;¹³⁶ God's holiness - His justice and righteousness - is grounded in the Divine Love and Fatherhood, and thus the Christian name for the Lord of all grace is 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ'.¹³⁷

132. Ritschl op. cit., pp. 127, 130, 139.

133. Ibid p. 192, Cf. p. 545.

134. Ibid p. 175.

135. Ibid p. 228, Cf. Oman op. cit., p. 363, "nothing but personality can be absolute in any right sense."

136. Ibid pp. 264 ff.

137. Ibid pp. 273 ff. 277 ff.

The scope of the Father's care extends to all men, "even when they are His enemies."¹³⁸ From God, the Father of Christ, all grace is bestowed upon men as persons capable of being succoured by a Person.

Ritschl's optimistic view of man is allied to his doctrine of sin. The Augustinian teaching concerning original sin as the source of actual sin is denied emphatically.¹³⁹ An idea of sin can be formed only by comparison with an idea of good. In the Christian view, sin, which extends to the whole world by virtue of fellowship,¹⁴⁰ is the opposite of reverence and trust in God,¹⁴¹ and constitutes a break in the, "uninterrupted reciprocation of action springing from the motive of love" which is the Kingdom of God.¹⁴² As a more authentic substitute for the theory of original sin Ritschl develops the 'kingdom of sin' conception; men being conceived as part of a sinful humanity, yet without personal guilt thereby.¹⁴³ The Pauline assertion that God counts men as sinners before they have committed sin on their own account is termed, "mysterious and obscure,"¹⁴⁴ emphasis being laid on the sinning of all individual men as the reason for the universality of sin. Guilt accrues only to those evils which

138. Ritschl op. cit., pp. 319, 614 ff.

139. Ibid pp. 256, 328 f.

140. Ibid p. 338.

141. Ibid p. 383.

142. Ibid p. 334.

143. Ibid p. 344 f.

144. Ibid p. 348.

each individual imputes to himself.¹⁴⁵

In Ritschl grace is chiefly the disposition of God as Father to justify and reconcile sinners to Himself by love. The supreme gift of grace is Christ, the appeal of the Father's love to men; for Christ incarnates the very heart of God. The Kingdom of God, the state of reconciliation, is a state of grace, which is dependent for its character and continuance upon God's loving will toward men; but men must act as well as God, and the influence of the Holy Spirit is always free and personal.¹⁴⁶ Reconciliation is not operative outside the Christian community, yet the conviction of faith, though mediated by the community, is "the permanent form of the individual's reconciliation and Divine sonship."¹⁴⁷ Blessedness here and hereafter is freedom of fellowship with God; accomplished by the personal operation of God on free persons.

The disciples of Ritschl have adhered to the conception of grace as a relation of persons. Harnack voices the general opinion of the group when he characterizes and condemns the Scholastic view of grace as, "the desire to have, not God, but divine forces that can become human virtues."¹⁴⁸ The Schoolmen failed to conceive grace aright because; "There was no recognition of personality, neither of the personality of God, nor

145. Ritschl op. cit., p. 384.

146. Ibid p. 605 ff.

147. Ibid p. 608.

148. A. Harnack History of Dogma Vol. VI p. 278.

of man as a person."¹⁴⁹ Grace is a fellowship of persons; specifically, it is the communion of man with God as a child in the Father's house.¹⁵⁰

The Comparative Religion School, with Troeltsch as its leading exponent, is a retreat from the significant advance of Ritschl and his followers. Pursuing one line of Schleiermacher's thought, Troeltsch attempts to interpret Christianity in terms of universal religion.¹⁵¹ This, as our first chapter maintains, cannot do justice to the Christian conception of grace.

CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT

The Barthian School,¹⁵² most recent of German theological movements, emphasizes the sovereignty of God. Though the witness of the Holy Spirit to the individual heart is the sign and seal of the Word of God, the individual's personal faith is excluded as the methodic norm of theology. Augustinian total depravity and spiritual inability are re-affirmed. All is due to God, and from Him salvation comes to men as a free gift. "Grace in its execution, seen from above, is Justification. Grace in its execution, seen from below, is Sanctification."¹⁵³ In Baptism we receive, by the grace of

149. Wernack History of Dogma Vol. VI p. 279.

150. Ibid Vol. VI p. 280 ff.

151. Wobbermin op. cit., p. 319, Cf. Paterson op. cit., pp. 392 ff.

152. Ibid p. 320, Paterson op. cit., p. 401 ff., J. McConnachie The Significance of Karl Barth passim

153. McConnach op. cit., p. 201.

God and by that alone, both Justification and Sanctification.
 All, absolutely all, that is of spiritual value is of God.
 Man of himself hath nothing.

In English three noteworthy attempts to formulate the modern evangelical conception of grace have appeared in the twentieth century. Each develops along the lines indicated by Schleiermacher and more especially by Ritschl. The thesis of John Oman's masterly work is, "absolute moral independence and absolute religious dependence are not opposites but necessarily one and indivisible,"¹⁵⁴ each being essential to the full experience of grace as a personal relation of God and man. N. P. Williams contends that, all quasi-material interpretations of grace being discarded, grace as the personally operative healing power of God can be equated with the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.¹⁵⁵ The World Conference on Faith and Order held at Lausanne in 1927 gave rise, through the work of a distinguished international committee of theologians, to a symposium on The Doctrine of Grace. The conclusions therein set forth recognize the personal nature of God's grace and stress the personal manner of man's acceptance by faith of that free out-going love.¹⁵⁶

154. J. Oman Grace and Personality p. 26.

155. N. P. Williams The Grace of God p. 110.

156. W. T. Whitley (editor) The Doctrine of Grace pp. 24-28.

In the Barthian stress on the Sovereignty of God and the prominence of men's freedom in modern English interpretations we seem to be faced once more with the paradox of Paul; the paradox with which our New Testament closes. We believe the conflict is more apparent than actual. As the meaning of the modern evangelical conception, particularly as represented by the English writers, is set forth in the succeeding pages, it will become evident that the task of the twentieth century is not to push God's sovereignty to one side and man's freedom to the other, but rather, recognizing the intrinsic difficulties of the problem, to bring both together in theological doctrine as actually they are wedded in Christian experience.

PART THREE

THE MODERN EVANGELICAL CONCEPTION
OF GRACE

CHAPTER X

THE NATURE OF GRACE

All religion testifies to man's consciousness of revealed Divine beneficence. Wherever prayer is uttered the conviction of the existence of a Power Beyond, able and willing to help men, is evidenced. Thus God ever seeks to reveal Himself, but men variously interpret the nature of this gracious Self-disclosure. To non-Christians, in its essential nature, grace is simply the helpful relation of God to man, usually an expression of Omnipotent Power, commonly described as non-personal in operation, and customarily associated with the performance of meritorious good works.

In the Old Testament Yahweh's gracious care for Israel is constantly reiterated. But, although the loving-kindness of Yahweh is an underlying fact of Old Testament religion, salvation is based on His sovereignty, omnipotence, righteousness and justice, rather than upon His mercy. Jeremiah, Second Isaiah, and Ezekiel perceive the personal, and to some extent the universal, character of Yahweh's Self-revelation,

but the legalism of those represented by Ezra soon obscures this significant advance. In the Old Testament, the intrinsic nature of grace is Divine helpfulness, as seen in the gifts of nature, but especially as revealed in Yahweh's Self-initiated, beneficent covenant relationship with His chosen people. Grace is Yahweh's unerringly righteous administration of this covenant by Divine Omnipotence.

THE NATURE OF GRACE AS ACTIVE 'DISPOSITION'

In the New Testament conception of grace, continuity as well as contrast with the Old Testament teaching is evident. Hosea following his faithless wife and Ezekiel proclaiming Yahweh's care for exiled and unworthy Israel both imply that He does not judge Israel simply through the worthiness of the nation under the covenant, but also comes to succour His people even when they fail to keep the Law. What is thus implicit in the Old Testament is explicit in the New. Here, as elsewhere, to speak of the meaning of grace is to indicate something basic concerning the nature of God.

As flame cannot be separated from the fire which is its source, so grace, apart from God, loses all meaning. In the New Testament, and in modern evangelical thought and experience, grace, firstly and fundamentally, describes the Divine character as manifested in the type of relationship He enters into with persons. It is the Father's spontaneous, free,

undeserved love to sinners as His wayward children. It is not a substance, nor is it the general benefits of nature. It is simply God's unvarying, active disposition of love toward men.

Thus, it is the nature of grace to be revealed and not discovered. God may be incomprehensible, but He is not unknowable. Just because He is God we cannot fully comprehend His Nature, but it does not follow that we can know nothing about Him. Religious experience everywhere testifies to God's knowability, and this same experience always bears witness to the fact that human understanding of the Divine is based on God's Self-disclosure. Were it possible for men by searching to find out God, obviously God would be no longer God, but Something subject to exploration and exploitation at the behest of men. All that we know of God He reveals to us. Some Divine initiative is a first principle of religion. But this is not a uniquely Christian belief. The consciousness of a prior movement of God toward men is found in both primitive and developed, both early and contemporary, religious communities.

In Christian experience the grace of God is always perceived as personal, because God is personal. Once again the intuition of the Christian has for its context the entire religious history of the race. Unquestionably primitive personalization of Deity consists, in large measure, in the

projection of man himself into the world around. It is anthropomorphic; but although there is truth in David Hume's scathing denunciation of anthropomorphism, refined manhood constitutes the closest analogy to God we possess, just because it stresses the personal nature of the Deity. Where we find the personal element in religion submerged, as in early Buddhism and Confucianism, later developments invariably reinstate the temporarily displaced emphasis. Men universally regard themselves as in some sense akin to the Divine. They ever picture their God or gods as in some manner personal like themselves. Says Knudson; "So long as religion implies a trustful feeling of absolute dependence and a deep longing for redemption, it will inevitably tend not only toward a belief in a superworld, but toward a belief in a transcendent personal Being."¹ It is the nature of grace, therefore, if it is the Self-disclosure of a personal Being to persons, to be personal.

In Jesus Christ the Christian has an unparalleled witness to the personal-ness of God's Self-revelation. He who declares, "I and my Father are one"² gives His followers a conception of the personality of God which has for its reference the personality of an historic personage, that is, Himself. "Jesus in

1. A. C. Knudson The Doctrine of God p. 203.

2. John 10:30.

knowing God as Father and Himself as Son assumed such affinity of nature as can be described as personal; and consequently the God He knew and made known must be conceived as personal!"³ It is only in recent years, however, that the full content of the term 'personality' is applied to God by Church theologians. Early trinitarian works speak much of 'person' and 'persons' but not at all of the 'personality of God'.⁴ Wounded by ecclesiastical sacramentalism the Christian Church, through centuries of its history, although retaining the conception of God as a personal Being, construes His Self-disclosure to be, by nature, a Divine essence which can be superadded to the natural endowments of men. But these two conceptions are incompatible. Either God is personal and His grace the dealing of Person with person, or else, grace being a Divine essence, God is a Supreme Impersonal Energy which can be poured into the soul of man in as truly mechanical a manner as serum can be injected into his body. Even the Classical Reformers do not resolve this difficulty, for their emphasis is on the individual mode of operation rather than on the personal nature of grace. It is in the philosophy of Leibnitz, Berkeley

3. A. E. Garvie The Christian Doctrine of the Godhead p. 17.

4. The reasons for this early rejection of the term 'personality' are to be found in the Greek reaction against polytheism, the Platonic subordination of the individual to the universal, and the difficulty of conceiving a unitary personality in the presence of ultra-trinitarian doctrine.

Kant and especially Lotze that the modern conception of the personality of God emerges. Nineteenth century theologians are the first to elucidate the nature of grace from this standpoint, as God's personal influence upon the soul of man. In so doing they mark the beginning of that development which issues in the modern evangelical stress on the personal nature of grace. It becomes increasingly evident during the last century, "that personality does not stand in an adjectival relation to ultimate reality, nor is it a mere hypostatic distinction within it, but it is itself the key to ultimate reality and identical with it."⁵ The world as we know it comes to its highest expression in the life of man, and man is a personal being. Christian faith is assured then, that God as He reveals Himself to us in Jesus Christ can not be less than the highest we know already. That highest is personality in man, and the Christian quite rightly adduces the personality of God. In its intrinsic nature grace is personal therefore because it is the Self-disclosure of a Person to persons.

The essence of personality is difficult to define, and when we use the term 'personal' with reference to God as definitive of His grace it becomes still harder to characterize. In man, personality implies at least, "Self-hood, self-knowledge, and self-direction".⁶ Although the self is thus

5. Knudson op. cit., p. 291.

6. B. P. Browne Theism p. 162.

regarded as an entity for purposes of investigation, it is also a unity which cannot be known apart from relationships with other like beings. Since these beings are personal the relationships of the self to them must also be personal. Reciprocal intercourse is essential to the development of personality, and an isolated person is simply a contradiction in terms. Therefore, when we speak of God's grace as personal in nature we mean to indicate the character of God as revealed in just such a personal relationship, namely, the spontaneous movement of the Divine Person toward us and our response to the same. That is to say, grace is God's personal character as we apprehend it through the personal relations which He enters into with us. But if on the one hand we insist on the societal nature of personality, we must on the other guard against reducing the personal to the sum of its relations. Galloway rightly holds that, "a centre of immediate experience is the condition of there being relations at all."⁷ The ultimate residue of personality is a self-conscious, self-determining, self-directing, loving will. Personality, thus conceived, is not necessarily clothed in corporeality. Physical bodies, indeed, are now seen as media for the expression of personal spirits, but a being whose nature is personal may be either finite or infinite. The nature of grace as we experience it

7. G. Galloway Philosophy of Religion p. 499.

in our relationships with God, as Spirit to spirit, is personal both in the sense that grace is known only in a relationship of persons and further in the sense that He to Whom we respond is apprehended as at least a self-conscious, self-determining, self-directing, loving will.

It may be urged that personality is a limitation of both God's Being and His grace. Undoubtedly 'person', as we commonly employ the term, is a human category and used as such does delimit Divine activity. Nevertheless, personality is the summun bonum of history. Personality, instead of limiting our life, leads toward greater development, introducing us to realms beyond the ken of animal existence. Thus the highest forms of living activity, because of the varied possibilities of response, are those which we call 'personal' and, "If we are convinced that any God with whom we are concerned must be a living God, we shall be led of necessity to think of Him as personal, for to be a person is the most adequate way of being alive."⁸ If God is impersonal, even if He is Almighty in the sphere of the impersonal, He can never be the God of men's spirits, for there still remains a whole realm of experience into which an impersonal being can not enter. If the Supreme Being is without consciousness of personal values then He has no right to the word Supreme, for man

8. W. R. Matthews God in Christian Thought and Experience p. 161.

himself, being self-conscious and showing a personal will, is superior to Him. God, if He is God, must be personal. It is clear, however, that God must be personal in a higher sense than man; He is not simply a magnified human being. Indeed, the true statement of fact seems to be that personality, as defined above, is partially and relatively possessed by men but is found in full plenitude in God. We are incomplete and externally conditioned personal beings, but God is complete and self-conditioned. His is the fullness of self-direction, self-determination, self-consciousness and love. Our personality is defective and therefore cannot be taken as the norm for all personal life, but God as the Supreme Person is the most complete and adequate living Being. It follows that His grace is not less but more effective because it is personal in nature. We know God's personal character through the Divinely initiated personal relations into which He enters with us, and taken apart from this personal revelation all nature and history are shadowy manifestations of the Divine. Grace therefore, is not limited by being personal in nature, since it is thereby, precisely the channel through which Divine influence upon us as persons and not things is possible. But while we know God through the type of personal relations into which He, as the Supreme Person, enters with us as persons, God is the cause and not the result of this manifestation. Grace is personal because God is a Person.

In Christianity grace is not only personal in nature, but further, it is personal in a particularly intimate sense. Grace is God's Fatherliness, and this is the distinguishing characteristic of our faith. Judaism and other religions use the word 'Father' to describe God. As a descriptive symbol there is nothing new in the term, but the content which Jesus puts into the word is unique. The Father's grace is the spontaneous, free, unmerited outgoing of His love to sinners as His wayward children. The spontaneity of God's activity is everywhere attested by the religions of the world, but Jesus is witnessing to a spontaneous activity of a particular type, the initiative of a Father seeking His lost children, and willing to draw them to Himself without regard to their personal merit if only they respond to His proffered fellowship in trust. The content of 'Father' in the gospel of Jesus is told in prayer, parable and personal activity. The God and Father of Jesus Christ is the Supreme Person whose Fatherliness is Holy Love seeking to impart Himself to His children.

Jesus' personal life supports this interpretation of the nature of grace as God's Fatherliness. Here for the only time in history, "there appeared on earth One who absolutely trusted the Unseen, who had utter confidence also in the Absolute Power of that Absolute Love and in the liberty of that Love to help Him". Divine Fatherhood, in this great sense, is a new planet

in the sky of faith."⁹ That Jesus Himself couches His relationship to God in terms of Fatherhood and Sonship lends tremendous weight to the validity of the conception that this is a true representation of God's character in His relations with persons. The One man who of all men best knows God declares that the God of His experience and knowledge can be most adequately symbolized in speech by the word 'Father'. Speaking in the temple while yet a child He says, "I must be about my Father's business".¹⁰ As the suffering Messiah on the Cross, He cries, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do".¹¹ Between these two great occasions there is revealed a life of such complete and continual dependence upon God that no important crisis is met without recourse to prayer in which He seeks to know His Father's will. The Fatherliness of God is the message of His greatest parable, and is indeed, fundamental in all His teaching. When we say that the nature of grace is the Fatherliness of God we are in full agreement with His revelation of Himself in Christ. "Father is the most fully significant, the highest and best name for God",¹² and Fatherliness, therefore, is the most adequate term by which we can indicate the nature of grace as God's invariable active disposition of love toward men.

9. H. R. Mackintosh The Originality of the Christian Message pp. 38-39 (quoting Professor Cairns).

10. Luke 2:49.

11. Luke 23:34.

12. J. H. Snowden What do Present-Day Christians Believe? p. 28.

"The apostles caught up (this) new note, and echoed it to the world, by putting the reality and precision henceforward attaching to the conception of God into the characteristic name, 'The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.'" ¹³ From this time forward God is the Supreme Person whose nature is Holy Love, and we are not required to balance one attribute against another asking which of God's numerous attributes forms the basis of the communication of grace made to the soul, ¹⁴ because, "all His attributes must be the modes of the activity of this love which serve to analyze the unity exhibited by the inexhaustible riches of its content." ¹⁵ Grace as God's Fatherliness is not the activity of one part of God's Being. It is not to be thought of in juxtaposition with His Wrath or His Judgment. It is the unvarying disposition of God toward men because it is the outgoing of a Person whose nature is Holy Love, that is, because it is the character of 'The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ'.

THE NATURE OF GRACE AS THE GIFT OF GOD

As the unvarying Fatherliness of God whose nature is Holy Love, grace by nature is also the free gift of forgiveness and sanctification which the Father desires to impart

13. Mackintosh op. cit., p. 39.

14. Pohle-Preuss Grace Actual and Habitual p. 344, where this balancing is done from the Roman Catholic point of view.

15. T. Haering The Christian Faith p. 491.

to men.

"Love, generally, is that principle which leads one moral being to desire and delight in another, and reaches its highest form in that personal fellowship in which each lives in the life of the other, and finds his joy in imparting himself to the other, and in receiving back the outflow of that other's affection into himself." 16

Translated into terms of Christian faith this means that God desires, above all else, to bring men into the fellowship of His presence. This participation in His own Holy life is the greatest gift God can bestow, and it is the gift which He freely offers to men. Grace as the gift of God's own Self is heralded in the Old Testament and in certain ethnic faiths, but the revelation contained in these pales into obscurity compared with the living epistle of the grace of God in Jesus Christ. Here, in one luminous moment of history, there appears an incarnation of Divine Love from the human side, and a revelation of God as the Loving Father from the divine side. But the nature of grace as God's gift to men in Fatherly Love does not admit a distinction between 'the grace of God' and 'the grace of Christ'. The case for any doctrine which differentiates gratia Dei and gratia Christi rests upon the assumption that grace as a gift is a supernatural something derived from the merits of Jesus Christ, and that apart from His merits men cannot enter the Kingdom of

16. J. Orr Article on Love in J. Hastings Dictionary of the Bible.

God. Christ merits for us all the grace we receive, and He actually produces that grace in us.¹⁷ This however presupposes a view of God's nature in which He does not spontaneously, freely and gratuitously seek to redeem men but rather insists upon the payment of a price, namely the atonement of Christ, before considering the saving of men. From this primary misconception of the nature of God the idea that Christ purchases the gift of redemption follows.¹⁸ We hold that Jesus Christ is the exponent of God's Holy Love to us, showing us the unsearchable riches of God's Fatherliness. He is sent from the Father, and 'the grace of Christ' is identical with 'the grace of God', being in point of fact, God's personal revelation of Himself, so intrinsically attractive as to elicit our response in faith. In Christ's compassion, devoutness, graciousness, mercy, tenderness and kindness, in His succouring hope for the vilest human, in His yearning to lead men to know God as the Father of their spirits, in His perfect union of spirit and action under the will of His Father, in His complete self-sacrifice for men in obedience to His Father's will, we see the outreaching of the Perfect

17. For a concise exposition of this view see Pohle-Preuss op. cit., p. 10 f., and E. Towers Actual Grace p. 70 f., "We depend entirely upon the grace which he (Christ) won for us by his passion and death" Towers Sanctifying Grace p. 40 (underlining by present writer).

18. This seems to us a contradiction in terms, as we shall argue in Chapter XII.

toward the imperfect, the yearning of God for the redemption of men. God is not compelled to seek our salvation, nor is it purchased by Christ but from grace as God's Fatherly disposition follows grace as His gift.

Christ, the supreme manifestation of grace as God's Fatherly disposition makes clear that grace as God's gift is freely offered. Being the offer of Fatherly Love, grace as God's gift is not to be earned but is to be accepted by responding love on our part. It is the nature of grace, as God's gift of His personal fellowship to us, to be free. Nothing that we are able to do is meritorious in the sight of God. Nowhere is this shown more clearly than in the parable of the servant, who, although performing all service to his master, has no claim upon him because, in doing all service, he only performs his duty. The nature of the gift of grace which is freely offered to us by God is the forgiveness of sins and subsequent membership in the Kingdom of God. Our Father offers to reinstate us in His presence. It may be objected that free grace is incompatible with the righteousness of God. Righteousness is indeed, primarily concerned with the moral excellence of an ideal while love is usually thought of as concern for the welfare of other sentient beings. But perfect righteousness must be perfect love, one and the same. Ritschl is pointing to this when he says, "God's righteousness is His self-consistent and undeviating action in behalf of the

salvation of the members of his community; in essence it is identical with his grace."¹⁹ In the Old Testament Jehovah is revealed primarily as a just and holy God. In the New Testament God is seen especially as our Loving Father, but this conception is no less Holy because God is graciously seeking to save sinners. In Jesus the austere, haunting, holy righteousness of God is ever tempered by the spirit of the Loving Father, whose disposition toward men issues not in a tyrannical imposition of inexorable judgment, but in grace. He is no less righteous, holy, and austere because of this grace which seeks out the erring man to bestow upon him the gift of His companionship. The Loving Father must inevitably abhor that which is so foreign to His nature as sin and the sinner, yet His Wrath is to be thought of as something so refined and conditioned by Fatherly Love that God continues to reach out toward the sinner, seeking, at great cost to Himself, to lead us to accept the fellowship of His Love, which is the free gift of grace.

Grace as God's free gift of forgiveness and blessedness is never to be deemed separate from grace as God's Fatherly disposition toward men. The former is but the actualization of the latter. Misinterpretation of the nature of grace as the gift of God is a fundamentally misleading fallacy of

19. A. Ritschl Justification and Reconciliation
pp. 473-474.

Christian theology throughout many centuries. Further, the idea that the "first and fundamental"²⁰ meaning of grace is 'the free gift of a supernatural quality' persists to the present day. On this interpretation, grace as a gift is given in varied measure, and under different forms, as external or internal, actual or habitual, efficient or efficacious. Roman Catholic doctrine defines Actual grace as,

"that unmerited interior assistance which God, by virtue of the merits of Christ, confers upon fallen man, in order, on the one hand, to remedy his infirmity resulting from sin and, on the other, to raise him to the supernatural order and thereby to render him capable of performing supernatural acts, so that he may attain justification, persevere in it to the end, and thus enter into everlasting life." 21^a

More succinctly grace is by nature a supernatural Divine essence which as 'actual' enables men to perform salutary acts, and as 'habitual' is infused into the soul and changes men from defiled and degenerate humans into redeemed and recreated sons. Thus the gift is by nature different from man, and in its bestowal man is changed into the likeness of God. On the contrary, some thinkers hold that the gift of grace is to be equated with the Creator's beneficence in nature, and with the virtues which human character displays. This Socinian view is associated with the idea that God creates but does not actively sustain. Both these interpretations

20. Pohle-Preuss op. cit., p. 6.

21^a Ibid p. 18, quoting, "Perrone's classic definition."

of the nature of grace as a gift result from the separation of gift and Giver. If it is established that grace is by nature personal, under the specific type implied by the term Fatherliness, then, the nature of grace as a gift is to be defined, in the New Testament sense of the word, as God's free offer of forgiveness and restored fellowship through His personal revelation in Jesus Christ, so intrinsically attractive as to elicit our response in faith. Grace as the gift of God is to be confined neither to the common benefits of life nor yet is it to be differentiated from God Himself as a supernatural reality, energy or substance. We cannot separate the gift of Fatherly Love from the Loving Father. Love without personality is non-existent. The personal Fatherly Love of God issues in His beneficent care for all His creation, and that care is expressed toward persons in the gift of grace.

THE NATURE OF GRACE AS A STATE OF LIFE

When we receive the gift of grace in faith we come into the fellowship of our Father's Kingdom of Love. We are living then, in what the New Testament calls a 'state of grace'.^{21b} The nature of grace, as herein implied, is God's succour of our personalities in His Kingdom, so immediately and constantly present in the personal fellowship of that blessed order, that His Fatherliness is reflected in us. Grace as a state of life

21b. The term 'state of grace' does not occur in the New Testament. The state of life herein designated is indicated by Paul (*ante* p. 79 ff.) and also by the other New Testament writers (*ante* p. 98 ff.).

is not assurance of either present or future salvation in which we can rest content. Jesus made it perfectly clear that fellowship with God means sharing His purposes and doing His will. When we enter the Kingdom of the Father, by responding to His Fatherly Love, and accepting His gift of grace, we share God's desire for the salvation of others, making His will our will and His work our work, and thus His Fatherliness is reflected in us.

To the theologians of Rome the definition we offer here is anathema, and for at least two reasons. First, because the interpretation of justification as an inner change in the soul by which it is transformed from a sinful to a sacred thing is rejected. Roman Catholic theologians hold that God, by infusing into our souls a reality classified as 'sanctifying grace' effects, "an inner renovation which blots out sin"²² and thus makes us just in the sight of God. They argue that grace, thus conceived, is not a physical substance, but yet inheres in the very substance of the soul, and imparts to it the power to perform meritorious acts. Grace, is an accidental form of the soul itself and since an, "accident that inheres in a substance permanently and physically is called a quality . . . sanctifying grace must be defined as a supernatural quality of the soul."²³ This scholastic argument endeavours

22. E. Towers Sanctifying Grace p. 5.

23. Pohle-Preuss op. cit., n. 333.

to be logically faultless but begins from premises which can not be granted. Only one gracious saving influence comes from God to men, if God is recognized^{as} the Supreme Person, and therefore a unified personality. If sin is the hideous reality of which the New Testament speaks, and if God is the Holy and Righteous Person to Whom sin is abhorrent, then the easy salvation which blots out our sins is contrary to His whole nature. 'The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ' in the succour of His Kingdom, that is in the state of grace, does not remove our sins but enables us to bear them and triumph over them. Further, in spite of all subtilty of argument, a quality which is an entity, and which is infused into a soul substance and is capable of inhering in that substance must be of similar nature to that in which it inheres, and since indeed it is actually identified therewith we are led to conclude that 'sanctifying grace' is itself a substance. But grace is not a substance, being rather God's Fatherliness, seen in this context as the succour of His Fatherly relation to those who respond to His gift of forgiveness and re-instatement.

Second, our definition is unacceptable to the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic theologians because it does not countenance their cherished doctrine of the deification of man. Zankov says; "This basic idea runs like a central nerve through all the faith and life of the Orthodox

Church."²⁴ Towers tells us we are made, "to be of the same nature as God" and "partakers of his Godhead".²⁵ Pohle-Preuss admits the impossibility of any deification of the creature in the strict sense of the word but adheres to the Roman doctrine nevertheless, interpreting deification to mean, "an assimilation of the creature to God."²⁶ We hold that such a teaching is a dangerous approach to pantheism. On the basis of our analysis of personality it is impossible to adhere to any doctrine which merges and submerges the life of one personal being in that of another. It is the nature of grace as the succour of God's fellowship in His Kingdom to lead us to a consummation in which we shall be not less but more fully personal than we are now. If we propose to accept the idea that the state of grace is the deification of man we are faced with a dilemma. Either our personality is absorbed into that of God, and we therefore cease to be persons, or else we become gods in our own right, and God ceases to be the One Supreme Person. But if we hold that the state of grace is God's Kingdom of Love in which, as persons, we are succoured and sustained by Fatherly Love these difficulties are obviated, for God continues to be the Supreme Person and our consummation as a personal end is assured.

24. S. Zankov The Eastern Orthodox Church p. 47. The idea he phrases as follows, "Orthodoxy emphasizes alike the Incarnation and the 'deification' of man resulting from it."

25. Towers Sanctifying Grace pp. 12, 13.

26. Pohle-Preuss op. cit., p. 344. *The passage in 2nd Peter 1:4 usually quoted in support of this position is of doubtful authenticity and disputed. The dominant New Testament conception is expressed in the Pauline phrase ἐν ἑαυτοῖς.*

SUMMARY

The definition of grace which is revealed by analysis of the New Testament, and which we espouse as the modern evangelical conception, may be stated as follows:

Grace is God's Fatherliness, manifested,

1. In His spontaneous, free, undeserved love to sinners as His wayward children,
2. In His gift of forgiveness and blessedness by His personal revelation in Jesus Christ, so intrinsically attractive as to elicit our response in penitence and faith, and,
3. In His succour of our personalities in His Kingdom, so immediately and constantly present in the personal fellowship of that blessed order, that His Fatherliness is reflected in us.

Thus the New Testament emphasis on χάρις as disposition, gift and state is preserved. Moreover, the first manifestation may fairly be described as in the Father, the second as in the Son, and the third as in the Holy Spirit. Although thus manifested in three distinguishable ways grace is always one and indivisible, for the 'God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ' is the Giver of the gift and the Sustainer of the state.

It is now our task to elucidate the meaning of grace, as here defined, with more detailed reference to the modern evangelical conception of the chief problems which emerge in the historical presentation. Thus, this definitive chapter is related to those that follow as the hub of a wheel is to the spokes thereof. From this centre we are to investigate the aspects of Fatherliness; the necessity, mode of presentation and way of working of the gift; and the nature and conditions of the state.

CHAPTER XI

ASPECTS OF FATHERLINESS

Jesus gives the term 'Father', as applied to God, a new and unique content. Yet we may be confident that this original interpretation is to some extent based on the Old Testament. Therefore, before we examine the aspects of Fatherliness which bear directly on the conception of grace, we must endeavour to state more precisely the meaning which is implied in the term 'father' in Hebrew thought.

Amongst most peoples of antiquity Fatherhood and sonship is regarded as a purely physical bond, even when applied to the Divine. The outstanding example of this conception is the Olympian family, but the idea thus epitomized is the common property of most ancient and many contemporary peoples. The Hebrews, while not neglecting the significance of the physical tie, use the term 'father' to imply much more than this. To a very marked degree the Hebrew expressed by this word the ideal bond, "in which the father lived and acted in his son, and the son carried out the father's aims in proud

and joyous submission".¹ Thus, as the Father, Yahweh stands in an analogous relation to the nation Israel, as His son.² All that a father can give to his son, Yahweh gives to Israel.

Having paid tribute to the legacy of the Old Testament in this regard, we note also, its limiting conditions. God is not invariably pictured as Father in the Old Testament. More commonly He is spoken of as the Creator, Judge or Ruler, and occasionally even destruction is attributed to Him. Moreover, although, as we have pointed out in Chapter II, there is a trend toward universalism in the later Old Testament writings, the characteristic and intimate gifts of Yahweh customarily are confined to Israel. The principle underlying Yahweh's graciousness is the fitness of the community (and in the community, of the person) to receive His gift. As men are worthy, so do they receive all gifts beyond the common beneficence of nature. That is to say, the sphere in which Fatherliness operates is the covenant relation.

THE SPHERE OF GRACE

Various conceptions of the sphere of grace, (each claiming the authority of the New Testament) are held by the several churches of Christendom. In Roman Catholic theology the

1. W. F. Lofthouse The Father and the Son p. 24.

2. Ibid p. 25, "The whole nation, or a faithful section of it, has the name son given to it; but save for one or two poetic references to kings, that is all."

sphere of God's grace is strictly limited. By tradition and ecclesiastical decree all who are outside the Roman communion are cut off from the influence of ^{efficacious} grace, and the sacred is held apart from the secular, both as regards the world and man. The position of the evangelical revivalist is similar. Even such a scholar as Charles Hodge makes an elaborate series of distinctions between the sphere of 'common' grace and 'efficacious' grace, supporting his division by numerous references to the Scriptures.³ Where Rome delimits the sphere of grace to her visible body, the revivalist confines it to those who manifest a certain conversion upheaval. The end achieved is the same in each case, the Father's grace is forced into a definite channel of operation, and the scope of His influence is narrowly interpreted.

The Eastern Orthodox Church, especially in its early patristic developments, points us to the widest interpretation of the sphere of grace. With it we can compare the Socinian view which holds that everything in the world, all creation, is the true and only manifestation of grace. In the Eastern Church difficulties arose because of Pelagian associations. It is one thing to declare God's original Creatorship of the cosmos and all contained therein, but it is quite another to affirm His continued Lordship over His creation.

3. C. Hodge Systematic Theology Vol. II p. 668 ff.

Again, the Eastern Church, while holding this emphasis on widespread beneficence as grace, now regards the Sacraments as the chief, if not the supreme, media for the reception of grace. As with Rome, the sphere of grace is closely limited in practice, although in theory grace is everywhere available.

Limitation of the sphere of grace follows from the false antithesis of nature and grace. This results in the distinction of natural grace and supernatural grace, the former corresponding to God's general beneficence in nature, the latter designating His special gifts within the Church. Under the conception of grace as a gift; dominant in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox communions, some differentiation of this kind is required in order to account for the Scripture passages in which 'grace' is applied to God's gifts in creation. Once it is made, the distinction appears to be quite plausible. The natural, "is something which belongs to the very essence or nature of a thing, or flows from its nature, or is necessary or suitable for the existence and development of a thing".⁴ That which is, "above, or higher than"⁵ the natural is termed supernatural, and "natural is opposed to supernatural grace in the same way that nature is opposed to the

4. E. Towers Sanctifying Grace p. 9.

5. Ibid p. 10. Cf. F. Gavin Greek Orthodox Thought p. 13 ff.

supernatural."⁶ But grace, interpreted as God's Fatherliness, is not susceptible to these distinctions. As the character of the Father grace belongs to God's very essence, flows from His nature and is the suitable concomitant of His Being. All God's actions, whether in creation or susten^{ti}ation, are 'natural' in the sense that they conform to His nature. Nor can we distinguish God's grace, from a human standpoint, as natural and supernatural, for all God's actions being the expression of the Supreme Person whose nature is Absolute Holy Love, are far beyond our ken, and the infinite perfection of their operation completely transcends all human endeavour. Whether in creation or sustenation all grace is supernatural to men. The whole point is not whether grace, seen in human perspective, is to be termed natural or supernatural, but rather that grace is God's Fatherliness. As revealed at work in the world and man grace is natural to God, supernatural to us.

Thus the modern evangelical conception is that the world in which we live is ours because it is God's, and therefore, that grace comes to us in all its manifestations. No part of the cosmos can exist independently of God, and every part is to be understood by its relationship to the whole. What therefore, the schoolman terms 'natural', as pertaining to the general beneficence of God, is to be rightly understood only in

6. Pohle-Preuss Grace Actual and Habitual p. 9 (sic).

relation to that which he calls 'supernatural'. God as the Supreme Personal Being uses all possible means to approach us as persons. The exquisiteness of the sunset is a supernatural phenomenon, but it is understood as a gift of grace precisely when the witnessing person perceives its meaning in terms of his relationship to God as the Giver and himself as a steward-recipient. Thus comprehended, the cosmos is apprehended as the dwelling place of the Father, and all its manifestations are seen to evidence His Fatherliness. Any view of grace which limits its sphere of operation to a narrowly defined 'natural' or 'supernatural' is inadequate, for it does not recognize the world as God's world both by creation and sustentation. He has not left His creation purposeless and guideless, but comes to succour men in and through all its ramifications.

Further, nothing is sacred because of church or any other man-made associations, nothing is secular because it lacks ecclesiastical prestige. Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox exclusiveness in Sacrament is matched by revivalistic exclusiveness in technique. Both lose sight of the secular character of Jesus' ministry, judged by their standards. He did not spend His life in taking Orders, administering Sacraments, or condemning those who came to God by the ministry of John the Baptist. Having just re-read the gospels we are more than ever impressed by the approach which Jesus made to all of life,

not just that which was commonly regarded as 'religious'. For the hypocrisy of those who knew themselves to be 'clean', Jesus reserved His most scathing words. In coming to call sinners to repentance He used the market place for His pulpit, chose the wayside well for an important conversion, trained His disciples in the open country of Galilee, and uttered His greatest sermon with a green hillside as His church building. Grace comes to men not as saints, but as sinners, and it sanctifies the sinful man in spite of his corruptness, in his own world. We must live in our present situation, in accord with the light which is given to us, and in that environment, although surrounded by sin, God in grace comes to us as we are, and where we are, and teaches us to grow into His likeness. There is nothing secular except that which is made unclean by sin and evil. There is nothing sacred except it be touched by the purity of Holy Love. Grace, since it is the activity of God's Fatherly Love, can never be confined in its sphere of operation by any such distinction as secular and sacred, for grace itself transforms all that it touches, and God knows no limitations upon His operations. A New Testament author sums it up in these words, put on the lips of Him who came to reveal the Father, "I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it."⁷

There are no special means of grace by which God comes to the individual, but all personal fellowship is its channel of communication. The Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox communions not only confine the transmission of grace to the limits of their separate communions, but also, within their several bodies acknowledge special means for the purveyance of this power. Once again the position of the revivalist is quite analogous in its own way, for crushing emotionalism is as indifferent to individual responsibility as is ritualism. But Love knows no special channel save to avoid the unloving, and a personal God comes to men as persons. The contagion of personality depends upon the establishment of reciprocal relationships and in so far as the Scriptures, Preaching, Sacraments and Prayer draw us into the fellowship of those who are God's children, in so far especially as they bring us into the fellowship of God Himself, so far are they means of grace. It is obvious that the contagion of Jesus was exercised, not in robe and ritual, but in words and deeds. The persuasiveness of His personality rested upon the sheer consistency with which He revealed in every personal contact the Absolute Holy Love of the Father. The sphere of grace is limited by no special boundaries, but is co-extensive with personal existence.

Grace comes to persons through every faculty of their beings. The practical Roman Catholic emphasis on the

dominance of feeling is no more valid than Socinian enthronement of the intellect. If God comes to the individual by every personal means, then no part of the individual's life can be distinguished from the rest as his religious faculty. God does not limit the ways in which He approaches His children. Jesus, if our records are to be trusted, used the persuasion of intellect, the influence of example, the suggestiveness of illustration, and also the chastisement of a scourge of small cords. In winning His way into the hearts of men He utilized the social occasion of a marriage feast, the intellectual approach of the last week's disputations, the economic and political necessity of paying taxes, and the physical laying on of His hands to bless or heal. He called to His service occasions of jubilation, rejection, sorrow, anguish, hope, and fear. Every means that was personal was a channel by which He could reach men's spirits. The Father is not less than the Son Who came to reveal Him. In His dealings with His children no path is too obscure, no trail is too faintly blazed but that, if it be personal, it can become a highway along which the mutual impulses of personal relationship may be established between God and men. There is no special religious faculty by which grace may be received, but every faculty can become an avenue of blessing as it is laid open to God.

An ultra-Calvinistic conception of grace limits the sphere of its operation to a special group of persons known as the 'elect'. Seen in the light of the nature of God as our Father this either must be rejected or drastically re-interpreted. The Old Testament revelation of God's choice of Israel to be a peculiar people is no exception to the universal appeal of His grace. Grace was bestowed upon this one people for the sake of all nations. "Israel is to stand out against the dark background of the world as a people of peculiar blessedness, and to attract the world to that God from whom its blessings come."⁸ In the New Testament God's choice of some men as His special messengers is also election to service. The problem of predestination will be considered more fully in another place, but we are stressing here the universal character and sphere of grace as God's Fatherly Love. The living and personal God has under His care not just one section of His creation, topographical as the Japanese declare, ecclesiastical as the Roman Catholics profess, or individual as revivalists declare, but all His world and His people receive blessings from His hand. In His sovereign freedom God can and does choose peoples and persons for His own in order that they may be instrumental in bringing His purpose for all men to fruition. Such choices on God's part are, however, not the expression of His Absoluteness alone. God's Holiness and His Love are perceived in the self-same act: Holiness in the

8. H. L. Goudge Some Notes on Grace in The Doctrine of Grace p. 325.

righteousness of His selection, Love in His purpose to save all by these personal instruments. Jesus reveals this aspect of the Father's nature when He says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." The Christian conviction that we are chosen of God is an affirmation that we believe God is on our side, actively seeking to bring us into fellowship with Himself. It is also a witness to the sovereignty of God, but this is always the omnipotence of a personal and loving Father.

Grace is not the exclusive possession of a certain few who have, through Christ, become sons of the Father. Lofthouse holds that the universal Fatherhood of God is a wrong inference from the gospel story. He maintains that sonship "is ours, as we 'believe in the Son' and commit ourselves to His way of life, to His thought of the Father. . . . He is our Father, not because we are human beings, but because we have come to Him in Jesus."¹⁰ This interpretation is based on the Old Testament conception of fatherhood, and is a subtle

9. John 15:16.

10. Lofthouse op. cit., p. 83. This is the fundamental thesis of the volume, and is presented most admirably. Confusion in regard to the meaning of 'sonship' probably accounts for our criticism. One is inclined to believe that the author conceives 'sonship' as membership in God's Kingdom, not admitting the distinction between those who are reinstated sons and those who are estranged sons. There is, of course, a valid interpretation of the Kingdom of God as the enjoyment of sonship's blessedness.

importation of human accomplishment into an activity which is wholly Divine. If we accept this view we are driven to say that there was a time when God was not our Father, but that, in our acceptance of His Son, we become sons. Without question our author intends to call us away from an easy religious life to a deeper and more austere faith, but the cost of achieving his purpose in this particular manner is prohibitive. Is the father in the parable of Jesus any less a father because the son has deserted his household and wasted his substance? The point of the parable is that the father continues to be a father, even though the son does not accord him the honour which is rightfully his due. We are made in the image of God, and while we do not acknowledge the Fatherhood of our Creator when we are in sin, nevertheless, He does not cease to regard us as sons - although estranged sons. God is our Father by virtue of what He is, not because of what we are. Although we do not live in His household as sons except through Jesus Christ, nevertheless, grace is for all and Fatherliness does not hesitate to claim wayward children as rightful heirs to the Kingdom. But this is to anticipate a point which belongs to another chapter. Suffice it to conclude here that even the limitation which Lofthouse proposes is not commensurate with the universality of grace as God's Fatherliness.

The scope of grace is universal. The sphere of its operation includes all personal activity, and is expressed in all God's creation. Grace comes to us in a world which is God's world, created and sustained by Him, knowing no distinction between secular and sacred save the barriers of sin and the blessing of love. All personal fellowship is its channel of communication, and every faculty of man's being is a means of grace. No special peoples or persons are chosen to be saved, but God wills that all men come home to their Father's house, and chooses nations, associations and individuals as instruments for the bringing in of His Kingdom. Grace, as the activity of Fatherly Love, knows no bounds and recognizes no borders, save as it seeks to redeem and sustain persons.

THE METHOD OF OPERATION

All higher religions agree that the salvation of men is the end which God desires to accomplish, but great divergence of belief and practice is found concerning the manner in which this end is to be achieved. Among the communions bearing the name Christian, the Roman Catholic speaks of super-added qualities which are poured into the soul; the Eastern Orthodox, of diffuse 'influences'; the revivalist of overwhelming night, and within the liberal Protestant churches there is a considerable body of thinkers who hold that God

operates among men by the agency of what they call 'the moral order'. If the revelation in Jesus Christ and the witness of Christian faith that God is our Father is valid then none of these conceptions of His method of dealing with men holds true. Even in the realm of human experience personal influence is never infused by one personality into the life of another, and if this be so of men who are but imperfectly personal, how much more is it true of God who is perfectly personal? The influences which play upon man from the world and his fellows are God's media of action only as they are expressions of His nature, which, far from being diffuse and general, is always specific and personal, coming with conviction to each man as an individual. The over-whelming might of the revivalist is a mechanical operation, unworthy of the Father's dealing with His children. In Romanism, Orthodoxy and revivalism, the operation of grace appears as the resolute, undeviating determination of Omnipotence to accomplish salvation regardless of all that man can do to prevent its fulfillment. It is not the activity of Fatherly Love, but the operation of Almighty Power.

In form, the humanistic argument for the validity of the moral order as expressive of God's Way of working among men is modern. In essence, it is the Pelagianism which has recurred time and again throughout the history of grace and it has its source in the desire of men to emphasize the

element of freedom which is necessary to moral responsibility. Such a conception of the method of God's operation is inadequate, first, because it cannot meet the test of universality in scope. Many who hold to this view assert that it is universal, being inclusive of the world and men, but any legalistic idea of God, whether a specific code of laws or the general thought of a moral order, excludes by its very nature the miraculous element of personal forgiveness (to take a single example), to which Christian faith has ever attested. The great moral order, which seems so imposing to us as men, does not express the fullness of God's Fatherliness, indeed, its very legal inclusiveness and imposingness when applied to men is precisely its narrowness and feebleness when applied to God, or to personal relationships inspired by His grace.

In the second place the moral order is an imperfect and unworthy expression of the righteousness of God which it strives to epitomize. The inexorability of law's demands does not speak of parental affection; even the human father deals with his wayward child, not according to law, but in love. This is by no means to deny the holiness of God, but to reassert it, for His holiness is just in this, that He sees the sinful man as he actually is, knows the penalty of his sin, but still reaches out to strengthen and succour him, - coming to suffer with Him. Those who magnify the importance of the moral order do us a service in stressing the fact that God does

not remove the penalty of sin when He forgives men (the drunkard has still his weakened body, the dissolute man his wretched memories), but they fail to recognize that law is only one of God's means of operation, and is on a lower plane than love. The righteousness of God includes law, but rises so far beyond it as to pass, like a great peak whose head is shrouded in the clouds, to heights beyond our keenest vision.

In the third place, a supreme moral order displaces a sovereign God. If the word 'sovereign' connotes an oriental despot it does not describe God, but if it means the absoluteness of His freedom and the supremacy of His Holy Love, it is a right appellation. There can be but one Absolute; either the moral order or God is supreme. The two can not be equated, because the idea of a moral order directs our eyes to humanity, and the idea of God points us toward Divinity. Even social eudaemonism ultimately is pegged to human values. Widening the scope of moral law to include all others, and directing it toward the summum bonum of the race does not alter the self-centredness of its character. If we seek the summum bonum of the race, in what terms are we to define our end, or if we chose to call it so, God's will? Must we not interpret it according to our own idea of worth? But if we do this we focus attention on man and his effort, approving our own acts as valuable and drawing over us the blanket of our own

self-satisfaction. The awakened spirit of the Christian knows that the supreme values are not man's but God's. The revelation of God in Jesus Christ is this; "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."¹¹

Finally, the moral order is fundamentally legal and therefore negative. As Oman well says, "A merely moral attitude toward life can thus be put on as blinkers to make us walk in a narrow beaten path, with the whole vast horizon of life's possibilities hidden from our eyes."¹² God comes to us in Christ that we may realize the complete life, and any conception of God's way of working among men which is untrue to this revelation is inadequate. The illumination of fellowship with our Father is not the flickering torch of narrow legal observance, but the steady luminance of all-pervading loving activity.

The end of God's dealing with His children is salvation, but it is not a salvation reached by the operation of super-added qualities, diffuse influences, over-whelming might or legalistic morality. The end for which God has created us calls for very different means of succour. Among men love achieves its ends in personal fellowship, wherein each lives

11. Matthew 6:33.

12. J. Oman Grace and Personality p. 234.

in the life of the other. In this relationship we are conscious that both persons are equals with love flowing from person to person. Grace is God's unfailing disposition of love toward men, but in this case we are conscious of a distinction. The participants are not equals, but infinitely apart, save as He stoops to come to us. Recognizing this essential difference, there are some positive statements we can make concerning the operation of grace.

God as Father always deals with men as His children. The methods which grace as the expressive activity of Absolute Holy Love employs never over-ride the freedom of sonship. Without such freedom men are puppets rather than children, and God is a master marionette producer, rather than a Father. All means of succour by grace recognize man's freedom as a moral personality, for Fatherhood is not expressed in absolute might or irresistible guidance, but in the gradual transformation of men from less complete to more complete by suasion. The life and teachings of Jesus bear striking testimony to these conceptions. In the consciousness of the Galilean the Fatherhood of God was a constantly realized relationship which influenced every thought, word and deed. Consistently and beautifully Jesus lived with God as Father while He dwelt among men as their eldest brother. His relationships with men, therefore, show forth the character of His association with

God. When tempted to assume power and coerce men to His cause, Jesus refused. When surrounded by crowds and called to be king, He demurred. His method of dealing with men always acknowledged the freedom of God's children and utilized no means which was unworthy of Fatherly Love. In the activity of the Son the Father's method of dealing with us as His children is revealed. God's method as our Father is to educate us to the fullest participation in His Kingdom through the right use of the great freedom of sonship.

The Father's dealing with us as His children is not dependent upon our worth. In human life the much loved husband is often unworthy of the high affection of his lovely wife, and the wayward youth is frequently but a shadow of his father's moral stature. God's method in Jesus Christ, (and here the Old Testament is clearly transcended) is not to deal with men after they have attained a certain moral standing in their own sight, in the eyes of the community in which they live, or before Himself. He comes to us in the depravity of our present experience and calls us by His love to participation in His Kingdom. Men are of supreme worth to God, not because they have earned title to His confidence, admiration or respect (to use human terms) but because they are His children. The inclusiveness of the Father's love reaches down to the lowest person and deals with him as a potential son of His household, and in

dealing with him uses no methods and employs no force unworthy of the character of its object, as seen by the Father Himself.

The Father deals with us according to our nature and needs. It is inaccurate to think of God as dealing with 'humanity' in general. Humanity exists because individual human persons live and move and have their being. Our world is composed of men and women as well as nations, associations, clubs and societies. Every life, no matter how subjected and subdued, has frontiers which separate it from all other personal beings. God, as our Father, comes to us as individual persons. The two blind men in the gospel stories were healed by different means. One had faith in the touch of Jesus, and by His touch he became whole; the other had faith in the word of Jesus and by that word his eyes were opened. Thus the Father deals with His children one by one, according to the capacities and needs of each. He does not expect the moron to reach an intellectually advanced idea of His own Being. Knowing the nature of each child, and knowing our failures and defeats, the succouring grace of the Father comes to each of us with intimate understanding and infinite compassion, in a personal relationship of mutual trust.

Men are also members of the Father's family. While remembering the individual as an individual, we must not forget his membership in a community of persons. God's Fatherly way

of dealing with us extends to all personal intercourse for it is primarily in the lives of men that God meets us. Jesus left the ongoing of the Church in the hands of a few disciples. God's succouring of His children is left, in great measure, in the hands of those who love and serve Him. Jesus was ever concerned that our redemption should be marked by a transformation in attitude toward our fellows. God's grace operates through the medium of persons who are in a relationship of forgiveness toward their fellows, for if we are at peace with God we see other men as His children and so live at peace with them. Human personality achieves its highest, not in individualistic pride of pomp and circumstance, but in co-operative participation in the bringing in of God's Kingdom.

Grace operates only in ways that are compatible with the nature of God as Father and the status of men as His children. All conceptions of superadded qualities, diffuse influences, over-whelming might or legalistic morality are insufficient and are partially or entirely false. God as our Father deals with us according to our nature and needs, as members of His family, not according to our own worth, but on the basis of His valuation of us as children of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ to His Kingdom.

THE PURPOSE OF FATHERLINESS

Widespread recognition of salvation as the end toward which God's grace seeks to bring men does not mean universal agreement in regard to the character of that consummation. Roman Catholic doctrine proclaims the eternal happiness of the elect in heaven as consisting in "seeing, loving, and always possessing God,"¹³ while the misery of the damned consists in, "ever being cut off from the vision of God and punished with eternal torments in hell."¹⁴ Such bliss or misery comes to individuals in direct ratio to the merit or demerit of their earthly lives, though of course, the merits of the saints, under certain conditions, are applicable to the sins of others, and purgatorial advancement is possible. Eastern Orthodox teaching holds that each person is judged at death and thereupon assigned either to heaven or hell. The bliss of heaven consists "in deliverance from pain, suffering, grief, corruption, and . . . in reunion and fellowship with all other righteous souls."¹⁵ For the wicked is reserved, "torment and suffering . . . a depravation of all good - joy and consolation - in their separation from the vision of God, in their torment of conscience, in remorse and regret, and in certain external punishments."¹⁶ Both states are the result

13. The Catholic Faith p. 31.

14. Ibid p. 31.

15. F. Gavin Greek Orthodox Thought p. 421.

16. Ibid p. 421.

of man's merits or demerits in earthly life. The revivalist paints a gruesome picture of the fires of hell and its brimstone lake, and equally realistic representations of the pearly gates of the eternal city where all the saints play their golden harps joining in the jubilation of the heavenly kingdom. Assent to a definite creed is the usual criterion by which assignment to these destinies is determined.

Each of these views is to be condemned as involving a fundamental misinterpretation of the gospel message as it relates to the 'Last Things'. The conception of earthly life and heavenly life as utterly different in character is not justified, and is to be attributed to a misreading of the meaning of the words 'life' and 'death'. In the Old Testament, God is especially known as the God of the living, and the end toward which all the ancient men of God turned with great desire, was the possession of long earthly life. Physical annihilation brought only the shadowy existence of Sheol with no personal consummation whatsoever, for to Sheol, both good and bad alike seem to have been assigned. The God of the living could commune only with the living, and death was the supreme evil. In Hebrew thought life was associated with bodily existence, and was conceived as a present possession. In the Hellenistic environment of early Christianity a very different conception prevailed. Under the influence of Greek

mythology and philosophy earthly existence was held to be but a shadow compared with immortal life. God was the great Eternal One, and as such He was not 'body' but 'soul'. Thus whether alive in the body or dead in the body it is still possible for us to commune with God. 'Life' is eternal, and what we term 'death' is merely fleshly ceasation. Neither the Old Testament nor the Hellenistic conception rules in Jesus' teaching. His interpretation of 'life' and 'death' is revealed in the words; "This my son was dead, and is alive again."¹⁷ To be 'dead' in this sense is to be estranged from God. To be 'alive' is to dwell in His household. Jesus implies that the future destiny of those to whom He speaks is not to be separated from their present response to God meeting them in His life.

The clearest exposition of this conception is given to us by the Apostle to the Gentiles. When Paul speaks of 'life', he means life 'in Christ', that is, in God. He is so completely engrossed in this that we find no mention of life outside of Christ. For Paul to be alive includes the Old Testament present and the Hellenic thought of future existence, but its condition is always 'in Christ', bodily, and in communion with God. There is no break in the stream of life between present and future existence. Death is but an episode in man's career,

17. Luke 15:24.

the closing of one door and the opening of another, and the man who is 'in Christ' passes - has already passed - from death into life; from corruptibility to incorruptibility. This new life is spiritual in character. Where the Greek says 'soul' and the Hebrew says 'body', Paul, the Christian, says 'Spiritual body', gathering up all that is valuable in both, but transforming both and conforming both to his own experience of the Risen Lord. For Paul the glorified body of the Risen Lord is a proto-type of our condition in Him after death in the flesh, to live is to live 'in Christ', both now and hereafter. To die is to be outside of Christ in this life at least, and Paul is not explicit concerning the hereafter.

Thus the interpretation of the Bible passages concerning hell as meaning a place of eternal fire which consumes the body and soul of the unrepentant, after due torment, is untenable. The Roman Catholic National Cathedral in Washington has, as one of its greatest attractions, a gruesome reproduction by modern lighting effects, of Dante's Inferno. One of the most pernicious effects of such a conception of hell is the prostitution of the gospel to a religion of fear. But the whole idea is obviously unsound, for surely it is evident that such fire would quickly consume the fleshly body, and could in no way touch the soul. When Jesus speaks of the fire

of Gehenna, it cannot be seriously contended that He is describing hell literally, but neither must we detract from the austerity of the reality which is the subject of His figure. The horror of separation from God as man's fate is so great in the Master's eyes that He urges us to enter into life maimed rather than obtain such a destiny. Any materialistic conceptions of either heaven or hell fail, because they do not take into account the true nature of man, nor his condition as a child of the Father which is the basis of his present worth and future hope.

Moreover, a man's creed does not decide his destiny. A revivalistic church of our acquaintance prints upon the front page of its weekly Order of Service an elaborate statement of the beliefs to which each member of the communion must subscribe, and all who do not hold these tenets are regarded as 'lost souls'. This church is not an exception; there are many others in the same category. It is a travesty upon the character of God to set up such a standard as the plumb-line of Jerusalem's walls. What creed did Jesus demand of His disciples? Did He write down a statement and require His followers to subscribe thereto? God deals not thus with His children. The distinction which Jesus makes between the sheep and the goats is one of character and not of creed. That which pollutes a man, according to the Father's revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ, is not the external but the internal - that

which comes from the heart. Men are not to be estranged from the Father because their creed is not intellectually impregnable nor because their reasoning is not as profound as that of Plato or Kant.^{13a}

Fundamentally, Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and revivalistic Protestant look upon heaven as the reward of merit, and hell as the just due of the wicked. Whether the judgment be immediate, or posited at the close of a purgatorial process, the end achieved is the same; God places us in heaven or hell according to our earthly merits. But we have no merit which can gain heaven. The Kingdom of God is the gift of the Father's love, and not even the death of Christ can be said to merit our salvation. The only life we have that is worthy of eternity is that which is given us by God in Christ, and to posit heaven as the reward of our merit is to return to the legalistic basis which we have already found inadequate.

The Christian conception of Judgment is not that God, once and for all, sentences us according to our own good or evil works.^{18b} The truth of the idea of Judgment rests in its revealing character. In that Day God's view of sin becomes

13a This does not imply that creeds are valueless, which is untrue. It is to assert that salvation can be obtained, not by mental assent to a formula, but by personal adherence to a Person.

18b. *Biblical references on this point are varied in character. While certain passages seem to indicate eternal punishment or annihilation (Matthew 13:4; 18:8; 25:41; Mark 3:29; 9:43-48; Romans 2:6-11), others appear to favour universal restoration (John 12:32; Romans 5:18; 11:31f.; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 28; Ephesians 1:10). For elaboration of the author's viewpoint see the lengthy section entitled "Grace and Merit" beginning on page 353.*

our view and at last we see ourselves as we really are. The scales of our own self-importance falling from our eyes we know fully whether we truly seek His will or our own, and in this Truth our whole natures are tested and tried; because it is the knowledge of God's Fatherly Love revealed as Absolute and Holy. The end of God's grace, then, is not a paradise of satisfactions for those who have earned them, neither is hell the eternal torture chamber of those who have infringed the rules of the game of life.

All the punishment in the world meted out to the criminal who wantonly injured a child could never reinstate that criminal as a friend of the little one's father. To speak of God punishing us for our misdeeds is to misunderstand His relationship to us. In our Christian experience we attribute no punishment to God, not even taking to ourselves as punishment from God the natural calamities which befall us, as Ritschl suggested. The Father does not wilfully punish the child. The retribution which the Father seeks is the rekindling of His child's love. Hell as a place of torment and punitive retribution is inconceivable as the Father's way of attaining the end of His grace. If punishment can be conceived as so personal and so adapted to the needs of the individual that it brings him back to God, then we can believe that it is one of God's ways of leading men to His Kingdom, but such a conception

of punishment is different from that which is commonly implied by the term in human parlance; it is a refined, reorientated, and completely remade conception, worthy of the name of Love. We must reject the idea of eternal torment and punishment as the end which is ultimately in store for any man.

To the modern evangelical Christian the primary purpose of Fatherliness is to draw us into the fellowship of God's Kingdom, and we cannot conceive that this purpose will ultimately be defeated. To phrase this great end in terms of man's 'possessing' God, as the Roman Catholic statement has done, is to make it materialistic and man-centred. Our experience as Christians is that God possesses us, and we no longer live in ourselves, but in Him. An examination of the apostolic consciousness confirms this testimony of our own experience. No words are too glowing and no doxology too high to describe the Kingdom of God, which is the end of grace. And this Kingdom is entered here and now; our whole life as redeemed men is described as in God through Christ. Paul puts it thus, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and 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."¹⁹ The concern of Jesus Himself is the reconciliation of men in the present rather than the obtainment of their future bliss, and

19. Galatians 2:20.

Paul is justified in thus stressing the redeemed life as a present possession. Indeed, it is "only by finding a blessed and endless purpose in this life, (that) we have a triumphant hope larger than this life can contain."²⁰

The Christian conception of resurrection is to be differentiated from the general thought of immortality, for it is an expression of God's loving care for His children, which the latter is not. A Socinian belief in immortality implies a self-confidence in the future, but reconciliation to God in Christ means dependence upon Him for both present and future. There is an arresting quality in the Christian hope of the resurrection of the body (not the flesh) because it puts personal values at the very centre of its conception of God's end for men. Thus Paul's exposition of the nature of the 'spiritual body' makes perfectly clear the individual and personal character of that resurrection body as the organism of the whole personality, which, being freed from its earthly flesh, is able to enter into the life of the Spirit more completely than heretofore.

In dealing with such spacious realms as eternity it is exceedingly difficult to be true to our own ignorance. Of life beyond physical death we have no experience of our own to guide us, but we can be sure that the dealings of God with

20. Oman op. cit., p. 305.

men in the new life here and now represent something of His dealings with us hereafter. On the basis of this experience we can say that the realization of full selfhood in union with God is a consummation which is personal rather than impersonal and an end wherein our participation is measured in terms of love rather than of personal enjoyments as the reward of our good deeds on earth. Of God's end for men we can say little more, and we need say little more if to be like Him is His end for us; for what higher end could there be than to be like the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? The end of God's grace is a blessed and eternal fellowship wherein the Father's will of love is our will. And this Kingdom of God is begun here and continued hereafter because this life is too small to hold it.

CHAPTER XII

GRACE AND THE CONQUEST OF SIN

Our Father's purpose for His children is opposed by sin. The revelation of Absolute Holy Love in Jesus Christ discloses One who feels the opposition of grace and sin to be irreconcilable. Brooding over the city the Master says, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"¹ The great antagonism in the universe with which Jesus is concerned is that between sin and grace, for sin separates us from the fellowship with God which is His end for our lives.

THE NATURE OF SIN

If the existence of sin is everywhere recognized, agreement on its nature is much less universal. Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, revivalist and the modern evangelical Christian all agree that sin is present, that it is pernicious, and that

1. Matthew 23:37 (underlining by present writer).

it is a necessary concern of the Church, but they differ as to its nature, origin and purpose. For the Eastern Orthodox sin consists in, "transgressing and disobeying the will of God."² In itself this is quite admirable, but the will of God is to be determined for the Orthodox Christian by the Church, and is closely associated with the observance of ritual and rite thereby nullifying what seems at first to be simple, effective, and quite adequate. In Roman Catholicism mortal sin is infringement of the law of God as interpreted by Rome, and it is associated with the observance of the sacraments. "All men are bound to keep the commandments, because all men must live according to the will of God who made man, and a grave transgression of one single commandment is enough to deserve hell."³ In addition to keeping the commandments of God the good Roman Catholic must obey the precepts of the Church, for "it is a mortal sin to transgress one of them knowingly in a grave manner."⁴ These grave, deliberate, mortal sins are distinguished from 'light' transgressions - venial sins which do not make us lose divine grace, and which God easily pardons. The viewpoint of the revivalist is usually that which receives classic expression in the Westminster Shorter Catechism; "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God!"⁵

2. F. Gavin Eastern Orthodox Thought p. 165.

3. The Catholic Faith p. 44.

4. Ibid p. 59.

5. Confession of Faith etc. p. 116.

To each of these groups sin is primarily the infraction of law. In the far flung corners of the globe many religions and many philosophies concur in this opinion. The Hebraic decalogue has its counterpart in the Confucian Analects, the Taoist 'way' and the Stoic law of nature; and all ultimately hold the same general position as legalistic Christians. Sin is not merely, however, that which is contrary to law, for law may be, and is, variously codified and differently defined. The Orthodox Church is lenient and tends to overlook much, the Roman Catholic Church has its inevitable loop-holes of escape thinly veiled under the distinction of 'mortal' and 'venial' sins, and the inexorability of the revivalist is so rigid and unrelenting that its mechanical operation obscures its Christian character. If sin is the infraction of law, then is it different in each of these communions, and its nature is determined by accident of birth, church creed, or ecclesiastical government, and not by some ultimate standard which is valid in itself.

Nevertheless, there is an abiding truth in the recognition of sin as infraction of law. Paul does not discard law when he proclaims to the Romans the supremacy of grace. He recognizes the necessity of law, even terming it a 'school-master' to bring men to Christ. In the normal consciousness of the Christian there is a perception, however vague and dim, of something permanent in the moral order. The voice of

conscience is not merely the command of customs and mores. There is a categorical imperative which comes to each man as an absolute demand, bearing with it the conviction that something in the very structure of the universe requires that justice will ultimately prevail. And all around us we see the terrific results of sin bearing witness to the judgment which is the universal concomitant of law. Sin is infraction of a certain law or standard in the universe, and it meets with the judgment which is its due, but that standard is not an absolute in itself, neither is it set up by any single communion or administered by specially designated representatives of the great Lawmaker. The moral order, in the Christian sense, is God's government of His world in accord with His Fatherliness, and sin is that which runs contrary to this rule of love.⁶

The law which sin infringes is, in another aspect, rooted in the constitution of man as a personal being. We are conscious in our reflective moments that sin thwarts our self-development, keeping us from the complete life. To many this is, in itself, the motive for right conduct, because of the subsequent satisfaction accruing therefrom. From the Christian viewpoint all that impinges upon our personal development

6. See Chapter XI, p. 251 ff., where the humanistic interpretation of the moral order as the sole medium of grace is refuted.

is sin, not simply because it deprives us of self-satisfaction, but primarily because it is in such moral failure that we turn away from our true course of development as God's children. As Christians, we recognize ourselves as sinners partly because we realize that in sinning we are thwarting God's purpose for our destiny, as well as infringing His rule in His world.

Further, in a religion which is deeply concerned with personal relationships self-centredness is quickly recognized as sin. The testimony of the Christian is always, "whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for . (Christ's) sake shall find it."⁷ It is important to note the qualification, for the Christian is to give his life meaningfully in response to the demands of Love. Self-sacrifice is not a morbid self-mortification to be sought because it may foster the feeling of self-elation; it is an instrument in our hands by which we may serve God's purpose in our relationships with our fellows. Sin is not just anti-social conduct, but anti-social conduct is sinful, and any communion which withdraws from the world, taking one attitude towards those who are within the fold and a decidedly different attitude towards those who are of some other persuasion, impoverishes the gospel. The greater our realization of ourselves as created by God, given present power by Him, and

7. Matthew 16:25.

destined for membership in His household, the larger should be the measure of our ministry to our fellows. As we know whence we came, what we are, and whither we go we should not retreat into our sacred halls, nor boast of our world-wide power, nor yet flaunt our future glory in the eyes of men; these are reasons for self-sacrifice not self-esteem. In an individual or in a communion self-centredness is sin.

To the Christian consciousness sin is revealed as enmity with God. Our infraction of the moral law, our infringement of the law of our own being, and our self-centredness are all against God as revealed to us in the world, ourselves, and our fellows. This is particularly clear when we see God as our Father, because then we perceive that every act which is unloving, everything which disrupts our personal relationship with Him, is sin, and all man-made or church-made standards fall away. Sin is that which separates the child from His Father's bosom, that which destroys the fellowship of God and man and that which hinders man's reception of grace bestowed therein.

Accordingly, we must reject the rationalistic explanation of sin as imperfection. Since the application of the idea of Evolution to theological subjects many have utilized the conception in the explanation of sin. Sin is regarded as the lesser good; as we pass from one plane of development to the next all that we leave behind now becomes evil. But to say

this is to confuse two ideas which have been kept separate historically, and for good reason, that is, 'moral evil'⁸ and 'sin'. If sin were no more than 'moral evil' evolution would certainly offer a profound and valuable explanation to theology; but sin is more than 'moral evil', and therefore any view which approaches from outside the realm of religious experience in attempting to account for sin, is bound to fail. Sin is essentially a religious reality, and concerns the breach of man's personal relationship to God. 'Moral evil' is basically a man-made category founded on progressively higher codes, tribal, national or international. When explained in terms of the development of man the solution is incomplete. "It is only when man is aware, however dully, of his relation to a power, a judge, an owner, a master, however poorly conceived, to whom he is responsible and on whose will his happiness depends, that the fact of sin takes its place in history."⁹ As an explanation of the nature, origin and purpose of sin solely as 'moral evil', the idea of evolution can teach us much; but it contributes little to the understanding of sin as that which separates man from God.

8. The term is used here in the humanistic or anthropological sense, and is not to be confused with infraction of the moral order, as God's rule.

9. W. D. Mackenzie The Final Faith p. 136.

SOME IMPLICATIONS OF SIN

The reality of sin, as herein defined, implies the possession of freedom. For sin to be sin there must exist¹⁰ the possibility of conscious choice. Undoubtedly, we are surrounded by an environment which determines much of our life, but it does not determine our whole life, and the small measure of freedom which we do possess is sufficient to make a vast difference in our way of life. Having sinned and sinned again, we bring ourselves to a sinful state wherein we are not able to choose regularly the right and good rather than the wrong. Psychologically what we are to-day is so conditioned by all our past choices that the activity of this hour is largely directed by the character which we have builded through the years. Though it is thus impossible to say that we are immediately responsible for every individual wrong step, the truth of freedom is not negated thereby, for we have made ourselves the sinful creatures that we are.

Sin is the result of an activity of man's will. "Before an act can possibly be considered sinful, there must be some awareness that there is a higher path, and that the path taken¹¹ was wrong." Tennant emphasizes the difference between innocent and guilty ignorance,¹² and while we cannot agree with

10. See Chapter XIII for detailed discussion of Grace and Freedom.

11. H. H. Farmer Lectures Hartford Seminary Foundation 1932.

12. F. R. Tennant The Concept of Sin p. 88 ff.

his entire position, it is evident that error due to ignorance is not the same as error due to conscious exercise of the will. It is by act of will that we hold in mind the idea or knowledge which is chosen for attention, and if attention be fully occupied therewith a course of action follows. As sin engages the attention of the mind the perception of truth is darkened, moral insight is dimmed, motives are suppressed in the interest of activity, and the sense of sin is atrophied and enfeebled. The great difficulty with sin is that it makes us, "deaf to life's calls and blind to its opportunities,"¹³ and this is one of the chief problems which an adequate conception of grace must solve. Every man will testify that the great failure of his life is lack of power to hold the true light before his soul.

Thus the most serious consequence of sin is the progressive blinding of human perception to Divine revelation. As we sink further and further into sin our state becomes such that we usually do not recognize God's Self-Revelation. Sin cannot be regarded as departmental. It invades the whole personality of man, yet we must recognize also that sin never gains complete possession of man. God in Jesus always finds something in the worst of men to which He can address Himself; however feeble the light may shine in the darkness, it is still light.

13. J. Owan Grace and Personality p. 234.

"Our Lord assumed that there was that in man to which He could make appeal",^{14a} and an examination of ourselves and our fellows bears this out, for within the human personality there is, as testified to by the existence of different levels of experience, the consciousness of a governing 'norm'. It is the peculiar character of personal life, as distinguished from all other, to be able to re-direct activity in accord with valuations. This is the truth in Ritschl's theory of value-judgments. Now, while sin progressively dims our ability to make such judgments of value, and while it decreases our ability to act upon them, it never completely destroys either the ability to perceive or the capacity to act. For the Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and revivalist alike the consequences of sin are exclusion from the body of the elect here and eternal damnation hereafter. For us the ultimate consequence of sin which must be transcended is the progressive blinding of our souls which keeps us from knowledge of the truth and fellowship with our Father.

ORIGINAL SIN

Ever since the days of Tertullian the doctrine of original sin has played an important part in all western conceptions of grace. It is abundantly evident that the world into

^{14a} H. Townsend Grace in the Synoptic Gospels p. 173.

which we come is not without sin, that the people around us are sinful, and that we ourselves can recall no moment of our conscious life when we could say we were sinless. The evolutionary and rationalistic explanation that sin is the lesser good we have discarded already. We must also reject all pantheistic theories which make sin illusion or speak of the particular evil as the universal good. The poignancy with which sin and regret come in upon the human spirit negates such a conception, for our whole experience testifies to the reality of the moral struggle which is thus termed illusory. Zoroastrian dualism does not solve the problem. Our knowledge of the unitary character of personality and of the world mitigates its contention. But, should it still remain, who is to say that the good will be ultimately triumphant, and what motive for moral action on man's part remains if all is the result of an 'absolute' power for good and another 'absolute' power for evil? The Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and revivalistic doctrines differ on details, but in the main they hold that man was originally righteous, but succumbed to the temptations of the devil, and the first man, Adam, passed on his corruption to all his descendants. The Eastern Church rejects total depravity which, on the other hand, is affirmed by ^{14b} revivalism. To hold that man is responsible for an act over which he has absolutely no control seems to us utterly unethical, and to press the logic

14b. Total depravity is officially condemned by the Roman Catholic Church. The exact meaning of this is difficult to ascertain, because of qualifying definitions (cf. Polla-Presse *Grace, Actual and Habitual* p. 55 ff.). The authoritative Catechism of Trent speaks of men as "nothing but rottenness and corruption" and of "the corruption of nature." (Eng. trans.)

of the situation to the inherent corruption of the newborn babe, save as it is baptized, is an argument reductio ad absurdum. Augustine, as a matter of fact, seems to be forced to this position chiefly in an attempt to justify the church's practice of infant baptism. We find no doctrine of total depravity in the revelation of God vouchsafed to us in the New Testament, nor can we accept it on the basis of our own religious experience. Sin it is clear, if God be Absolute Holy Love, must have entered into the world against our Father's will, by some free act of man. It is not clear what that act was, but because of that failure to respond to the grace of God, and because the human child is born into an environment which has for its chief content other persons, the consequences of the first sin have an 'original' significance. By the first failure sin was established as a condition of human life, and we as members of the race are partakers of it. But it remains to be emphasized that we are accountable to God for no action done in ignorance or without choice. Original sin becomes actual sin at the point of man's freedom, and not simply at the moment of his entry into the world.

The problem which sin sets to grace is two-fold, the sinful past must be transcended and the sinner must be brought into filial relationship with his Father. Sin is an infraction of the law by which God governs the universe, being chiefly evidenced in the realm of personal relationships and especially

in the estrangement of man from God. Its existence implies man's possession of freedom. for sin is profoundly inward, and is always associated with an act of will on the part of man. As such, it is rooted and grounded in our refusal to face God's revelation and walk by its light.

THE DIVINE INITIATIVE IN THE CONQUEST OF SIN

Because of the nature of sin man's necessity is such that he is unable to cope with it in his own strength. No group of Christians denies this fundamental affirmation. The Eastern Orthodox Church holds that, "revelation is a truth which man by his own unaided powers would be incapable of discovering."¹⁵ Roman Catholicism asserts that, "without the grace of God man is so much under the dominion of concupiscence that he inevitably falls into sin."¹⁶ Revivalism stresses the impotence of men, always maintaining the sovereignty of God as the Source from which redemption freely comes to men. The need for salvation, which we ourselves are unable to satisfy, is made clear if we recall certain facts in our own lives. Each of us is beset with a feeling of disharmony with our environment which is disconcerting, for if we are to progress in life at all this discouraging

15. Gavin op. cit., p. 11.

16. F. Towers Actual Grace p. 16 footnotes.

element must always be present, and we are therefore forever at odds with our world, and can never be at peace in it. Turning inward we discover that our own lives are distressed by the continual conflict of an interminable number of complexes all struggling for the mastery of our spirits. If our relationship to our fellows is unsatisfactory, our relation to ourselves is not less hopeless. Added to these difficulties of life there is the mystery of death; an inescapable problem which touches even the most callous personality. Finally there is the sense of loneliness, which to the human person is the greatest of all evils, especially when we recognize in it that separation from God which is the deepest meaning of sin. We are unable, in our own strength, to overcome the failures of the past, live abundantly in the present or look with confidence to the future.

Every religion offers some solution to the problem of sin. Buddhism is a type of the pantheistic group which slurs over the evil of the world and seeks salvation in the distraction of contemplatively ignoring its existence, but this in itself is an attempt to solve the problem, and an unsuccessful one. Confucianism is an example of the ethical cult which seeks salvation by man's own strength, but like others of this kind it ultimately recognizes the impossibility of its self-imposed task. The simple fact of the matter is that man cannot grasp

the Ultimate Reality, because that One is Holy, and man is sinful. Before communion with God can be re-established, before salvation can be ours, we must be made holy; we must be reconciled to God. This communion is ours, not when we forget about the evil and sin of our lives, nor when we attempt to make ourselves masters of the universe, but when we perceive God's revelation of Himself to us, and the Truth in Him makes us free. This is grace as the gift of God.

From the modern evangelical point of view the solution of the problem of sin is based on God's revelation of Himself to men. The initiative lies with God. When we become conscious of our need for salvation, we also realize that God is reaching toward us in grace; the answer to our soul's quest is present ere we become conscious of our need. We do not minimize the importance of discovery in science, in our own religious life, nor yet in the New Testament, for it represents a vital aspect of our being. Nevertheless, discoveries are made by the effort of the investigator whereas the Christian is fully convinced that all he knows about God is the truth he has received from God. "All religious knowledge of God, wherever existing, comes by revelation; otherwise we should be committed to the incredible position that man can know God without His willing to be known."¹⁷ We know God, not because

17. H. R. Mackintosh The Christian Apprehension of God
p. 65.

we discover Him, but because He, in grace, reveals Himself to us.

God does not merely make Himself known; He also gives Himself to us. If among men the gift without the giver is bare, how much more so with God, the Infinite Giver? To be a full answer to sin, adequate to man's necessity, the revelation of Truth must be personal, coming to us out of nature and history in manner such as we are able to receive. Moreover, this succour must not be past but present; it must not be given once and finally, but rather continuously according to our needs: and it must be adequate to remove our blindness, yet never overpowering to our spirits. General revelation in nature and history can not satisfy these needs. The primary revelation of God to us is a Person, because we are persons, and it is in the light of God's unveiling of Himself in Jesus Christ that we are able to perceive His general revelation in nature and in history. Because grace is given only in a personal relation, it must "work through human experience and God be manifest in Christ."¹⁸ Every religion offers redemption, but Christianity is distinguished from all others in that the redemption it offers is reconciliation of man to God by Jesus Christ in Whom God reveals Himself savingly to us.

18. Oran op. cit., p. 160.

THE OFFER OF REDEMPTION IN CHRIST

Christ, as God among men, is the supreme revelation of God's grace; for He is Himself the chiefest gift of that grace. If it be urged that the Absolute could not manifest Himself within the limitations of history, we must reply that Jesus as perfect character and will showing forth perfect Holy Love is absolute in history. We cannot merge God in history, for it will not contain Him, but neither can we banish Him from it. Our minds and spirits being finite, can not fully comprehend the Infinite, but we can apprehend, through finite objects and particularly through persons, something of the universal in the particular. In one Person, Jesus Christ, we see the grace of God personally present among us, and this revelation, because it is the perfect Self-disclosure of God Himself, can not be transcended. It is Absolute and Final. To this interpretation the New Testament offers abundant support and no contradiction. As the intrinsically attractive Incarnate Revelation of God's grace,

"Men found in Him something different, .. new and unique. Behind His words and acts, in the quality of His life and character, they realized the divine. Others had spoken of God and done God-like deeds: He showed them God, infected them with the sense of God's presence, fulfilled all their ideas of God, in His own person. So compelling was this conviction that it overcame all their prejudices, their fear of blasphemy and of idolatry, and compelled them to confess Him as their Lord." 19

19. C. E. and E. Raven The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ pp. 102-103.

In our Christian experience we know Jesus to be God Incarnate simply because He comes to us with the same force and authority as we attribute to the Father. Kneeling to pray, the name of Jesus springs to our lips with the same naturalness as that of God. As we come before the Master by reading the New Testament, listening to the preached Word or participating in the Sacraments, we are conscious that we are in the presence of holy spiritual life, which is present with us now, as the Supreme Reality of our environment. In our experience, Christ is not simply an Incarnation; He is the Incarnation, the perfect revelation of God's grace.

As the Incarnate One Christ carries conviction to our hearts partly because we recognize in Him the norm of human life. Grace coming to us in a Divine One who was not acquainted with our sorrows and did not share our grief, could not elicit faith and conquer sin; for how could we be assured that our Father really understood and truly cared for us if He did not stoop to touch us in our own lives? If it is the essential nature of God, as we have maintained, to seek to re-establish personal relationships with His children, it follows that He could fully accomplish this end only by manifesting Himself "in a life perfectly lived among men, through a perfect relation to Himself."²⁰ Such an One provides us with an

20. Oman op. cit., p. 158.

understandable norm of human life. We do not accept Schleiermacher's idea that Jesus is to be differentiated from other men only by His unremitted and unclouded consciousness of God, holding rather that Jesus and God possess an essential unity of will. At the same time we hold also that only as we see Jesus' manhood as our manhood can we understand the richness of grace wherein Absolute Holy Love takes on human flesh and dwells among us in order to reconcile wayward children to their Father. The truth seems to be that "the measure of Jesus' humanity is the measure of God's Love."²¹ How we are to explain clearly and finally the relationship of human and Divine in Jesus Christ we do not know. It is plain that Jesus is a unitary personality, living a human life, yet at the same time uniquely dependent upon the Divine will, and standing in a unique relation of personal interaction with God - so unique as to be best expressed in the term God Incarnate. This means that in Jesus, the supreme gift of grace, God has humbled Himself far beyond our poor power to understand or appreciate. Here, then, we believe, is the chief corner-stone upon which reconciliation is founded, for in Christ's Person God comes to us in grace in a way that is so intrinsically attractive as to elicit faith, thereby enabling us to do that which we of ourselves could not do, that is, to overcome sin.

21. Mackintosh The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ p. 405.

Thus Christ's work is an expression of God's grace; for it can not be separated from His Person. Ritschl rightly teaches us that the content of the work shows us the character of the Person. The two are inextricably interwoven, and any conception of grace, like that of the Eastern Orthodox, which holds apart Person and work is employing abstract and mechanical formulae to describe the living interaction between personality and its activities. The character of Christ's Person gives meaning to His work. It is when viewed as the activity of Immanuel, God with us, that the work of Christ is seen in true perspective, for then we realize that in Him we confront, not One who is part man and part God in mysterious union, but One who is God in man come among us, in pure grace, to make man perfect in God. The Person and work of Jesus Christ is the supreme and normative mode by which God manifests His grace, and whereby He offers salvation to men.

The focal point of Christ's work is the Cross. To interpret this all-important climax as a solitary act by which God at one fell stroke accomplishes our salvation in Christ does violence to God's grace, for why, if this presentation be valid was Christ's life of humiliation necessary? In the economy of God's plan of salvation Jesus' death is but the culmination of His life. Every word and deed of Jesus' life among men shows us the Father's unremitted grace flowing down

to us and it is just because Jesus lived His life perfectly among men, in perfect relation to God, that the Cross is the supremely significant revelation of grace.

As a penal sacrifice the cross is not a work of grace. That Christ died for our sins, paying in full the debt which sinful men owed to an indignant God has been one of the most prevalent views of the Western Church concerning the atonement. To be saved, accordingly, is to be made righteous by the infusion of supernatural grace. 'He paid it all', 'He purchased our salvation' and similar expressions are still the current coin of the revivalist. Anselm gives classic form to the retributive theory in Cur Deus Homo. He recognizes that "the remission of sins is necessary to man that he may attain to blessedness"²² and holds that, since man in himself can not accomplish this work, because he is unable to make reparation to God in regard to the injured honour of the Divine, Christ alone, because He only "gave to God what he was not obliged to lose, or paid a debt he did not owe"²³ is able to satisfy the Divine honour and justice. Later thought modified the Anselmic idea into penal, governmental and ransom theories, but impersonal operation and abstract application to persons continued as basal characteristics. Socinus blasted

22. Anselm Cur Deus Homo 1:10.

23. Ibid 2:18 b.

such arguments once and for all when he pointed out that if we were in debt to God, and Jesus Christ paid that debt in full for us, it follows that our forgiveness is not the result of our Father's free grace but simply our just due. Then too, if in our world of personal intercourse, particularly in our homes, we do not deal with one another in terms of such strict legal justice, why should we ascribe to God that which is less than the highest in man? Furthermore, by what process of justice does it become right and legal that one innocent man should suffer for millions of guilty sinners? A God "who really thought His honour was increased by millions of men suffering eternal torments, or that it was a satisfactory compensation to Himself that in lieu thereof an innocent God-man should suffer on the cross,"²⁴ could hardly be described as the Father whose nature is Absolute Holy Love, always dealing with men in grace.

The older theories of the atonement are right in stressing the seriousness of sin. Even those who condemn the retributive theories most vigorously admit this merit in them. If we are to realize to the full the meaning of God's grace we must see our sin in true perspective, for then we know to what depths God's love stoops in order to redeem us. In the cross the heinousness of sin is revealed, because there as

24. H. Rashdall The Idea of Atonement pp. 355-356.

nowhere else, our rejection of God is set forth. "The fact that God gave Christ to men, and they could do no better than crucify Him, cast a terrible light upon our nature"²⁵ and by this illuminating torch men ever since have known more fully the terribleness of sin. The cross reveals the Father's inherent hatred of evil. Jesus' life was one of constant opposition to all that was unworthy; now in His cross sin is condemned by God as He in Jesus bears death at the hands of sinners. Thus forgiveness is also judgment, for it reveals to us the tremendous repulsiveness of sin to God. Finally, sin is unveiled in its true nature in the cross because there the connexion of sin and suffering becomes abundantly clear; God Himself suffers in order that we may be redeemed. "Forgiveness, in the Christian sense of the term, is only realized . . . as we come to feel the cost at which alone the love of God could assert itself as Divine and holy love in the souls of sinful men."²⁶

The cross is the supreme work of grace because there God unveils Himself to men as the Father who loves us so fully that He is willing to suffer for and with us, even to death. "The Incarnation may be traced back to the love which has taken that form."²⁷ All that God does in Christ, He does out

25. H. B. Mackintosh The Christian Experience of Forgiveness p. 199.

26. J. Denney The Atonement and the Modern Mind pp. 75-76.

27. J. M. Campbell The Nature of the Atonement Intro.p. xx.

of compassion for men; but it is supremely in the cross that this grace is revealed to us, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us."²⁸ The climax of the Incarnation was the crucifixion; and while we renounce the purely penal interpretation of the act, we yet affirm that it brought to Christ the full realization of the Divine re-action against sin in the race in which He was incorporated. The answer to His cry, 'My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?' lies in the fact that without the uttermost devotion, without experiencing the depths of sin's cup of pain, He could not have been the Redeemer of men from sin, or the Reconciler of men to God. We can not escape the fact that Christ's sufferings had to do with sin, but Christ as the Suffering Servant is not a penalized Son. Horace Bushnell expresses the relationship of Christ as Redeemer with a freshness and vigour that appeal to us. He regards Christ's part in making forgiveness available to men as vicarious; "Our human instinct puts us always on making cost when we undertake to forgive,"²⁹ and true forgiveness requires, he says, "such a sympathy with the wrong-doing party as virtually takes his nature by suffering, or expence, or painstaking sacrifice and labour."³⁰ Christ's work is vicarious in that in Him God

28. I John 3:16.

29. H. Bushnell Forgiveness and Law p. 40.

30. Ibid p. 48.

is able to enter into our life and bear evil along with us; not that He becomes sinful, which is manifestly impossible, but that in His own body He bears our sins. It is an exacting thing to pardon a great wrong among men: God in Christ is forgiving that which is most repulsive to His nature, and thus it is that God suffers in Christ on the cross, vicariously, but truly, for our sins. It costs God much to redeem us. Grace is the free outpouring of the Fatherly Love, but it is also the expression of Absolute Holy Love, and the fact that there are principles of righteousness native to the love of God helps us to realize the cost at which our reconciliation is wrought. Christ died on the cross because God is Holy Love. To send Christ into the world that the world through Him might be saved was to make Him a sacrifice for sin in the sense that it was to lay the burden of our sins upon Him. Whatever more the Incarnation represents it certainly means that here "God has taken the initiative for man's redemption, within history and at a sacrificial cost."³¹ Faith always recognizes that we owe our salvation to this One in whom God Himself was uniquely present in history and whose appearance we can not but trace to the self-abnegating love of the Father. The chief thing in religion is what God does, and according to the revelation in Christ, God seeks unwearingly to redeem His children. This

31. Mackintosh The Divine Initiative p. 49.

never-failing grace is transparently revealed in the cross, for God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, and what Christ did in His supreme act of self-sacrifice, that God did. In that cross God shows us His love in an illuminating, compelling and saving manner because there sin is revealed and condemned by His righteousness but also conquered by His love. The cross is the supreme manifestation of God's grace because it is the supreme act of His self-bestowal.

Christ Himself is the chiefest gift of grace, and in His work the meaning of that gift is revealed. "The Incarnation is the guarantee of the atonement"³² for it is because God was in Christ that the life and death of Jesus had unique revelational value and thus redemptive significance. The traditional manner of treating the work of Christ under the captions of Prophet, Priest and King tends to be mechanical and wooden, but it has this in its favour, that it makes clear the various aspects of His reconciling work. As Prophet, Christ brings to men the gift of new insight into the truth; Divine revelation means the entrance of truth into the depth of living, and "when the truth penetrates into the whole warp and woof of life then for the first time God becomes man's motive power and the guiding spirit of all his ways."³³ Jesus is the consummation of

32. A. C. Knudson The Doctrine of Redemption pp. 377-378.

33. Kagawa's Meditations as translated by W. Axling in Kagawa p. 144.

the long line of prophets who arose among the Hebrews, but in Him we do not have an occasional insight into the nature of God, but rather a permanent, continuous embodiment of the truth so personally revealed to us as to carry lasting validity. As Priest, Christ brings to men a new relationship to God based, on the one hand on a profound awareness of the terribleness of sin, and on the other hand, on a winning revelation of the boundlessness of God's forgiveness. By sharpening our sensibility to sin's true nature Christ as priest brings us to the knowledge that we are unworthy of sonship and infinitely separated from God, but in the self-same office He links us to God in His own Person. As King, Christ brings to men mastery over the world, for a life of present reconciliation must be a barren and empty redemption if we are left to hold fast what has been given us in our own strength. If we are to be really reconciled the way must be open for better things in the future; Christ as King must rule our hearts and our lives, but such rulership is ever to be understood in terms of love. The cross is a revelation of the Christian way of victory through love, for love's highest requirement is that the most crushing defeat shall be endured without causing love's flame to be dimmed.

Thus in all these ways God in Christ approaches us in grace and offers all that is necessary to transcend our sinful past and draw us again into filial relationship to Himself.

Face to face with the broken sonship of man, Jesus presents the unbroken Fatherhood of God and makes it credible to us by His Own unbroken brotherhood with men as seen in every word and act of His life and as revealed especially in His vicarious death. Here indeed is the gift of grace by which we are to be saved from our sins, and through which we are to come again into our Father's household as His children.

THE RESPONSE OF MAN

It is apparent from what we have said above that God's gift of grace requires a response in man if it is to be savingly effective. We must realize our condition as sinners, accept Christ's proffer of forgiveness, and meet His demand for obedience. For Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and revivalist this is accomplished through the gift of a new disposition by which God enables men to discern the truth and walk in its light. Such operation is individual but impersonal, for it takes the direct line of irresistible action instead of the indirect route of personal consent and co-operation, thus negating the freedom of man and making God's grace the activity of mere caprice.

To escape from the snare of the mechanical trap we must affirm the identity of the old man with the new. In conversion the old man is not annihilated and a new one put in his place. Sabatier writes, "The conversion of Francis (of Assisi),

radical as it was, giving a new direction to his thoughts and will, had not the power to change the foundation of his character. . . . In vain is one changed at conversion - he remains the same."³⁴ The truth in this statement is that Francis did not gain a new disposition or a new soul, he received a new insight which enabled him to see the heinousness of his sin and the wonder of God's love in Christ and by this vision his personal response in penitence and faith was evoked and therein his sin was transcended and his subsequent life re-directed. He remained the troubador knight, but now, instead of being a knight errant of fortune and fame, he owed his allegiance to God in Christ, and was 'God's troubador'.

We recognize God's ability to change that which He has created, but such changes must ever be made in accord with the nature of God as our Father and the position of men as His children. Thus a mere gift of eternal life might lead us to excuse ourselves from the moral struggle, and certainly would not require us to set our own personal relationships in order, but true reconciliation to God requires that we also be reconciled to ourselves, our world and our fellow men. If we do not see the world as God's world, and accept our task in it as His will for our lives, we are not truly redeemed. Conversion, whether sudden or gradual, must bring us to the realization of these truths; it must bring us into a right relationship with

34. P. Sabatier Life of St. Francis of Assisi p. 170.

God, and as such it can not be merely an amendment of our disposition, but must come by conscious personal insight, a direct change of outlook, wherein old things pass away and all things become new because we see our lives as the lives of God's sons, our world as His world of discipline and duty, and our fellow men as His children. Because God's revelation of Himself in His Son is an act of grace, a disclosure of Fatherliness, it must come to us by the freedom of our own acceptance, for "except as we see for ourselves nothing is true, except as our own hearts reverence nothing is pure, except as our own purpose is consecrated nothing is good."³⁵ Though the Person of Christ be ever so attractive and though the work of Christ be ever so complete the forgiveness of our sins and the re-establishment of our filial relationship can not be accomplished without personal adherence to the truth which is thus plainly set forth in Person and work. Man as a personal being can, indeed oft-times does, maintain separateness from God, and this estrangement is surmounted only when we realize that our true end is God's will and make that purpose our own. The accomplishment of God's gracious purpose for our lives calls for penitence and faith through which we become conscious of God's gift, accept it as our own, and permit God in Christ to rule our lives. "There

³⁵. Oman op. cit., p. 186.

must be, that is, at once trust in the merciful good-will of God and penitent revulsion from our personal evil." ³⁶

PENITENCE

The Eastern Orthodox communion holds that "true penitence is absolutely necessary for the remission of sins," ³⁷ and designates its chief constituents as a deep sense of sin, contrition and a firm resolve to amend our ways. In the Roman Catholic church contrition for mortal sin is held to be necessary in order to receive the effects of Baptism and Absolution, though ^{in Baptism} the character of the sacrament is conveyed regardless of such penitence. ³⁸ The difficulty with both these conceptions of penitence is that each confines its operation to the sphere of a particular communion, each regards its effectiveness as attached to a particular rite or rites within the ecclesiastical body, and for each penitence in itself is not necessarily associated with faith but is rather the accompaniment of the sacraments of Baptism or Penance through which, if rightly administered, the priest may pronounce forgiveness or absolution. To regard penitence in this light is to remove the moral implications of the act by

36. Mackintosh The Christian Experience of Forgiveness p. 232.

37. Gavin op. cit., p. 361., quoting Androutsos Dogmatike p. 137.

38. The Catholic Faith p. 70.

disassociating it from its personal significance as between man as a man and God as his God. The real difficulty lies in the fundamental misconceptions that grace is not a personal relationship but an infused quality, that sin is not the derangement of man's fellowship with God but the transgression of a law (either ecclesiastical or divine) and that conversion is not insight into the Truth which God has revealed in Jesus Christ but entrance into an ecclesiastical organization and obedience to its rules. In the last analysis penitence is no more than our performance of that which is necessary in order to merit the church's commendation, and as such it makes the gift of grace no more than the just due of the labourer who has earned his hire.

To the revivalist penitence is frequently a mixed emotion of regret and despair. Urged to look back upon our lives and see them, if we are at all honest, as loaded with fruit that has rotted while still hanging on the tree, we are urged to face this picture of ourselves and 'repent'. By such repentance is meant 'sorrow' but not necessarily 'contrition'. Another man of nobler mind is brought to feel that he is at odds with the whole universe, that he is unworthy and undone, guilty and condemned, but even this is not repentance. Such regret and despair might be likened to the feelings of a small boy who is denied a much prized toy, in that its reference is to our sense of deprivation and loss of that which we wish to achieve

rather than to our consciousness of the end to which God desires to bring us.

In the modern evangelical conception faith and penitence belong together, and are really different aspects of the one act of regeneration. "They are the natural and only suitable acts for one who wishes to turn from sin to God and goodness."³⁹ Repentance is rightly defined in terms of its etymology as a 'change of mind': but such a change of mind is not constituted by passive acknowledgement of sin and feeling of sorrow, it must issue in changed life. No man is truly repentant whose actions reveal him to be otherwise. To believe in Christ we must stand for the things He stood for and do the works He did. The first essential of true repentance is an attitude of utter sincerity which neither underestimates nor magnifies our abilities and yet neither ignores the stark reality of our sin nor imputes evil to that which is good. Without moral sincerity God's gracious relation to us, vouchsafed in the revelation of His Son, is meaningless. It is not by moral depreciation of ourselves that we gain insight into the Truth of God, but in true repentance we must see ourselves in the light of God's purpose for our lives, and such vision requires faith. Thus repentance and faith belong together as integral parts of one another.

39. W. N. Clarke An Outline of Christian Theology p. 401.

Repentance must be according to the standards of God; but we can not command at will the sincere view of life. It is not possible for us to decide to-day that we will repent next week or in a fort-night, Indeed the only way by which we can be brought to true repentance is by full knowledge, utter abhorrence, and complete renunciation of sin. Knowing, feeling, and willing are all present, though fundamentally it is an act of the will by which we turn our backs on the past and face forward to the future. But we are unable to do this of our own volition, for our sight is dimmed, our feeling misguided and our will impotent, because of sin. Only a vision of God and a revelation of His love can make true penitence possible, because only thus can the conditions of man's turning be fulfilled. Jesus Christ is this revelation, and in His presence penitence and the vision of God are linked together so that the impact of the insight is heightened by repentant faith, and yet the penitence is evoked by the actual unveiling in Jesus Christ of what sin is to God and man, and also of the boundless depths to which God in grace has stooped to seek and to save His wayward children. Repentance is evoked in us when we come face to face with God in Jesus Christ, and "nothing in history is more certain and nothing in experience more impressive than His influence in enabling men to estimate themselves with true humility".⁴⁰ Realization

40. Oman op. cit., pp. 200-201.

of the stern reality of sin is the dark but necessary background against which the Father's grace stands out in clear relief. Thus the true follower of Jesus Christ is perpetually repentant because he is ever in the fellowship of Christ and thus forever increasingly conscious both of Christ's estimate of sin and of His revelation of the Father's grace. Ultimately then, the very fact that we can be repentant is a gift of God's grace, for it is possible only as we see the Father in His Son, who is the chiefest gift of grace.

FAITH

Our response to God's grace apprehended in His revelation in Jesus Christ involves faith as well as penitence. The Eastern Orthodox Church regards faith as, "the assent of man, generated on the basis of their authenticity, to the truths of the teaching of the Christian Religion, and the Divinity of Christ."⁴¹ Faith is an assent to knowledge, especially of the supernatural revealed truth in Jesus Christ, as defined by the Church. By faith thus based on authority we are to be led beyond ourselves and enabled to appropriate the content of the revelation, thereby embracing the salvation which is offered to us. The revivalist has turned this conception to his own use, stressing the necessity of adherence to the

41. Gavin op. cit., p. 32 quoting Rhōsse Dogmatike p. 66.

dogmas and creeds as essential to salvation. Surely Herrmann meets the position conclusively when he remarks, "'faith on authority', which our own resolve creates, cannot help us one whit, since the revelation of God which creates true faith works only upon the man who understands it."⁴² Assent to church doctrines does not awaken our trust in Christ, God alone does that; neither can 'authority' take the place of personal conviction.

The fundamental difficulty in the Roman Catholic conception of faith is seen by consideration of the definition,

"Faith is a supernatural virtue, infused by God into our souls, whereby, relying on the authority of God Himself, we believe whatever He has revealed, and whatever He proposes for us to believe by means of the Church, to be true." ⁴³

When grace is regarded as infused potency it is hardly possible to take any other view of faith than that here presented; for faith is the response by which we appropriate grace. We therefore, urge the same criticisms against the doctrine of infused faith as against infused grace, namely, that it destroys all moral freedom in man, makes God responsible for evil, is limited in its sphere and is mechanistic in its operation being the direct action of omnipotent power rather than the succouring personal fellowship of Fatherly Love.

42. W. Herrmann Communion with God p. 220.

43. The Catholic Faith p. 108.

The Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox doctrine of the relationship of the Church, as an ecclesiastical organization, and faith cannot be accepted. The dogmas of Roman Catholic papal infallibility and Eastern Orthodox General Council infallibility are based on a particular interpretation of certain New Testament passages, and even if such exegesis could be proven true to the letter of the individual passages, it could not be shown to be consistent with the general tenor of the gospel message. Faith is not gained or lost according as we accept or deny, "even one article proposed for our belief".⁴⁴ The way in which we are to appropriate the redemption offered in grace by the revelation of God in Jesus Christ is through personal conviction of sin, repentance, and awakened trust. The Church as the fellowship of those who follow Christ is the living organism by which the gospel is carried forward from generation to generation, but in this task the Church is not an ecclesiastical organization but the Body of Christ, and her interest is not in assent to dogmas, but in redeemed men and women.

Faith in the modern evangelical conception involves personal self-commitment, confidence and trust. It embraces two elements, the perception of the reality of God's Truth, and the hearty comital of the soul to His way. Faith in Jesus

44. The Catholic Faith p. 108.

Christ, which is the only true Christian meaning of faith, is then trustful recognition of the saving grace present in Jesus Christ, willing acceptance of the forgiveness thus offered, and entrance upon the holy life therein made possible. By grace on God's part, freely offering to us that which we need and can not ourselves provide, and faith on our part, freely and actively accepting that which grace presents, sin is overcome; but God's grace can not bless and save us except as we by faith recognize and accept the salvation which He proffers. This requirement of faith on our part is not of merit. Do we say that in accepting a gift from a friend we merit the gift? No more can we say that in accepting the freely offered salvation of God we merit His gift.

Christian faith is produced by revelation. Such revelation may come through the various forms of nature, history, or the events of personal life, but the normative revelation by which all general revelation is understood, comes through the personality of Jesus Christ as God meets us in Him. The object of our faith is God as seen in Jesus, and this object is the sufficient cause of our faith, for to have seen Jesus Christ is to know that we have found the answer to our soul's quest. All Christian faith ultimately is confidence in an event in our own lives. It is when Jesus Christ meets us, personally, that we recognize the meaning of God's grace in Him seeking to bring us into His fellowship, and consequently commit

ourselves to His Fatherly care in faith, which is nothing less than complete trust in Christ. Realizing that our faith in God would be impossible without His saving revelation of Himself, we see that even our faith is a gift of His grace: for "The object of faith in the last analysis determines subjective faith, and imparts to it whatever illuminating and redemptive character it may possess."⁴⁵

JUSTIFICATION

To have faith is to be forgiven, and to be forgiven is to be justified. The Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic interpretation of justification as making righteous is unscriptural. The Bishop of Gloucester writes, in a most sympathetic account of the matter, "It may be stated at once - and there cannot, I think, be any doubt about it - that in St. Paul's theology Justification means not making righteous but holding⁴⁶ righteous." Once again we reject the conception of infusion, by which both Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic regard justification as an actual change in man which counteracts sin and guilt and implants new life. Towers' characterization of the Protestant viewpoint as a queer combination of pessimism and easy optimism is not without point.⁴⁷

45. Knudson op. cit., pp. 409-410.

46. A. C. Headlam A Statement of the Problems in The Doctrine of Grace p. 379.

47. Towers Sanctifying Grace p. 4.

Revivalists often stress the utter depravity of mankind, so that absolutely all human action is corrupt, unless we are redeemed. They also proclaim that God blots out all past sins as soon as we 'accept Jesus as our Saviour'. Now it is plain that all human action outside Christ is not corrupt. It may not be spiritually good, but it can still be morally good; is the self-abnegating activity of one human being in giving up greatly desired ends in favour of another sinful, if the action is performed by a non-Christian? Being morally good however, does not make the action acceptable to God as spiritually good, even though all spiritual activity must be moral in character. Furthermore, justification or forgiveness is not blotting out of sins, but being reconciled to God in spite of our sins. We do not escape the accompanying consequences of sin in being forgiven, but we are made able to face them in the confidence that they no longer impede our fellowship with our Father.

Justification is the acceptance and present succour of a man by God, although he has done wrong. It is first and foremost an act of God in grace by which our sins no longer estrange us from His fellowship; but even if the accompanying consequences of our sin continue to follow us, despair for the past is not overcome, nor hope in the future established. Thus, "only if we are living down our past now, have we a well-grounded confidence of not meeting it again as an enemy in our

path at any later time."⁴⁸ Past evil cannot be made as though it had never occurred but we can, by the succour of God's personal fellowship with us in the present, become able to accept and overcome its consequences. Justification is a permanent relation to God in Christ which is begun now. We are not only forgiven, but also accepted into the Father's family as reconciled sons. By the succour of God's gracious relation in the present the accompanying consequences of sin are transcended and we are able to live in a new relation to our world as God's world of discipline and duty, ourselves as God's sons, and our neighbours as fellow heirs of God's household.

We are justified by faith, through grace. The conception of justification as the result of faith, love and good works makes justification the attainment of man rather than the gift of God. As we shall see in a later chapter, all ideas of merit must be ruled out or grace is no longer grace. Good works inevitably result from the life of reconciliation, but good works do not purchase righteousness in God's sight. When faith is present justification follows, because the renewing fellowship of God in Christ touches us as the soul commits itself to Him, and a right relationship with our Father is thereupon established. This is the good news of grace, that

48. Oman op. cit., p. 223.

he who is 'in Christ' is now in right relation to God. It is 'in Christ' that we are renewed, justified and made triumphant over life's trials. Faith in the Christian sense, the faith that justifies, is trustful dependence on Christ and intimate union with Him in facing the problems presented by the world, ourselves and our neighbours, so that God's will becomes our will and all our ways His ways.

SUMMARY

The two-fold problem which sin sets to grace is the redemption of man from his sinful past and the introduction of the sinner into a filial relationship with his Father. Because of the nature of sin and the hold it has upon us, we can not cope with this problem in our own strength. God, in pure grace, out of the depths of His great love for us, takes the initiative and offers us salvation through His Supreme Self-revelation in Jesus Christ. This revelation is savingly effective as we accept God's freely offered gift in faith, and are thereby forgiven and reinstated as His children. Our salvation is therefore, the work of God in grace, for without His revelation we can not possess faith, conquer sin, or enter into fellowship with the Father. This is grace as the gift of God.

CHAPTER XIII

GRACE AND FREEDOM

All that we have said in the preceeding chapter leads to the conclusion that 'all is of grace' and grace is solely of God. But wherever the domination of God over the life of men is too triumphantly proclaimed there is always a protest in favour of freedom. The New Testament closes with this unsolved antinomy, holding steadfastly to the necessity of both freedom and sovereignty. Later, Augustinianism is opposed by Pelagianism, Calvinism by Arminianism; and the modern Roman Catholic communion has become an Augustinian Church with Pelagian members, attempting to solve the difficulty by compromise, if only the solution is practicable. Since Arminius the trend in Protestantism has been toward greater and greater libertarianism, but in recent years the Calvinistic note has recurred in the theology of Karl Barth. Moreover, a significant group of Reformed scholars, of whom John Oman is the chief, have sought a tenable solution in the rediscovery of grace as personal influence.

A Roman Catholic theologian sums up the teaching of his Church in this way,

"God provided for the fulfilment of His decree of predestination and for the preservation of the freedom of the will, by granting to the unpredestined only sufficient grace, which they were sure always freely to disobey by their own fault, and by providing for the predestined efficacious grace, which they were sure always freely to follow." ¹

It is obvious that such subtleties, ranking with the postulations of the scholastics in obscurity, presuppose the idea of grace as a force which is sent by God to do His will regardless of all that men may desire. Now we have discarded the conception of grace as a force, finding it inadequate in the light of the revelation of God's grace vouchsafed to us in Jesus Christ, and for the explanation of God's dealings with men as His children. If, then, we reject the idea of grace as irresistible might operating by the power of omnipotence and under the direction of omniscience, we must give some other and more plausible answer to the age-long question whether freedom in man is compatible with the religious experience of dependence upon or oneness with God.

In the search for such an answer Oman points out that, "the old way of arguing down from the throne of God"² must be laid aside, for it presumes that we know more about God

1. E. L. Van Becelaere article Grace (Roman Catholic) in Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.
2. J. Oman Grace and Personality p. 40.

than that which He has given us in our own experience, which is manifestly impossible. Therefore, we must seek a valid and clear conception of the nature of God's relationship to men in an analysis of His dealings with us as seen on this earth and in our own experience. Since we have found already that the end which God's grace seeks is the succour of His children, we must now endeavour to ascertain the nature of such moral persons in order to understand how they are succoured, for it is clear that God's grace must operate in accord with the kind of personality which he has given to men.

THE NATURE OF MORAL PERSONALITY

The most vital and distinguishing characteristic of a moral person is freedom. Unfortunately, the word is used in a great variety of different senses from the time of the Pelagian controversy right till the present hour. This divergence of definition leads to unnecessary confusion and disputation. What, then, is the meaning of the term 'freedom'? The legalistic conception of 'freedom' is really not freedom at all; for what is secured to men by law is neither will nor determinative power but simply the opportunity to act. Legal freedom simply says what a man may do, not what he can do. In its simplest and most usual meaning 'freedom' refers to the absence of compulsion or restraint by any external power, that is, freedom of action. In this sense 'freedom' is not the

peculiar possession of man but also belongs to the animals, and may even be ascribed to the explosion of a powder cap in a small boy's pistol. It "refers only to the carrying out of the will, not to the setting of its direction . . . accordingly it is . . . only freedom to actualize the will."³ 'Freedom' interpreted as freedom from outward circumstances, events and conditions, being merely selective in respect to the content of a given situation, can hardly be described as constitutive of moral personality. Nor do we find greater validity in the conception of inner or psychological freedom, for the inner world is also 'given' in regard to a particular sequence, and every volition grows out of the situation and never exists apart from it. We may, in fact, rule out the entire idea of a negative 'freedom', as it is usually conceived, that is a freedom from something, for a free will is by no means an undetermined will - that would be chaos - but rather a will which chooses consciously determinately. Certain philosophers have made much of an indeterminate factor behind consciousness, but this is self-defeating, for certainly this is not the freedom we know; it is not the conscious will that is held to be free, but rather something else which lies behind and directs it. Nor is apparent freedom true 'freedom', for the subject may be ignorant of the forces determining his

will and thus believe himself free when he is really bound; because we have a consciousness of freedom does not necessarily mean that we are free. It is clear that none of these definitions present the 'freedom' which is the essential constituent of the moral personality, yet we must still maintain that that 'freedom' is fundamental as witnessed by the impossibility of helping persons except through themselves. Every aid which is really personal must call forth an inner response, and it is therefore evident that God's grace if its end is to succour moral persons must work with His children through their personal freedom. We must ask, What is the freedom which is the unique possession of moral persons?

The 'freedom' which inheres in the moral personality can not lie outside of the person himself. Part of the confusion here results from misunderstanding in regard to the use of the term 'will'. Modern psychology assures us that there is no special faculty to which the name 'will' can be given. Indeed it might be well to replace the older term 'freedom of the will' by the newer term 'freedom of the self', for it is not the will that is free but the whole man. 'Freedom' means that the whole man determines himself, and by man is meant a moral person with a definite character content. To say that character, deterministically conceived, dictates conduct is meaningless, for character itself is only an abstraction apart from the self which wills. As Oman puts it, "a spinning-top,

kept going by a spring within, is just as mechanical a toy as one flogged into motion by a whip without,"⁴ and a self which is the product of an already determined character possesses no true freedom. An examination of the experience of the race shows that the human mind has always been creative. No one can deny this in the face of the great works of genius in every realm of life, or in opposition to the evident accomplishments of great leaders. Mathews a philosopher of history, writes, "the historian can safely lay down the thesis that social situations do not produce great men; they give a great man the opportunity to exercise and develop his powers by doing great things,"⁵ and a psychologist, McDougall, emphatically agrees, adding, "If, then, the human mind is greatly creative in its highest forms and flights, how can we deny that it may be creative, in a small way, in the moral struggles of the common man?"⁶ The very characteristic of life is that it serves its own ends, that it is determined by the self in accord with rational motives. Indeed there would be no continuous consciousness of self without the imputing of our doings to ourselves, and there can be no personal relations with our fellows or with God except through our own souls.

4. Oman op. cit., p. 47.

5. S. Mathews The Spiritual Interpretation of History p. 113.

6. W. McDougall Outline of Psychology p. 448.

The freedom which inheres in the moral personality must be positive: not indeterminateness, but determination according to self-direction. There is nothing in freedom inconsistent with a large degree of uniformity in human conduct. The sphere of self-determination according to our own self-direction is undoubtedly narrower than that of life, for man has not the power to control all the influences that affect his life. Human activity is conditioned by nationality, parentage, early environment, physical constitution and many other factors. Though these modify the extent of the moral person's freedom they do not destroy it, nor detract from its importance. When freedom means the absence of dependability no one wishes to have it. If man is to be considered free he must, when confronted with real alternatives, choose according to his own self-direction, since no action is right unless we ourselves judge it to be right, and no faith saving except as it is appropriated by the individual himself. Ideals and ideas have no authority in life except that which is freely accorded to them by the moral person. Indeed, "We are moral selves in so far as we choose, by our interest and attention, some ideal out of a number of genuine possibilities."⁷ Grace as the succouring of moral persons implies that God does not impose His orders on us, but brings His ends to their fruition only

7. E. W. Lyman The Meaning and Truth of Religion p. 371 (underlining by present writer).

in and through our own insight. We have seen that the end of God's grace is the aiding of His children, and the bringing of them into most complete life in fellowship with Himself. It now appears that the goal of our own insight is identical with the end of God's grace; for both seek the fullest possible development of the individual. Freedom of our own self-direction consists in the right and ability to do what we know we ought to do, and what we know we ought to do corresponds with what God would have us do. It oft times occurs that we, of ourselves, are unable to accomplish all that we feel we should do, but it would be immoral to suggest that we cannot because God's succour is not available or is inadequate to our needs.

The freedom which inheres in the moral personality is exercised in the sphere of the self-conscious world. It is futile to ascribe self-determination to sub-strata or super-strata of life; for the problem is in no way ameliorated thereby, and the freedom thus provided has no validity for persons who must live in the world of their own self-consciousness. We can be free in no world but that in which we live, and we are free in this world only as we see it as our moral sphere and thus interpret it and move in it according to our own self-direction and by our own self-determination. In every conscious decision our world and our fellow men as well as our selves are involved. No person or object enters our conscious

world without being evaluated, and every personal action is done on the basis of such valuations of our world, our neighbours, and our selves. It is not possible simply to add an experience to our world, because our lives are units of ever changing complexes wherein all that is in our self-conscious world is unified. Our freedom, then, is possible only in our self-conscious world, and all God's dealings with us in grace must approach us as moral persons who are self-determined, according to our own self-direction in our own self-conscious world.⁸

THE ARGUMENTS AGAINST FREEDOM

Many arguments have been propounded in opposition to the conception that we are self-determined according to our own self-direction in our own self-conscious world. Were this a treatise on Freedom per se we would treat each of these in detail; but our object is to see the relationship of man's freedom to God's grace, and we therefore present the views opposed to freedom under four general categories, namely, Fatalism, Necessarianism, Determinism and Predestination. The first three are chiefly the result of metaphysical thought while the latter is the crux of the long lasting religious controversy which we traced in the historical section.

8. Oman op. cit. p. 43 (This thesis is elaborated in Chapter VII).

Fatalism holds that all things occur according to a fixed and immovable order, with which free causes have nothing whatever to do. The inexorability of natural laws has been one of the chief 'facts' urged in support of this position. Science moved for many years toward the construction of a view of ^{the} universe in which the reign of unrelenting law was supreme, but such arguments ~~seem to be~~ invalidated by the principle of indeterminacy which physics has discovered. Even the electrons gyrating about the proton of an element do not invariably follow the same path. Investigations in other branches of science have revealed the same principle of indeterminacy, until at length we are forced to the conclusion that the universe is not founded on a reign of law. After all, the laws of nature do not 'reign' and can not 'determine' anything. They are by no means compelling forces but rather formulae evolved by men to exhibit the uniformity which exists in nature. The most that can be said is that,

"There seems to be sufficient uniformity in nature to enable us to predict the future with a high degree of certainty at the level of the mechanical sciences, with varying degrees of certainty in the organic sciences, and with some degree of certainty in human affairs." 9

This uniformity in nature does not exhibit fatalism, and in no way rules out the possibility of free action on the part of man. Moreover the whole argument presupposes that God deals with men as things rather than as personal beings. It is true that we live in the physical world, but we are also inhabitants of the spiritual realm of personal relationships, and principles or laws which apply in the physical realm do not always govern

the spiritual. No doubt the sun shines on the good and evil alike, and without question the rain falls on the just and the unjust. Physically, man is part of the order of nature, and can not be otherwise, but just as soon as natural events enter the experience of moral personalities they take on moral and spiritual significance which can not be attributed to the 'natural' cause. Fatalism falls by the undermining of its own foundations in science, and by the removal of the false presuppositions which lie at its base.

Necessarianism holds that our deeds are determined by our motives, which in turn are determined by our nature and environment. Consequently, freedom, in the sense in which we are using the word, is completely negated, for every action results from a cause which is determined by laws of human nature and these are imposed by some power external to the self. Choice in the Necessarian scheme is dictated by the relative strength of the various motives which present themselves at a particular time. This strict view of causation is untenable. It is not essential to assign as a cause of every action of man either an external physical law, as the fatalist declares, or an internal human law, as the necessarian proposes. Lombroso and his followers have long since failed to establish their theory that there are distinctive physical characteristics of the criminal type; a criminal thereby being such by virtue of natural law. The

correspondence between the shape of the head and the intelligence of the subject is by no means an ascertained fact. Recent investigations tend to make the findings of mechanistic social science less and less secure, and as in the realm of physical science, point to the existence of great variety as well as general uniformity. The arguments from heredity and from statistics cannot be accepted as valid. Even were these statistics and laws of heredity established they would still fail to support the necessarian argument, for the general law of averages is a general law simply by virtue of the fact that it recognizes variations. Where shall we find the 'average man'? He does not exist outside the calculations of statisticians and abstractions of certain philosophers; he is a hypothetical figure excogitated by human minds to meet the contingency which arises by virtue of the fact that infinite variety is an evident and essential quality of moral persons. Necessarianism, like fatalism, fails because its foundations in science have become increasingly insecure, and because it attempts to apply mechanical laws to moral personalities. The actions of men and women in the realm of personal relationships become meaningless, absurd, and futile as the necessitated results of primary and predetermined motives beyond the control, outside the consciousness and with indifference to the self-direction of the individual.

Followers of fatalism or necessitarianism are not now numerous, but many philosophers, psychologists, and scientists avow themselves determinists, what William James aptly describes as 'soft' determinists.¹⁰ Moral responsibility is affirmed and the importance of the activity of the self in rational activity upheld, but man's decisions in a given situation are said to be determined by his total character which is formed already. Thus, according to the nature of the self and its environment, our actions are the necessary result of the particular condition of the universe at the specific moment of actualization. We play some part in determining this result, but we ourselves are in turn determined by the forces of the universe as a whole and consequently freedom, as we have defined it, is abrogated. Soft determinism found one of its strongest arguments in the psychology of association wherein, presupposing the existence of separate faculties, it was possible to see an act as the result of interplay among the several constituent elements, but, since this faculty psychology has proven itself inadequate, the conclusions based upon it are also invalidated. Moreover, the common argument that if we knew all the antecedents of an action we should be able to predict the action with absolute certainty is inconclusive, for the most we can really ascertain is the probable

10. W. James The Dilemma of Determinism in The Will to Believe p. 149.

conclusion toward which the known antecedents point. Could we know all the antecedents of an action we should be engaged in actually performing the action itself. In other words it is impossible to have complete knowledge of all the conditions of an action apart from participation, and the contention of the determinist in this regard is therefore overcome. The usual argument from character is likewise insufficient. Character obviously improves and degenerates. It might be possible to attribute these changes to alterations of the environment, but if so how does it happen that character continues to improve in some of us while it steadily degenerates in others? The moment we speak of 'good' character or 'bad' character we imply responsibility, and in spite of every affirmation to the contrary, character which is already determined, and which in turn determines our actions in each situation according to the nature of itself and its environment is not free and therefore not responsible. Freedom implies the ability to restrain, control and direct motives. The most abject slave of vile habits may act in full harmony with the character he has formed, but such action can hardly be described as free. If we regard the already formed character as the spring of action we are driven to the conception of grace as a force (for the transformation of our lives then demands the gift of a new disposition); which is just the Catholic position, but which is inadequate for the understanding of

God's succouring love as He deals with moral persons. But we need not regard character in this fashion; for the very fact that action as the outcome of a bad character is looked upon as particularly heinous assures us that character is not the sole determinant of action, but is rather a constituent part of a self-determining ego, and is in reality the result of the loyalties and disloyalties of that self. Otherwise the moral approbation and condemnation which are given data in our experience lose all meaning. Character, we affirm, is formed by men and not for them. Ultimately then, soft determinism defines the universe as a place where what we feel ought to be is impossible: for we cannot act so that it may be achieved, and, "the cause why a bad act is done really is the fact that there is a bad soul in the world. Nothing can alter that, and that is all we want to know from a purely ethical point of view."¹¹ Such a view is too triumphant, making God responsible for evil and, in spite of all protestations to the contrary, over-riding the freedom of man. Soft determinism, though appearing more attractive than fatalism or rigid necessitarianism, is in reality but another and more refined form of the same arguments. The freedom it promises is not self-determination according to our own self-direction in our own self-conscious world.

11. H. Rashdall The Theory of Good and Evil Vol. II p. 340.
 Cf. W. F. Lofthouse The Father and the Son p. 191.

We come then to the difficult and vexing question of predestination which has been closely associated with the conception of grace since the time of Augustine. Let us rule out immediately the absolute double predestination which we found in so many ancient, medieval and reformation writers, for it finds few protagonists in our generation, since it so obviously contravenes the entire revelation of God as the loving Father and the idea of men as self-determining persons, and since it receives so little support in the New Testament, in our own Christian experience and in contemporary thought. Predestination as the "eternal decree of God to bestow eternal salvation upon all whom God foresaw that they would finally believe"¹² still claims our attention. Thoughtful minds are always impressed by the feeling that a firm and steady hand guides the affairs of the universe and every Christian when he kneels before his God feels that his salvation is entirely and completely the free gift of God in grace. Such inductive reasoning has a basis in fact, but thoroughly indefensible is the a priori reasoning which deduces a universal foreordination on the basis of the assumption that God must conduct the universe as the Omnipotent and Omniscient One, and that He could not do this save by Divine decrees which determine everything beforehand. We

12. R. F. Werdner The Doctrine of God p. 72.

may put it in this manner, while the doctrine of predestination, as a belief set forth for acceptance, finds little support in the New Testament or in Christian experience, there are indications that the idea of predestination, as provoking a mental image of conditions which really exist, does truly represent certain permanent relationships of God and man.

The Scriptures bear witness, both Old and New Testaments, to 'election'. These references, so often misused, are an entirely inadequate basis for a doctrine of salvation which assures us that a select number are elected to eternal life by divine foreordination. The assurance of election, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, is accompanied by the command to carry on some definite type of ministry. Election in the Bible is a call to service, not an assurance of salvation; it means membership in the Church in this life rather than citizenship in the new Jerusalem of the life to come. From Abraham down to the member of the early Christian Church, the Bible shows a line of chosen people, and all these are spoken of as the elect of God, chosen to serve the non-elect that salvation may come nigh all men. Election is not to salvation, but to service; "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit."¹³ Such a view of election is fully compatible

13. John 15:16.

with the conception of the grace of God as His succouring love which does not will that any shall be lost, but seeks, by every personal means to save all, for men and women elected in this sense become the personal media by which God is able to save and succour the rest of mankind. Nor is our freedom as individuals thereby negated, because we can be instruments of God's grace only if we have ourselves entered into a personal relationship with Him through Jesus Christ freely accepting the election which is therein offered to us and freely performing the service thereby made possible.

Any doctrine of predestination which rules out all human freedom cannot be accepted. The much used analogy of the master chess player who, playing with a novice, infallibly gains the victory because he understands all possible moves of the latter and knows in advance how to meet them, is ultimately as deterministic as if every single move were under the control of the expert. The alternatives really are not open: and we are not self-determined according to our own self-direction in our own self-conscious world.

On the other hand, there are certain very real truths which gain expression in the broad and general idea of predestination. First, it represents God as seeking man. That God is on our side, definitely working as our heavenly Father to bring us into fellowship with Himself is a fundamental

affirmation of the Christian faith. Second, it declares the ultimate triumph of the good and the final realization of divine purpose in the reconciliation of men to God, which are also integral parts of the New Testament teaching. Third, the omniscience of God is clearly asserted; "The very hairs of your head are all numbered,"¹⁴ It is essential for Christian faith that nothing be hid from the Father which pertains to the welfare of His children. God's knowledge of our finite experiences must be such that He can have direct perception of our difficulties, pain and suffering; and surely God in Jesus as the One who suffers with and for us luminously reveals the adequacy of His knowledge. For the understanding of divine foreknowledge we must appeal, not to the expert chess player defeating his novice opponent, but to the analogy of human friendship and personal influence. Religious determinism is no less determinism than metaphysical determinism, and can not be excused on grounds which we have condemned with reference to the latter. It may be urged, however, that in the great majority of instances we can be sure what a personal friend's reactions would be; yet this does not affect his self-determination. In similar manner Robinson argues that God's prevision leaves men free, for we are "in absolute ignorance of it, and it cannot therefore fetter our choice."¹⁵ We

14. Matthew 10:30.

15. H. W. Robinson The Christian Doctrine of Man p. 337.

recognize the fact that we can foreknow the actions of a friend with a degree of accuracy which corresponds quite closely to the measure of intimacy existing between us. A skilled psychiatrist is able to foreknow the activity of a client with even greater certainty. In each of these instances the foreknowledge of the one person does not determine the action of the other. The analogy is very imperfect, being human, but it seems quite possible that God's prescience, in a similar although perfect manner, can be complete, and also leave us unfettered. Yet another path out of the maze seems promising, that is, if we conceive God as the perfect Subject, above and beyond time, it is then evident that all is present to God although past, present or future to men. Finally, the interaction of God and man as personal beings leaves ample scope for the operation of those subtle but powerful influences which lead us though never over-riding our own freedom.

Predestination then, like its companion thought of election, is not a doctrine to be applied to all and sundry as a decree by which a certain few are assured of heaven and all others thereby assigned to hell; as such it is religious determinism and subject to the defeating arguments which we have heretofore adduced. Predestination is an expression of the tender care which God exercises toward all men, an assurance of the ultimate triumph of God's purpose and an assertion of the Lordship of Christ which the Christian never ceases to

acknowledge; as such the believer, being in personal fellowship with the Father, recognizes the providence of His household.

THE ARGUMENTS FOR FREEDOM

We have maintained the freedom of moral persons thus far by the negative process of eliminating deterministic arguments. We must now ask, What positive support can be found for the belief that we are self-determined, according to our own self-direction in our own self-conscious world?

The most obvious argument for the freedom of man is our own consciousness of self-determination. This however, does not mean that self-determination is the phenomenon we observe, for indeed we see only the consciousness of self-determination. While seeming to be the strongest of all arguments on the surface, and often regarded as such by philosophers, there can be no conclusive proof of self-determination from this angle. The most that we can deduce from the phenomenon of our consciousness of self-determination is that this consciousness is an ethical reality which must have an actual reason for being; but this is not to prove that freedom is the best explanation of the phenomenon. We can hardly infer the existence of a thing simply from the consciousness of it. But if it can not be conclusively proven

that man is free because he has a consciousness of self-determination, neither can it be disproven; for the sceptic must himself show how the phenomenon arises and must present a more adequate solution to the problem than that which is upheld by the non-determinist.

The experience of responsibility and accountability is one of the strongest arguments for the actuality of our freedom. If there is a possibility of self-deception in regard to the cause of our consciousness of freedom, there can be little of that in regard to our experience of responsibility, because here the person accepts a load which natural tendencies would cause him to discard. The assumption of responsibility is an ethically real act and a being who thus, "takes responsibility upon himself and carries it must somehow be capable of doing so."¹⁶ From the manifest reality of responsibility we can rightly infer the existence of freedom, for accountability must rest upon freedom. What did not follow from the consciousness of self-determination, namely the real existence of freedom and its inherency in the nature of the person, does follow from responsibility and accountability, and this is personal self-determination; for the assumption and carrying of responsibility is possible only where autonomy exists.

16. Hartmann op. cit., p. 155.

Moreover, there can be no escape from the feeling of regret, as many of our great dramas have made abundantly evident. While responsibility accompanies every moral act, the feeling of guilt arises from certain particular actions which are in the highest degree recognized as real. Guilt always signifies personal authorship. We cannot feel guilty on behalf of another even though we enter into their particular predicament with large sympathy and deep understanding. Further, no normal healthy person accepts guilt so long as he can avoid it. If indeed, a man does load himself with feelings of guilt which are unfounded we regard him as a psychopathic case, and in more extreme instances a proper inmate of the insane asylum. Probably the clearest defense of this argument is that by William James. He shows that determinism breaks upon this rock because, if it supposes all we regret had to happen it throws us into hopeless pessimism, and if, on the other hand, it escapes by saying that evil is only seeming we are driven to hold that, "our performances and our violations of duty are for a common purpose, the attainment of subjective knowledge and feeling,"¹⁷ which lays us open to fatalism. The most adequate explanation of the experience of regret is the existence of freedom - the capacity for self-determination according to our own self-direction.

17. James op. cit., p. 171.

Further, we daily experience many feelings which are directed toward other moral persons as if toward individuals who are capable of self-determination. The sense of being worthy or unworthy is without meaning unless we hold that men are faced with open possibilities. The reciprocation of love, the deepest of all human bonds, demands freedom of acceptance or rejection. Trust, the very basis of human intercourse, is founded on the conviction that men are capable of making a decision and holding to it. Friendship assumes that moral persons have chosen to confide in one another. The history of the race exhibits an ever increasing recognition of men's capacity for self-determination; in the discarding of slavery, the advance in the position of women and the tendency to recognize the personal rights of children and old people. Even in economic spheres the individual is more and more regarded as a personal being capable of exercising freedom. The truth seems to be that when we leave dull and mechanical conceptions of irresistible law behind and enter upon the consideration of the self-conscious world where personal relationships and personal values govern we also leave behind the sphere in which determinism displays its most convincing strength. The existence of freedom is, we believe, the most plausible explanation of the consciousness of self-determination which is common to men, the necessary inference from responsibility and accountability, the essential basis of regret, and the prerequisite of personal intercourse.

FREEDOM AND DEPENDENCE

If, then, it be agreed that the essence of our nature as moral persons is to be self-determined by our own self-direction in our own self-conscious world, how is this freedom to be reconciled with the religious experience of dependence upon God? How are we to harmonize the findings of the last chapter that 'all is of grace' and grace is of God with the reality of man's freedom? How can moral independence be compatible with religious dependence?

Compromise which gives to each a sphere of influence is insufficient. Ethics has, in recent decades, attempted to establish its validity on a basis distinct and separate from religion and, beginning with Schleiermacher, theologians have tried to stand religion on its own feet apart from morality. But in the domain of personal life divided loyalties are only poor expedients which the mind constructs to avoid basal conflicts. The personality is a unit, and its loyalties can not be departmentalized. Both religion and morality influence each thought, word or deed, and two separate autonomies they can not be without sacrificing the integration of personality. If they are two distinct authorities one must govern and the other be subservient: but our daily experience is that each is reinforced by the other and compromise does not describe their relationship aright.

Isolation is subject to the same criticisms. To place the solution of the problem in the, "divergent idiosyncrasies

of the thinkers who have dealt with it"¹⁸ is to declare that the ultimate resolution of the difficulty is impossible. But the fact is that the 'once-born' ethical independent and the 'twice-born' religious dependent are not distinct types but rather emphases in persons, the one being dominant at one time, and the other at another. To hold that these two divergent standpoints are irrevocably separate is to adopt the counsel of despair through the weariness of long dispute and great verbosity. There must be a final unity which holds both moral independence and religious dependence, both man's freedom and God's grace, or else the universe is an ultimate paradox.

A Religion which over-rides man's freedom, is not only contrary to the very nature of moral personality, but also negates its own spiritual character. Some hold that this difficulty is overcome by attributing moral worth to actions subsequent to the influx of supernatural energy given by arbitrary decree. Thus, it is maintained, all is of God in the bestowal of prevenient grace, and moral freedom is preserved in the earning of further graces by good works.¹⁹ But this destroys both dependence and independence by confining each to a sphere of operation, whereas we have seen that grace is not thus delimited. Further, by the introduction of merit and the

18. N. P. Williams The Grace of God p. 4.

19. The merit of good works may, under certain conditions, be transferred to the 'account' of less favoured individuals.

consequent earning of further grace, the spirituality of religion is denied; for we are then self-regarding and moralistic, rather than self-effacing and dependent on God. The truth is that we can dispense with neither moral independence nor religious dependence; for unless the good shines in its own light we have no standard to evaluate the revelation in Christ, and therefore the spiritual quality of its attractiveness is meaningless. Unless penitence and faith, which we hold to be the media of our response to God's revelation, are dependent upon our free activity, the costly way of reconciliation in Christ is needless; for arbitrary power is then regarded as the chief attribute of Deity, and thus strict predestination is the only acceptable religious doctrine.

On the other hand, if religious dependence be abandoned morality ceases to be really ethical. If rules and forms are inadequate to express the love of God to men showing itself in grace, they are equally inadequate to express the response on man's part. Until the boundaries of observance are passed and the freedom of love rather than the bondage of law espoused moral living is devoid of lasting content. Oman puts it thus,

"Never, except in the atmosphere of living religion, has morality maintained its absolute demand, penetrated from outward conformity to inward motive, grown sensitive to the deeper requirements of humility and sympathy, and, finally, passed all rigid bounds of law and come face to

face with the infinite claim of love, which destroys all idea of merit". 20

One of the most startling facts of our experience is our inability to follow the path of action which we see to be right. With Paul we feel that we do that which we would not, and that which we would we do not. If we have no assurance that we can because we ought the ideal is sacrificed to the realizable and morality sinks to the level of legality, or judgment which is dependent upon the approval of others thereby dispensing with personal freedom. Consequently, the moral life is cut off at its very root.

Moral independence and religious dependence, man's freedom and God's grace, are integral and inter-related elements in one unitary person. They can neither be held apart nor unequally yoked together but must be understood as one whole. The great words of Jesus, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. . . . but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it"²¹ indicate precisely the direction which our thought must take. This becomes even clearer when we analyze Paul's conception 'in Christ' which recurs again and again throughout the pages of his epistles. Our feeling that duty is power depends upon our relationship to God, and for the Christian this is a personal relation with God 'in

20. Oman op. cit., p. 62.

21. Mark 8:34, 35.

Christ'. By the interaction of persons then, God and man, we come to know our Father's will, and the ought is no longer unrealizable but in the succour of this relationship becomes actually possible. When the Christian knows the Father's will he recognizes his own right course of action, and our experience shows us that the demands of morality never run counter to God's revealed will. But the question at stake here is, Does God over-rule our freedom in ^apersonal relationship which is so intimate that it can be described as 'in Christ' or 'in God'? If we are 'in Christ' what becomes of our self-determination according to our own self-direction in our own self-conscious world? Is not this relationship just as overwhelming as direct power? Let it be emphasized that we are moving on the plane of personal intercourse and therefore must abandon the mechanical approach which has characterized the discussion for so many centuries. Our closest human analogy is the affection of husband and wife, mother and child or bosom friend and bosom friend. Do we say that ^{the} tender care of the husband as it affects the wife 'forces', 'over-rides', or 'compels', her to act in ways which the solicitude of love has perceived to be desirable? Rather it is the self-effacingness of his action which wins her free consent and knits the two together in bonds that are more sacred just because of the inter-influencing character of the relationship. To say that either surrenders

freedom would do injustice to the facts of experience. We realize that it is just in so far as friends lose themselves in one another that they move on the higher levels of freedom. The confining limits of polite conversation are changed for intimate sharings of aspiration and desperation; and what is true of conversation is far more true in regard to fraternization of spirits. Furthermore, history shows that the creativity of masterly action, whether in art, literature, science, politics or religion, has its springs in the deep places of moral fellowship. If we live with God as our heavenly Father, 'in Christ', that is in union of spirit, are we then to say that human freedom has been discarded because the divine will has been accepted as the Christian's way of life? It would be more correct to say that only as we come into the Father's presence do we begin to exercise the latent possibilities for free action which have lain dormant whilst we were bound by the fetters of insincerity and sin. As we give our loyalty to God's will, seeing His will as our highest good, rivalry with our fellows is removed, estrangement with God surmounted, and the life of Christian fellowship wherein we serve and forgive instead of striving to overcome is entered.

Just because grace operates only by personal influence, inspiration, contagion and example, coming to us in personal relationships, it cannot produce the flawless world which

over-whelming power might be expected to bring forth. In the indirect personal method of approach the Father has made evil a possibility. Because it is given in a personal relation grace can work only in and through our personal response. Penitence and faith are God's gift in grace, but penitence is real only as we see ourselves in the light of God's revelation in Christ, and faith is active only as, progressively discovering God's will, we accept it as our own. The nature of this personal relation is best seen in Jesus. In the words of Canon Paven, "Jesus does not argue (men) into belief, nor sway them by emotion, nor exhort in the manner of the moralist: He flings down phrases that illuminate like flashes of lightning; and sometimes the blind receive sight."²² Most luminous of all is the revelation in His personal actions among men, eliciting the loyalty and love of eleven but receiving rejection at the hands of the twelfth. Self-determination is not abrogated in the relationships of persons, but each has the power to choose friends and espouse or reject the influences which emanate from such friends. We have maintained that this can be rightly done only according to our own self-direction, that is, as we see the truth by our own insight. Our religious dependence is therefore inseparably linked to our moral independence for we must respond by our own self-determination to

22. C. E. and E. Raven Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ
p. 87.

the proffer of salvation and we can do this only by our own self-direction as we perceive the truth of God's revelation and make it our own.

Finally, the nature of our self-conscious world requires the same essential oneness of moral independence and religious dependence. It is true that we had nothing to do with the family into which we were born, the country of which we are natives or the colour of our skin. Nevertheless, our world is our moral sphere because we are its centre and every factor in it is subject to our interests and arrangements. In our response to this world which is provided for us, but which never invades us except as we lay ourselves open to it, we can make our way aright only by dependence on the truth which we see by our own insight. Thus the sphere of our independence is at the same time the world of our dependence. Once again, our experience shows us that we, "are not independent, as though we could ride over reality; but, also, we are not dependent, as though reality could simply ride over us."²³ Further, because God's relation to us is personal and not merely individual, we are expected to honour the system by which all men as joint-heirs to the world are benefited. If we are guilty of infraction of the family discipline God does not shield us from the consequences. Were God's way of dealing with the world in Providence merely individual preference we would land in the

23. Oman op. cit., p. 68.

age-old problem of theodicy and find no way out. But when the Father's care of His children is expressed in personal terms it never disregards the fact that each of us is a member of the family, subject to family discipline, and not simply a favoured individual to whom the whole is a field for rampant activity; yet it is precisely for this reason that the personal order, involving the intercourse of personally related subjects, avoids the difficulty of making God responsible for that which should be charged to the freedom of men. Both religious dependence and moral independence are required for the right understanding of our self-conscious world.

The distinguishing characteristic of Grace as revealed by God in Jesus Christ is its personal quality. Grace is thus ever more important in our lives not as it is more powerful or invading but as it becomes more personal, that is, as our union with God in Christ becomes more intimate and complete. But we are at no time deprived of our freedom, being rather introduced into ever wider circles in which our freedom may be exercised. If then, God

"will not have us accept His purposes save as our own, discern His righteousness save by our own insight, and learn His thought about His world save as our own. blessed discovery, our dependence upon Him is no more in conflict with our true moral independence than help given in any other perfect personal relation." 24

Thus the conclusion at which we arrived in the last chapter, namely, that 'all is of grace' and grace is of God, instead

24. Oman op. cit., p. 71.

of being opposed to the finding of this chapter, namely, that a moral person must be self-determined according to his own self-direction in his own self-conscious world, is rather an essential and organic part of the same, both being livingly united in moral personality and actively expressed in the relationship of God the Father to men as His children.

Freedom, indeed, appears to be a deep bond of union between man and God, constituting the very means by which God's purposes can be realized without the destruction of moral personality. It is just as the Christian becomes more fully aware of his dependence upon God that he is more deeply conscious of his own moral independence and responsibility. The greater our loyalty to God's will the more certainly do we fulfill our own purposes, until, through moral and spiritual union with God 'in Christ' we cease to be concerned about the nature of freedom and find ourselves absorbed by the reality of grace as the living centre of our experience. Seeing ourselves as made in the image of God we recognize that freedom, our most distinguishing characteristic as moral personalities, is itself the gift of grace. When God's will is accepted as our will, by self-determination, His purposes as our purposes, according to our own self-direction, and His world as the world of our self-consciousness, human freedom is at its highest. This is freedom as the gift of grace.

CHAPTER XIV

THE BLESSED LIFE

The fusion of dependence and independence in a free personal relationship wherein grace is the unfailing man-ward disposition of God and faith the prevailing God-ward temper of man manifests itself in the life of blessedness. Blessedness has not always been regarded as the ideal of human life, and never less so than at the present moment when its usual unattractive, placid, passive associations are despised rather than eulorized. Since these condemnatory connexions are buttressed by reference to the Beatitudes, and since it is in these words that the Christ programme for our lives is epitomized, we must therefore seek to ascertain the character of the life under grace as therein portrayed.

THE BEATITUDES AND BLESSEDNESS

For Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and revivalist, the Beatitudes are a legalistic code. It is as though the Ten Commandments now included an appendix from the New Testament of which the fifth chapter of Matthew was the

most important article. We are told that "Jesus Christ puts the Beatitudes before us to make us detest the maxims of the world, and to invite us to love and practice the maxims of His Gospel,"¹ or that "the Lord proposed in these sentences a doctrine for the attainment of blessedness."² But if the Beatitudes are only a higher moral demand for more thorough repression and more complete submission, although they represent the loftiest maxim, they cannot enable us to attain thereto. Instead, the very height of the ideal becomes for us not a prime mover to blessedness, but a cause of even more utter despair, since we realize the impossibility of scaling so remote a peak. The Beatitudes are not, however, a code of morals, being rather the religious programme which Jesus sees in God-filled lives. The word 'blessed' is to be interpreted in terms of congratulation. The sentences do not balance into cause-effect, work-reward couplets; they are the recording of actual fact; 'Happy are those who are poor in spirit for they possess the kingdom of heaven.' In the Beatitudes we are faced with the liberty of faith, rather than with moral maxims of impossible magnitude. In them we discover how fullness of life is ours as moral independence becomes complete and present blessedness possible through dependence upon God.

In a very striking interpretation which we have adopted as our own, Olan divides the Beatitudes into three groups as

1. The Catholic Faith p. 115.

2. W. Palmer The Longer Russian Catechism et al. p. 82.

follows:

"the first group sets forth the nature of a blessed self-consciousness; the second, the nature of a blessed self-direction; the third, the nature of a blessed self-determination. To be poor in spirit is to live under God's rule and possess the world as ours because it is God's; to hunger and thirst after righteousness is to find God's guidance and be directed of our own insight; to be peacemakers is to determine our ways like God's children and have victory over evil without and within." 3

If this division is accurate, which we believe it is, then exposition of the Beatitudes reveals the nature of the life under grace as fully independent because completely dependent.

Thus, to be blessed is to be properly at peace in the realm of our own self-consciousness. With this the first three Beatitudes are deeply concerned. Roman Catholicism teaches that the 'poor in spirit' are those who either have no riches or rightly use those which they do possess, the 'meek' are those who live in patience and gentleness, and those who 'mourn' are they who suffer with resignation or grieve over sin. Obviously the interpretation is superficial, legalistic and mechanistic. It is concerned with the definition of a set of rules so that they may be readily comprehended and duly observed. Such an interpretation does not lead us to be reconciled with ourselves but causes us to be continually worried about our standing before God. Poverty of spirit is concerned

with our whole outlook on life, not merely with riches. 'Poor in spirit' is a brief statement of the tremendous truth that, "the power of the redeeming God and a real communion with Him are to be experienced only by bowing calmly to the inevitable."⁴ Impatience under the conditions of the world of our self-consciousness is opposed to faith, which is nothing less than trust in God and therefore in our situation as that which God has appointed for us. This may appear to be Stoicism, but all who have experienced the power of faith realize that acceptance of the duty and discipline which God appoints is positive victory instead of negative defeat. To be 'poor in spirit' is to be thoroughly realistic about our sins and imperfections and yet to live above the sting of self-despisement, being satisfied to stand before God in all our defilement because He accepts us in grace. When the prodigal returns to the father's dwelling-place he is 'poor in spirit' and his cry is, 'let me be as one of thy hired servants.' Moreover, poverty of spirit means readiness to serve our fellows. To withdraw from the place in the world to which God has appointed us is to cease to take part in His eternal work. The hermit fails to consider that the world, being God's, is the very foundation of present blessedness, since it is the medium through which we come to know the Father's will.

4. W. Herrmann Communion with God p. 325.

God is to be served in common life and in our own circumstances, not in cloisters but in the camps of men.

To be 'poor in spirit' leads to the relationship with other men described in the second Beatitude. To 'mourn' is to sympathize. Selfish grief, as of a too-much-pampered child, is not to be blessed or comforted. The old Amerind legend which closes with the words, "only through tears comes understanding", touches vibrant strings from which pure melodies resound. Sympathy is blessed because the true meaning of life lies behind its tasks, duties, and trials, rather than its pleasures and possessions. Is it not in sympathy that the most intimate fellowship of Father with child is evoked? Finally, sympathy with men, giving us by participation, some small glimpse into God's patient way of grace, leads us to be 'meek', not simply with our neighbours as Roman Catholicism suggests, but especially before God. This "true meekness is the relation to the Father of our spirits which, by laying us open to His whole purpose, shows us all things in the earth working for it."⁵ Any possession in the world which becomes an end in itself holds us in thrall, but all possessions become truly ours if they are recognized as instruments for the accomplishment of God's purpose for His children. Being 'poor in spirit', sympathizing with our

fellows, and holding ourselves in meekness before God we are blessed by finding enduring peace in the sphere of our own self-conscious world, seeing it to be God's world, and ours because so appointed by Him.

To be blessed is to be reconciled to our Christian duty by the self-direction of conscience. This is particularly emphasized in the second three Beatitudes. Of these Roman Catholicism says, 'those who hunger and thirst after justice' desire to grow in grace and good works, 'the merciful' love their neighbours for the love of God, and 'the clean in heart' keep away from sin and impurity.⁶ Thus to confine the scope of these wide-sweeping and heart-searching sentences is in effect to change their meaning and purpose. To 'hunger and thirst after righteousness' is to feel the ever present voice of conscience which assures us that when we have done our very best we are still unworthy. This is to enter the realm wherein moral demand knows no limits and recognizes no borders; as Oman puts it, "if love is the fulfilling of the law, it is a law without definition or measure or finality"⁷ ever fluid in the search for still more Christ-like standards. Though this limitless demand be our duty, faith gives us the power to submit to its claims with joy in the realization that the smallest task has value as a service in God's household, and that peace comes as

6. The Catholic Faith pp. 115, 116.

7. Oman *op. cit.*, p. 103.

we live beyond the anxieties of merit and law in the infinite love of God. If we hunger and thirst after righteousness we become 'merciful'; for we dwell in the sphere of the divine compassion. To say that we love our neighbours for the love of God expresses a truly religious motive only when our neighbour's need shows us the Father's nearness and tender care. As we are merciful we realize the fullness of His mercy, and by our forgiving we grow in the knowledge of His forgiveness, which brings us to the acceptance of our duty to estimate our fellows with compassion. We cannot receive forgiveness from God and withhold it from another penitent person. The 'pure in heart' far from being those who avoid sin because it is sin, are those who cling to goodness because it is good, and are endued with the commission to persist in purity that light may dispel the darkness. Only through such activity does the kingdom of blessedness come to reign in men's hearts, and it is as we are reconciled to this Christian duty that we are blessed.

To be blessed is to be reconciled to the whole of life, by self-determination. In the two final Beatitudes this truth is enshrined. To Roman Catholicism the 'peacemakers' are those who keep peace with their neighbours, are at peace within, and make peace between those at variance. 'They who suffer persecutions for justice sake' are those who bear derision, rebukes and undeserved

persecutions for the faith and laws of Jesus Christ.⁸ In these definitions we can commend the recognition of social responsibility, but we are forced to note the negative and legalistic tenor of the whole interpretation, the preventing of wrong rather than the doing of good. The passive 'peace-maker' of Roman Catholicism must be replaced by an active and resolute guardian of the peace, for there can be no peace when error and evil are abroad. To secure that inner peace which is essential, we must fight against the errors and evils of life; and if we enter the lists in quest of peace we find it only by seeking reality, which is based on truth and righteousness: for illusion breeds not peace but distraction. It is easy to say 'make peace', but to bring others to spiritual peace by contagion, inspiration and example we must ourselves possess that peace. Peace with our neighbours and peace-making among our fellows is possible only when we meet the trials and difficulties of personal relationships with the deep indwelling assurance that we are able to overcome them, and transmute them through the grace which God bestows in His personal fellowship with us. To do this we must be reconciled to the whole of life, not merely to its pleasant aspects.

Thus, the blessed life provides full scope for the exercise of our freedom as moral persons to be self-determined according to our own self-direction in our own self-conscious

⁸. The Catholic Faith p. 116.

world; for it is only in the blessed life that we are at last masters of our self-conscious world, fully controlled by the self-direction of Christian conscience, and ever determined by God's purposes now accepted as our own. At the same time the Beatitudes also represent experience which is inaugurated and maintained by God in Jesus Christ; for blessedness is made possible in Him. Being blessed we are morally independent and religiously dependent, yet our experience is never compartmentalized, but both are livingly united in the personal fellowship of the Christian with his Father. To be blessed is therefore, having complete faith in God's grace, to live in filial relationship with Him. Enjoying the communion of this reign of love, we are at peace in present mastery over the world (because we see it as God's and so ours), reconciled to our Christian duty by the self-direction of conscience and content to accept the victory of love by self-determination (seeing God's will to be our will).

GRACE AND MERIT

Can the life of blessedness be merited? "It is a treasured belief of the Catholic Church that the soul which is in the state of grace can merit eternal reward",⁹ an increase of grace; and de congruo we can merit for others everything which we can merit for ourselves. "Merit is

9. F. Towers Sanctifying Grace p. 66.

that property of a good work which entitles the performer to receive a reward from him to whose advantage the work redounds.¹⁰ It is of two kinds, condign, which presupposes some proportion between the work done and the reward given in compensation for it, congruous, which can claim a reward only on the grounds of fairness. First actual grace, the first infusion of sanctifying grace, restoration to sanctifying grace after having fallen away therefrom, and final perseverance cannot be merited, "in the strict sense of the word."¹¹ Grace in these cases is a free gift of God to which we have no 'natural' right, that is, no right inhering in our nature as persons. Even 'natural' prayer is of no avail in the quest for grace.¹² Thus, since this first grace is entirely gratuitous, all subsequent graces, being dependent upon this primary gift, are likewise gratuitous. But 'supernatural' prayer and good works are possible to those in a state of grace, and these have unquestioned merit de condigno in gaining an increase of grace, eternal glory and an increase of that glory; even "the sinner is able to earn justification de congruo."¹³ That which has been merited de condigno calls for a recompense from God, in strict justice. Thus even heaven and hell bear witness to merit, for surely the

10. J. Pohle and A. Preuss Grace, Actual and Habitual p. 131.

11. Towers Sanctifying Grace p. 74.

12. E. Towers Actual Grace p. 41. Cf. Pohle - Preuss op. cit., p. 142 ff.

13. Pohle - Preuss op. cit., pp. 134, 135.

darned are in hell because they deserve it, and the good in heaven because their good lives merited it. This leads us to the conditions essential to the gaining of merit. The work must be morally good, free, performed with the assistance of actual grace, and inspired by a supernatural motive ("every morally good action which we perform comes under this great principle"¹⁴). The agent must perform the meritorious act in this life, in a state of grace, and in the knowledge of God's promise to reward. On God's part a work is meritorious simply in virtue of His acceptance of it as such. Catholic theologians are not agreed concerning the influence exerted by supernatural merits on predestination to glory, but the general attitude, whether ante praevisa merita or post praevisa merita, is well characterized by Williams who says, speaking of Augustine's view, "Strictly speaking . God has not so much predestined His favourites to eternal life as predestined them to receive efficacious graces which will enable them to produce good works which will merit eternal life."¹⁵ The just man has therefore two claims on God, one as a son, another as a labourer in His vineyard. The meritoriousness of good works may be attributed to the fact that sanctifying grace is, "a kind of deificatio, which raises man above himself to a quasi-divine dignity that colors all his actions."¹⁶ But even in this

14. Towers Sanctifying Grace p. 71. Cf. Pohle - Preuss op. cit., p. 410 ff.

15. M. F. Williams The Grace of God p. 41.

16. Pohle - Preuss op. cit., p. 405.

state of grace only efficient and not efficacious graces can be merited de condigno, for otherwise a strict right to final perseverance would be included.¹⁷

It could hardly be expected that a right doctrine of merit and good works would be constructed on the wrong foundation of an inadequate conception of the nature of grace. But, because it is at this point that the modern evangelical conception is subjected to its most scathing denunciation, we have presented the opposing view in detail, and now proceed to the examination of it, hoping thereby to make clear what our view is, and what it is not.

Grace is not some thing which God gives to men. If we were able to accept the view that nature and grace lie in separate spheres we should find the meritoriousness of good works more tenable. But we have denied this, holding that the whole world is the sphere in which God's grace operates. Grace is not a 'supernatural' substance employed by God in dealing with us on certain special occasions. It is the very distinguishing mark of all our Father's actions among His children. God, in short, is always dealing with us as God, the personal, loving Being who is our Father, and never as anything less than that. Always He seeks to give us, not some infused potency, but Himself. To think that God waits for the appearing of merit on man's part, even conceived as

17. Pohle - Preuss op. cit., pp. 425, 426.

the result of His gift of infused 'sanctifying grace', is to maintain that God's attitude toward us is one of grace only at certain times, and upon certain provocations. This makes God a theological plaything, warping His gracious personality to meet the needs of the moment, as a man-made theology, compiled from the dusty tomes of centuries, chances to require. The very heart and centre of the modern evangelical conception of grace is that God's graciousness is absolutely unfailing. It is not the infusion of a substance deificatio, but it is God's persistent, gratuitous giving of Himself to us in personal fellowship with us. "Grace does not inquire about merit, but imparts by simple gift of love."¹⁸

Logically, the Roman Catholic conception is very much like a sieve. Almost any view can find a previously planned hole to sift through. Could anything be more unequivocal than the statement of the utter freeness of first grace? or more positive than the assertion of the merit of good works done in a state of grace? Yet each is weakened by one qualification after another, until we wonder what view actually is being espoused. Thus when the strict requirement that merit accrues only to 'acts done for God' seems too confining, every moral act is declared 'done for God'. If a sinner cannot merit de condigno, he is able nevertheless to merit de congruo, and the goal is the same no matter which pathway we take. Lest

18. W. W. Clarke An Outline of Christian Theology p. 336.

we scale the heavenly heights with our merits a clear line is drawn so that even those in a state of grace cannot grasp efficacious graces but must remain content with the efficient graces only. If it be stated in one place that the grace of God is a cause of our merits, and so cannot be also an effect, in another place we discover that grace, now differently defined, is gained by merit, prayer, becoming a stumbling stone, is categorized so that 'natural' prayer is ineffective because God, while He might, probably does not give ear to it, although 'supernatural' prayer is grace giving. Man cannot prepare himself positively for the reception of supernatural grace, but he is able to make negative preparations which are just as effective. The unqualified assertion that first graces cannot be merited is negated by the 'in the strict sense of the word' loop-hole. At every point what is declared impossible is made attainable under a redefined aspect; and all that is attainable is proven a free gift by the juggling of scholastic erudition. All these hair-splitting logical wakeshifts point to a legal system, dealing with a magic potency to which certain favoured clients have a claim, as though the mountain of God's illimitable love could be staked out for the benefit of those who have been rightly sacramentalized. But grace is given in an intimate relationship of one personal being to another, and when the heart is flooded with the self-abandonment of love, when it is succoured by communion with God, it is no

longer possible to "think in terms of the market-place or law-court, claiming this as desert, welcoming that as un-merited favour." ¹⁰

On the numerous Scriptural passages in which a reward is promised, protagonists of merit take their stand. The richness of the blessedness which the man of God possesses is one of Jesus' constantly recurring emphases. Just because this thought of reward is so outstanding in Jesus' teachings the advocates of merit are here defiant. But this is to leave unnoticed the frequent occasions on which good acts done for selfish motives were not commended but rebuked. The whole tenor of Jesus' teaching precludes the idea that He wished His followers to do good works hoping to receive a reward. Have we not found already that the blessed life is concerned with our inner motives rather than merely external and material acc^um^ulements? The reward which Jesus holds before our eyes is present fellowship with our Father. God's reward is Himself, and to speak of meriting such a reward is utter blasphemy. When Jesus uses 'reward' in His teaching He is assuring us that our trust in God and in God's way of life is not displaced. This admission of reward might seem to defeat our entire argument, but the blessedness of fellowship with God is not merely a future and external reward. It is the present possession of God's children, the blessed life here and now, wherein "the motive for doing good becomes grateful

¹⁰. C. F. Emmet The Psychology of Grace p. 186, in
R. W. Streeter The Spirit.

love rather than a desire to earn a reward." 20

If any act of ours possesses condign merit God is made our debtor. By basing our legal claim on God's promises instead of an equal exchange contract the difficulty is in no way mitigated, for if we have any right to a reward by the virtue of 'good works' performed under certain well-defined legal conditions, God is bound to recompense us, and is therefore our debtor. That God should be debtor to us is impossible. All that we have, we have received from Him, shall we then turn and demand more? Were we to ask thus, for what should we ask? since already the greatest gift of all is freely offered to us. If there is merit, what is to be merited? From the standpoint of God as our Father there is nothing that we need to do to win back divine grace, because that grace has never ceased to brood over us. The one essential fact for the Father is the penitent faith of the son turning from disobedience to loving trust. Does not the meritoriousness of good works as a means to blessedness, either here or hereafter, make God's gift of Himself in Jesus Christ a mockery, a half-gift as it were? But the whole matter resolves itself back to the same fundamental question, What is the nature of God? As the Supreme Person whose nature is Absolute Holy Love, the blessedness of God's fellowship is not something we can merit,

20. H. Branscomb The Teachings of Jesus p. 251.

but is the free gift of grace, the reaching down of the Father's love to us while yet we are unworthy, not because we have fulfilled required conditions but just because we are His children.

We are re-established as heirs in the Father's household because of God's Fatherliness, not as a reward for self-regarding 'good works'. Seeing this blessedness to be entirely the gift of grace and devoid of all merit, do we cut a gash in the tree of moral life and draw off all the sap which gives it strength? This has been the contention of the Pelagian camp for centuries, and finds strong expression among a varied assembly at the present time, Jesuit, Eastern Orthodox, revivalist and humanist unconsciously support the same position, though for different reasons. Whenever and wherever religion and morality are centred about man as man instead of upon man as a child of God, this argument raises its hydra-headed form. But so long as any work of ours, no matter how valuable it seems, is directed toward a reward for ourselves we are of the earth earthy. It may be good, but it is not blessed.

This question could be answered in at least three different ways. First, by a thorough-going discussion of will-psychology, attempting to answer the question how renewal of grace is possible in personal fellowship without injury to the freedom of the human will, we might show that morality based on grace is an ethically sound dynamic. A. Clutton-Brock

approaches from this tact with the provocative suggestion that only as we become passively receptive do we become actively creative, since, "man must enrich himself with his passive experience before he can act rightly."²¹ Thus it is that, the grace of God being the native air in which our spirits breathe, we express what we have experienced according to our own particular character. It is as though God's fellowship was likened to the sunshine, and our lives to flowers which give out the light and heat of the sun, according to our own natures, in form and colour and scent. Second, we might advance by the avenue of a critical analysis of the content of the moral judgment. Finding its essence in the moral imperative we might prove the inadequacy of naturalism and intuitionism in their varied forms of eudaemonism, utilitarianism, rationalism, humanism, idealism and evolutionism, to explain the nature and power of conscience. Espousing the conception of conscience as the voice of God, we would then have arrived at the position that the moral dynamic is rooted in God. But since conscience is subject to educative choices and environmental movements by which its effectiveness for good is progressively increased or decreased we would also reach the conclusion that man's freedom is not abrogated. Finally, while there is much value in the psychological and philosophic explanations, the most direct and telling

21. A. Clutton-Brock Studies in Christianity p. 113.

evidence is the example of men and women whose morality draws its very strength from their reliance on grace.

The moral activity of the Christian is a fruit of blessedness. In communion with God here and now we receive the power necessary for moral conduct, because, all false motives being stripped away, our actions are founded on the true basis of God's purposes. Works that are truly good come from the life of him who is 'in Christ', and is therefore thoroughly attuned to God, the world, his fellows, and himself. It is only as we live in peace that we possess this ability to work for God. Thus the blessed life, although not free from conflict without, enables us, being at peace within, to fight our battles with confidence as citizens of God's moral universe. All selfish individual aspiration is overcome in the blessed life because we experience inner freedom in the enjoyment of God's fellowship and thus desire nothing more than we already possess, being now ready to do everything for God. By our dependence on Him we become creatively independent. Any other association of religion and morality makes the blessed life the result of man's effort and not his insight, as though we were able to do good in independence of God. And if the promise of Blessedness as a reward for our 'good works' is used as a reinforcement to bolster up an inadequate morality, we tread perilously close to the brink of magic and bribery, to the corruption of both morality and

religion. In the blessed life we become more moral as we are inspired by greater insight, received in the Father's fellowship, because, the greater our vision the more we are able to comprehend God's purposes in His world and work for them as our own.

GOOD WORKS

The only thanksgiving on our part which is acceptable in return for God's gift of blessedness is the ever increasing desire for richer personal fellowship with the Father. Good works can neither earn privileges nor pay for gifts, but are the natural expression of the believer's life in communion with God. Nevertheless, the experience of the blessed life finds completion in the moral will, and it is in this sense that morality is our thanksgiving for the grace which has been experienced. Thus our deep longing for God, satisfied as we dwell in His presence, expresses itself in our moral conduct as Christians, and it is precisely this longing which is the sure basis of a right morality. To speak of merit on man's part would be to deny this. But just because our moral life is not something over against our religious life as Christians, but is rather one particular expression of that communion, it is not even necessary to ask whether or not good works are to be performed, because they are done spontaneously. Works are the fruit of faith, and

can be described as good only when they spring from our desire for God Himself. When they do this they are blessed because we are freed from the unstableness of legal duty and certain that we are in the grasp of God. He who is truly blessed never wishes to get away from God, but ever seeks His face, and so our duty as Christians becomes our blessedness and the blessed life our Christian duty.

Our desire for fellowship with God is linked with a life of prayer. But when prayer becomes a duty or a good work the motives for seeking blessedness resolve into fear of punishment and hope of reward. Such prayer is regarded as a service to God on our part and is meritorious in itself, and can moreover, be strengthened by association with other good works, notably fasting and almsgiving.²² This conception is not far from the magic of the Tibetan prayer wheel, or the automatic performance of a certain miner who wrote his prayers on the wall, jerked his thumb at them every night, and said, "My sentiments." Although primitive self-seeking be excluded from the formula, it appears once more in the motives of fear and hope which direct the ritual performance, and "the praying man does not obey a native inner impulse, but the external compulsion of the law; fear of punishment affrights him, hope of reward allures him."²³ Such prayer does not bring us peace in

22. Cf. The Catholic Faith p. 32 ff.

23. F. Heiler Prayer p. 351.

a right moral independence or religious dependence, but binds us to an oppressive legal burden which only loses its distastefulness as it becomes mechanical.

Prayer, however, is not man's good work, discovery or achievement, but God's gift in grace. As the personal fellowship of the believer with his God, prayer is the conversation of the blessed life. It is a living personal relation, a present experience of communion with the Father of our spirits. The essence of this contact is always confident faith relying on never-failing grace. In this vital and creative intercourse the dried-up wells of the moral life are re-opened, and a life of service for God ensues, not in the hope of reward, but because He loved us and gave Himself for us, and in His grace has inspired us to love Him. The paradox is not, How can prayer which is reliance on God be a moral dynamic? but rather, Who am I that the God of Holy Love should take me to His arms?

SUMMARY

The moral life can only be blessed and truly free when it is based on faith in God's grace, and therein accepts the world as God's world of discipline and duty. But it is abundantly evident that the world in which we live, as we are accustomed to measure it, is neither seen as good nor used as a blessed possession. Thus, we are living epistles

of the grace of God only as, being in the world, we are yet redeemed. By redemption in Christ our rehabilitation is accomplished here and now, because now we see the world, not as it formerly appeared, but as the sphere of God's eternal search for men, and as the place of His present fellowship with us. In this blessed life of communion with God we are truly self-determined according to our own self-direction, in our own self-conscious world, because in it alone we are at peace in present mastery over the world, reconciled to our Christian tasks, and content to accept the victory of love. All thought of our own worthiness having dropped away, we are free to serve a single Master, and He our Loving Father. This is the blessed life as the gift of grace.

CHAPTER XV
GRACE AND SOCIETY

The individual cannot live the blessed life in isolation. Our division, made for purposes of study, indicates no separateness of being. If it were possible to say at one and the same time all that there is to say about Grace and God, Grace and Man, and Grace and Society, justice would be done to the immediate inter-relatedness of all three, but to the confusion of thought. Grace is entirely given by God; as accepted by men it requires a societal commune for its field of action. Men are communal beings. The atomistic theory propounded by sociologists of the early twentieth century is founded on insecure premises which are entirely inadequate. Men, who can not propagate except on a social basis, scarcely merit the appellation 'atomistic'. Psychology gives ample evidence of an innate tendency to gregariousness which develops very early in the life history of men, and without which they become mentally starved and ultimately die. Language is a communal achievement and thought, at bottom, is a dialogue of the

individual mind. Should we accept atomism it would be reasonable to see history as the continual attempt of men to separate from one another, each living a hermit life in his own cave, but exactly the opposite has been true. Men have successively united into larger and larger groups, families, clans, tribes, nations; and now there is a movement toward internationalism.

The community is required for the complete fulfillment of the individual. A true interpretation of the meaning of grace must include the social as well as the individual aspects of man's being, for the correlative of the unique worth of each individual person as a child of God is the corresponding value of a society of persons as the family of the Father. Without persons there could be no society, but without society there can be no complete development of persons; to enter fully into the purposes of God we must serve in His household. This social interdependence of persons does not negate individual life or the necessity of a relation to God through personal faith such as we have found essential. It rather enhances the value of each self; for just as surely as the individual receives from society so also does he help to make and mould it. "Society exists through individual personalities and their bearing on one another, while conversely it is only within society, and as supported by its larger life, that strong individuality can flourish."¹ Indeed, we seen to

arrive at the very consciousness of ourselves as human beings through contact with other persons. We are communal beings, and the blessed life is a life of societal relationships.

THE NEED FOR GRACE

Though society is essential to the fulfilment of the grace-governed life, nevertheless, its sin, conflict, and failure make it, as it now is, unfavourable as the right sphere of the blessed life. This has long been recognized. In successive historic movements the reformation of society has been sought through the medium of changes in the rules of the game, education, moral uplift, and in sheer intelligence regarded as, "the light of the world and the chief glory of man."² These attempts have failed. Roman Catholicism has stormed the same fortress of evil by assailing the heights under cover of a barrage of carefully enunciated laws based on seven of the 'ten commandments', enlarged to meet Roman Catholic requirements.³ This cannonade falls short of its objective while those within the fortress laugh at the inadequate gunnery because they are secure in the knowledge that it is not meant to be too effective and purging, but only

2. J. H. Robinson The Mind in the Making p. 27.

3. The Catholic Faith p. 50 ff.

to instill the right degree of fear. If these, and many other, attempts at reform proved inadequate in past generations they have become doubly impotent in our time because of the increased complexity and more subtle expressions of sin in society.

Modern societal sin takes its character from the mutualism of our time. Because of the indirectness of its methods and the impersonalness of its approach the familiar repulsive characteristics which accompanied many of the commonly recognized sins of past generations are not yet applied to these modern loveless and un-Christ-like acts. We have commonly accepted the idea that sinners ought to be graded according to ^{the} traditional standard of 'badness of character', whereas today, "the villain most in need of curbing is the respectable, exemplary, trusted personage who is able from his office-chair to pick a thousand pockets, poison a thousand sick, pollute a thousand minds, or imperil a thousand lives". We fail to realize that those who rend society sin just as grievously as those who inflict harm upon particular individuals. Most of all, we have developed a false code which recognizes accomplishments of breeding, education, philanthropy, or apparent piety as a sufficient set-off to sin. We insist that because a man is a fine fellow, a good husband, and a kind father he

is all right, but like Mr. Radfern in J. B. Priestley's Laburnum Grove, he may be a counterfeit specialist. Such men secure the support and admiration of their immediate associates but evade their responsibility to the larger communal order. Those who are continually seeking to improve their immediate relations with their fellows too often allow the control of their money or business enterprises to slip into impersonal channels. A corporation board of directors may be amiable and pleasant in the comfortable executive chamber, but if dividends are lacking the manager is not urged to be more Christ-like in his attitude toward the workers but is exhorted to secure profits or lose his position. Under such compulsion, and under the cloak of anonymity which clothes a corporate body, society is poisoned and preyed upon by men who would not stoop to such activity as individuals dealing with other individuals.

Not only is society preyed upon by individuals, but the commune itself sins. Nationalism is only the most obvious obstruction to the building of a blessed fellowship, but it has the capacity to, "fuse into one indiscriminate whole the exploiting propensities and the moral sentiments of men". By this insidious implement it has been able to subdue forces and movements which are essentially international in character

5. E. A. Lyran The Meaning and Truth of Religion p. 440.

and outlook. In the last war it surmounted labour, science, scholarship, art, literature, and religion: all these being called to its service and bent to its slavery. In its treatment of the criminal or misdemeanant society is positively barbarous. In 1927 an American authority described the influence of the jail upon an offender as follows,

"We take a boy just past 16 and sentence him to 30 days or 60 days in the county jail for stealing a bicycle. The purpose of the sentence is to impress upon his mind that he must be virtuous, that he must have respect for the government under which he exists. So for 60 days he gets no exercise, no pure air, no mental exercise, no good reading matter; he sees no worthy deeds or acts of charity or kindness performed. The only thing he hears is the vilest of stories; he is taught how to engage in the drug traffic, how to avoid officers in the transportation, sale and manufacture of liquor, how to commit burglary; he is introduced into a ring of automobile thieves. After he has been attending a school of crime with past masters as teachers we release him with a firm admonition to 'be good'." 6

Page after page of similar information could be gleaned from the records of almost every 'civilized' land. Social injustice has led to class struggles and discontent. As a right solution of these problems the Roman Catholic admonition to reflect that heaven is our true country, simply evades the issue. The grace-governed life begins here, on this earth, and in this present society. We need not carry our analysis further. No one will gainsay the fact that the individual is frequently caught in the mesh of a societal net which impinges upon his personality

6. F. Rooney quoted in Propagating Crime Through the Jail et al (a report submitted to the National Crime Commission).

in such unmerciful, ungracious and unwarranted ways as to be rightly termed 'sin'.

THE CONSTRUCTIVE PURPOSE OF SOCIETY

Every social system known to men is hampered and marred by the presence of sin and evil within its very fabric. This sway of sin over society is so complete as to preclude the thought that the life of perfect blessedness is being achieved in any known human society. Yet society has a real purpose and a true constructive nature, and is necessary for the fruition of God's purposes for our lives. Society is the fellowship of men for the development of personal values. It exists to make possible a continual growth in moral character through spiritual fellowship in contact with other persons. Persons without society are as nebulous as society without persons. The constructive nature of the commune appears when we analyze the blessings of our material existence, and the opportunities for our intellectual, moral, and spiritual advancement. Not as individuals, but as a society, do we inherit schools, museums, art galleries, public health systems, or even such a common benefit as good roads. None of these instruments for the enlargement of life come as a direct result of our personal effort. They are our possession by virtue of communal solidarity. The existence and development of moral character also is dependent upon fellowship with others. We "search in vain for a human

being now possessed of genuinely moral character who has not been helped forward to that by better men than himself, in the shadow of whose stronger personality his immature nature at first grew up."^{7a}

THE REDEMPTION OF SOCIETY

Though society has a real purpose and a true constructive nature it is, of itself, unable to serve these ends. There has been no age in human history devoid of unrest, dissatisfaction, and failure. Thus it seems clear that if society is to serve its own highest ends it must be redeemed and reconstructed by some power outside itself. A naturalistic faith, which serves men only by responding to the societal pressure of prosperity and adversity by becoming optimistic or pessimistic, will not solve the difficulty. So likewise, a supernaturalistic faith which draws a sharp distinction between God's heaven and man's earth is doomed to failure. The faith which will save society must be able to send men forth to spiritualize this present order. Such a faith comes through dependence upon God's grace. Except as we transcend the world by coming into this personal fellowship of love we can not hope to work significantly in transforming the world. Whenever men and women come into the

^{7a} Mackintosh op. cit., p. 86.

fellowship of grace so that their lives are enveloped by its love and compassion, they find themselves able to direct their energies, according to God's purposes, toward reconstructing the disordered society which so largely hinders the development of our spiritual capacities. Thus the transformation of society, like the redemption of the individual, is a work of grace, accomplished through the agency of those who live in what the later books of the New Testament are accustomed to describe as a 'state of grace'.⁷⁶

If the goal of society is the development of personal spiritual life, then the method is the succour of grace. It is unfortunate that the Christian community ever lost sight of the 'social gospel', but likewise it is to be regretted that this same emphasis has usurped the whole interest of so many in the last few generations. The 'social gospel' of the New Testament is a regenerating spirit, not a new organization under the local board of charities. It is based on the perception of God as Father and the recognition of all men as the children of His loving care. Jesus proclaims the abundant life for those who are centred in God, that is, in a life of grace; and from the fullness of this communion with the Father the Christian goes forth to share his brother's need. The duty of social mindedness falls upon us not as a service to men, as of the philanthropist who wishes to see his name emblazoned over the doorway of the temple or enshrined within,

⁷⁶. *see note ante p. 233.*

but as the natural expression of a grace-governed life. The Roman Catholic standard 'obey the laws' cannot re-make a devastated community, nor revivify a tired societal life. Society which is to be redeemed by grace is to be transformed by love, not as an abstraction of the philosopher or theologian, but as the consistent creative spirit actuating all our relationships with our neighbours, and every effort for the improvement of society. In so far as we live by love, serving our fellows because we are the Father's children, and transforming society into the likeness of His household, we realize the meaning of that blessedness which is living in a present state of grace. Love to God and love to our neighbours are not separate entities, but are inextricably bound together in the one experience of reconciliation.

Dependence upon God's grace enables us to reconstruct the social order by leading us to a new conception of our neighbour. Christian love for neighbour is not just another statement of the fact that man is a social being. It is a creative attitude of mind and spirit bearing fruit in conduct in which we realize ourselves as being in a peculiar relationship of responsibility to and for any other personality. No longer do we view other persons as objects but always they take their place in our self-conscious world as subjects. No matter how high our achievements are, if other persons are treated as objects, and manipulated accordingly, the Christian

standard is rejected. Moreover, it is on this plane that we meet God as nowhere else. As we hear God's Word challenging us in the clarion calls of friendship we are able to know Him more fully, and thus live more abundantly. The Stoics held that the individual possessed intrinsic value. So also did Kant. But the uniqueness of the Christian conception of love to our neighbour lies in the fact that we are of supreme worth not simply as persons, but as sons of God; and all men are to be valued as potential members of His Kingdom.

Thus Christian love extends to all men and regards them as our brothers. Love as an emotional attachment of man as man has very distinct limitations, being dependent upon feeling, and changing with our varied choice of persons for its affection. Christian love, on the other hand, does not pick and choose men for its care, but bestows the beauty of its fellowship on all. We do not mean that such love is an abstract principle of giving every man his due. Rather, Christian love, while not abstract is yet universal, and though not a passion of feeling, nevertheless governs the expression of our feelings, for it wells up out of the deep and eternally valid experience of reconciliation in which, becoming conscious of the grace of God and having in penitence by faith entered into fellowship with Him, we recognize society as the appointed medium of God's purposes and see all men as persons for whom He cares, and therefore as our brothers and true ends toward which our love should be directed. Christian love is

unattainable by man's efforts, being reached by the avenue of faith as the free gift of grace. In a reconciled relationship, as we live in a state of grace, the warmth of this love radiates to all men.

Christian love reaches out towards our neighbours in the totality of their personal lives. It does not, by rule of thumb, chose one portion of their experience for its care, but in a combined experience which includes feeling, willing, and knowing, grasps the totality of their personal lives, and moves to succour them accordingly. If society is to be the fellowship wherein personal spiritual values emerge and increase, then the members of society must sense the needs of each other and of the communal body, not in mere fancy, but in that actual unity of understanding which transcends natural sympathy, being a vicarious but real experience like unto that of God in Jesus Christ.

Where Christian love is our governing motive there is always an impulse to share the truth with others. We are overwhelmingly concerned that the truth shall make men free, not by authoritative acceptance, but by the freedom of their own insight. Truth can be brazenly presented in a harsh, crass, repulsive manner which binds us closer to prejudice instead of freeing us from bias but the uniqueness of Christian love lies in the fact that its impartation of truth is based on the revelation of our neighbour's need, and rests upon our own continual openness to new truth. There is therefore included in

the Christian conception of love an attitude of sincere tolerance, because, if our neighbour is walking by his own insight, we may rest assured that ultimately he will reach the truth. This does not mean that our convictions, if arrived at through the perceptions of insight, are to be held with laxity, but it does imply a readiness to appreciate and allow for other opinions than those which we ourselves hold. Though the grace-governed life never ceases to follow after truth in all dealings with other persons, yet rigidity of moral principle is never confused with intensity of moral purpose, and like the Sister in Victor Hugo's Les Misérables we may find a lie to be an untruth told outside love and fellowship, rather than that which is contrary to the exactness of the law.

Under the direction of love we must demonstrate our willingness to suffer because of the evils of our neighbour and of society. By so doing we may be able to negate the evil will, and certainly we show lack of acquiescence in its purpose. The Christian program is not 'non-resistance' but the most powerful type of opposition to evil. It is the refusal to permit estrangement. As when a mother, while greatly disapproving the wife of her son's choice and his back-door method of marrying her, yet takes him to her arms and blesses him in spite of what he has done, so does the Christian overcome evil with love; and that good is able to exist only in the sphere

of personal relationships. If 'non-resistance' is merely an adopted device by which we expect to get our way in the end it is remote from the Christian spirit and akin to the demands of force. This view does not lead us into the altogether too convenient distinction between sin and the sinner, but moves us, while disapproving and showing our disapproval of our neighbour's sinful acts, to show him our love also. Thus the Christian life, the life in a state of grace, radiates rays of love and light, like unto those which we ourselves have received from our Father. Our love is the illumination of the torch which has gained its brilliance from the beacon on the hill-top.

THE CONQUEST OF SOCIETAL SIN BY GRACE

As operative in the redemption of society grace conquers sin by enabling us to govern every relation with our fellows by love. We cannot here pass in review the entire field of Christian Ethics; that would require more than one sizable volume. Our task is, by reference to certain aspects of the communal life now being subjected to searching analysis, to show how grace actually does redeem society from its sin and failure. Many moralists, sociologists, psychologists and certain philosophers hold that Christianity can not cope with the distressing difficulties of family life, economic collapse, and political instability. These men, Walter Lippmann,

Julian Huxley, and kindred spirits, are earnest and sincere searchers after the truth, but the Christianity which they so vigorously attack and condemn is the unstable and irrelevant fiction created by mediaeval minds and bequeathed through the generations to those who are still unemancipated. In contrast to the humanistic position we wish to present the modern evangelical conception of grace as God's succour of our personalities in the blessed fellowship of His Kingdom; for as this personal succour is reflected in our lives, we are enabled to recognize every man as our brother, beloved of God and sought by Him through the medium of grace-governed persons. Thus society, although sinful, is the sphere of God's redeeming activity and the present atmosphere in which those under grace are able to enter more fully into His purposes. Society is to be redeemed by God through the instrumentality of those who have entered the state of grace.

The disintegration of the family is considered axiomatic by many writers. Certain it is that the industrial changes of the last century, the advent of the motor car, the emancipation of women and their entrance into business, the wider distribution of birth control information, and the easing of divorce laws all have contributed to a more critical approach to family life. There has been, moreover, a quite general movement away from authority, and this has bred greater looseness of sex relationships. But if we are to put this problem in its rightful

place we must recognize that its context is a general deep felt need for re-orientation. It is not an isolated peak standing alone in the wilderness, but rather one eminence in a great mountain chain. Nevertheless it is important. "The primary moral issue of our time is the rehabilitation of family life as the home of free, rich, spontaneous living",⁸ says Barry, and if this be so it ought to be one of the main concerns of the Christian. The standards of the Roman Catholic Church fail as completely here as elsewhere. If the basis of right action is external authority, because 'the Church says so', the entire structure topples to the ground when this prop is removed. If the only way to avoid impurity is to,

"pray frequently from our hearts to God, to be devout to the Virgin Mary, the Mother of purity, to bear in mind that God sees us, to think of death, the divine judgments, and the Passion of Jesus Christ, to keep watch over our senses, to practice Christian mortification, and to frequent the sacraments with proper dispositions",⁹

we may rest assured that defeat is already at our door.

When the family is recognized as the basic unit of society, and its purpose is seen as the development of personal spiritual values, false ideals are more easily evaluated. Under this conception it is clear that no standards are valid except those which commend themselves freely to the persons involved.

8. F. R. Barry The Relevance of Christianity p. 202.

9. The Catholic Faith p. 54.

We have contended that grace is given in a relationship of persons, on an intimate basis. Does it not follow, then, that in the marriage relationship peculiar opportunities for spiritual personal development can emerge and bear fruit in the fellowship of husband and wife, parents and children? Thus approached, the purpose of the family is not the satisfaction of erotic love but the succour of moral persons through mutual intercourse under the direction of Christian love. Since this standard has not been achieved by many modern families the validity of monogamy as the right pathway along which we are to explore this realm of personal relationships has been challenged.

Monogamy is not only fundamental to our nature as human beings, but also points toward the ideal of the life in a state of grace. Each person owes his existence to the relationship of one man and one woman, and man as a self-conscious being knows this. Children require the care of parents for their development, and to deny the validity of the monogamous relationship is to urge some other method of bringing children to their fullness of stature in body, mind, and spirit than the personal succour of two loving parents. Even sex literature has a distinctly monogamous tinge; portraying all our trophies as laid at the feet of the one woman of our choice. But the real basis of the relationship of one man to one woman lies in the fact that such an intimate sharing of life provides

opportunity for the highest integration of human personality and therefore its greatest spiritual development. This is true because every part of life has a relation to every other part, and if sex life is separately maintained a split personality may develop, and certainly the wholeness of personal development is affected. The sex relationship being the most intimate sharing of body, mind and spirit possible among human beings, is full of possibilities for the rich and varied development of the human spirit. Thus the Christian ideal is a love-filled relationship in which the bond of personal loyalty is strongly emphasized, because this relationship of mutual communion conduces to that more abundant sharing of personal life which characterizes the state of grace.

If the union of personalities in a relationship of loving mutual sacrifice and service is the Christian ideal then the Church is to be concerned with the encouragement of right marriage rather than discouragement of wrong divorce. All proposals for 'trial' marriage, 'companionate' marriage and the like fail because they do not include the basic element of the Christian ideal, which is permanent loyalty to a person. By their very transitoriness they are self-defeating, and because of weakness at this crucial point, Russia's experiment will fail. Grace is not a potent force which will come to the aid of men and women who are in marital difficulties. When a theologian urges that it is highly moral to control child birth

by abstinence, and proposes that, "divine grace as well as reserves of moral power (are) available to lessen, or even remove, the strain"¹⁰ involved, he is ignoring the place of our most intimate relationships in the development of human personality. He is proposing that we invite strain and stress and then pray for grace in order that it be removed, which is surely far from moral. We hold that the purpose of marriage from the Christian point of view is the spiritual enrichment of persons through intimate sharing of all of life, and we steadfastly maintain that every means to that end which is under the direction of love, is not only right, but most highly desirable. Grace is love in action. Whenever the family is based on Christian love instead of romantic passion, economic necessity, or convenience, whenever it is the intimate fellowship of those who are under grace, the societal sins which accompany incompatibility are ameliorated and higher levels of personal life are reached.

There can be little doubt that the existing economic situation is an unfavourable environment for the development of spiritual values. By its aggressive self-seeking it impoverishes whole sections of every nation, imperils the right relations of men to other men, and endangers the peace of the world. Since about three-fourths of our waking life is spent in work, the Church must be vitally concerned with economic

10. A. F. Garvie The Christian Ideal for Human Society
p. 320.

conditions. This is even more true when we consider that it is through business that we form many of our closest friendships. The Church, indeed, cannot repudiate industry, nor can industry reject the Church; for the grace-governed life is to be lived all day every day, and not simply on the first day of the week. We hold that the economic activities of life are not in opposition to religion, but are for the purpose of sustaining and developing human life, that is, business exists in order to make personal spiritual development more feasible. Work and its products, therefore, are not ends in themselves, but are simply means to the achievement of human values. Surely we do not need to labour this point in a generation which has seen the whole idea of such an accepted economic 'reality' as money come into question. If we seek to live in communion with God we must also live in fellowship with men, and it is a poor and unworthy faith which remains aloof from the puzzling economic aspects of life. The sphere of fellowship for one who lives in a state of grace is all-inclusive. For us industry is to be an opportunity for the increasing of human fellowship, and as such, it must be a co-operative enterprise. "We need to see the bank and the factory as instrumental to the divine Kingdom no less than the school, the hospital and the Church."¹¹ The Christian conception of life gives sanction to every enterprise

11. Barry op. cit., p. 282.

which serves the spiritual advancement of persons.

This principle of industrial and economic activity as avenues for the spiritual development of personal values enables us to avoid wrong motives and false actions. Private property now is valued only as an instrument for the extension of personality, and is held as a trust for the total welfare of the communal body. Competition is approved when the success of one advances the welfare of all, but it is disapproved when competitors are trodden under foot. Since spiritual values are frustrated by the onslaught of poverty and incessant worry, the possession of money is seen, not as an evil, but as a tool placed in our hands for the service of spiritual ends. The necessity of labour is collated with the right to work, and both are declared essential. Capitalism, in so far as it separates the worker from any sort of right or ownership of the product or tools, puts impersonal production before personal welfare, and gives the few the right to control the many, is to be condemned. As Christians we are to carry the spirit of Christ into every activity in life, and therein we are to find blessedness through the transforming activity of love. If these are our motives and our actions industry and economics are made to serve our spiritual advancement and society is redeemed from a whole galaxy of evils, through the activity of those who live constantly in a state of grace.

The State is a frequent barrier to the development of spiritual, personal values. Yet, since the nation is the unit of communal activity (in the Western world at least), it follows that the Christian must be vitally concerned in its activities. Thus, while recognizing the State as possessing a derivative authority as an instrument of divine purpose, we must condemn its sinful aspects. The nation exists to provide for the development of its citizens, and this purpose is thwarted in an ill-organized, inefficient, unjust, depersonalized or loveless society in which none of us can become complete harmonious selves. The State does not command our unqualified allegiance except as it is itself unequivocally loyal to God, because its sovereignty is valid only when the purposes of God are thereby served. For the State that purpose is to insure to the individual the full opportunity to develop in spirituality. It is thus obvious that the criminal is not to be punished under a merely retributive or deterrent theory, but is to be dealt with in a reformatory manner. Certainly the death penalty is excluded, for death removes all possibility of reformation. This same motive must govern the activities of such police forces as are essential to the welfare of the community. In fact, every agency of government should be designed to make possible the fullest life for all citizens. Naturally, some things must be sacrificed in favour of others but in such choices the welfare

of the whole and not the desire of a favoured class should be the controlling motive.

The most crucial issue which nationalism presents is war. At the present stage of development war devastates civilization. "The effect of war is to spoil the breed, by the simple process of the reversion of selection. There is not a nation that is to-day what it might have been if it had chosen its best for survival instead of slaughter."¹² War may have been justified in the past, but it certainly cannot be regarded as right when the machinery for the adjustment of international disputes in a peaceable fashion exists, and when its futility has become abundantly evident. Most of all, war is under suspicion by its very nature. War must justify itself to the Christian conscience, if it can. But we fail to see how an act which estranges whole groups of persons, and pits them against one another with the object of killing, can be tolerated. The good Roman Catholic, following his communion's precepts, may find it "lawful to kill one's neighbour when fighting in a just war, and when executing a death sentence pronounced by lawful authority"¹³ but if we believe that society exists to serve personal spiritual ends, and if we hold that the method of securing those ends is the

12. W. R. Inge Christian Ethics and Modern Problems p. 310.
(quoted from Professor Starr Jordan).

13. The Catholic Faith p. 52.

succour of love, we cannot agree with his standard. How can we love a man and stick a bayonet in his stomach? The State exists to serve personal ends, and when these ends are not served the State has failed in its primary function. No State in the world can command our unqualified allegiance, but every State rightly demands our loyalty as an agent of God's purposes for our spiritual development.

SUMMARY

Society, although fraught with failures and defeats, is nevertheless essential to the development of personal, spiritual life. Thus, if God's will is to be actualized, society must be redeemed even as the individual must be saved - by some power or person from without. The grace of God, manifested in the lives of those who have accepted His gift of grace is the Agent of this redemption. In the life under grace God's personal succour is so immediately and constantly present that His Fatherliness is reflected in us. As we respond to His grace with ever increasing consecration and never ending devotion we are able to reconstitute the communal order on the sure foundation of mutual trust and dependence on God because the fellowship which we experience with God kindles in us the desire to lead our neighbours to the same Light Whom we have witnessed and into

the great renewing fellowship of love which has now become our rightful sphere of life. The redemption of society is the work of God, accomplished through the agency of those who have entered that personal relationship to Him which Paul calls life 'under grace'.

CHAPTER XVI

THE CHURCH AND THE DIVINE ORDER

The Church is the sphere of the Spirit's activity. Through it society, which is unable to redeem itself, is to be succoured and saved. As society can not be abstracted from the individuals of whom it is composed, so the Church cannot be separated from its constituent members. The Church is a fellowship of persons, in which each is enabled to seek richer communion with God, fuller development of self, and greater service to others. It is not merely the outcome of man's reverentiousness, but is the medium of God's Spirit, apart from which we cannot know God. Man is a social being, and his redemption therefore is accomplished by social means. On analysis, our own Christian experience confirms this conclusion; for it is only in and through the Church that we have come to the knowledge of the gospel, developed in dependence upon God and consequently in freedom to serve our fellows more fully. Moreover, it is clear that although God's purposes for the life under grace can

not be realized in a sinful society, yet men being communal, some societal order is essential for the accomplishment of His ends. The Church is this new society. It is the veritable organism of the life in a state of grace, in and through which we are able to live in communion with our fellows and with God.

As members of the Church we are elected to service. Any dualism between our personal character and our service is impossible. The Church exists to help us to help others. Where grace abounds its results are to be evidenced in Christian influence which brings our fellowmen to the same dependence upon God which has set us free. Thus the ultimate basis of brotherhood from the Christian standpoint, and the great moving power of the Spirit in the Church, is the realization of each person that God eternally seeks all men for His children. God in grace suffered for every man, and recognizing this grace, we are led to say, "This ... was my brother worth to God".¹ In the Church we learn to seek the Divine Order here and now: for, knowing the forgiveness of our Father, we have continuous fellowship with Him only as we forgive our fellows. Further, the Church is the sphere in which the Spirit is to be realized, and through this medium God seeks to succour society.

1. H. W. Robinson The Christian Doctrine of Man p. 341.

THE MARKS OF THE CHURCH

If it be true that the Church is the means by which God redeems society, then it follows that the nature of the Church must be such that it is a worthy medium for the furthering of Love's purposes. Its marks must be the marks of love.

Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and High Anglican doctrine reaffirm the ancient statement that the marks of the Church are that it is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. Only the Church which is distinguished thus is avowed to be the sphere in which the Spirit operates and therefore the medium of grace to sinful society.

As the agent of God to fulfill the ideal of human society, and as the body of Christ, the Church is one. This unitariness is defined in terms of organization by Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and High Anglican Churches. At no point does the dogmatism of the human mind exhibit itself more markedly than in the promulgation and defence of doctrines about the Church. The Eastern Orthodox claims that she, and she alone, is the true Church and "as the guardian of unity has never recognized heresy or schism as constituting parallel organizations dealing with salvation, but has cut them off from the healthy body, in order to induce repentance and return to it".²

2. F. Gavin Greek Orthodox Thought p. 243.

quoting Androutsos Dogmatike p. 274.

cf. W. Palmer A Full Catechism of the Orthodox Catholic Eastern Church p. 40.

At the same time the Roman Catholic Communion declares; "There is not, and there cannot be, more than one true Church",³ and the first note of that Church is its allegiance to the one visible Vicar of Christ on earth, the Roman Pontiff. The High Anglican claims for his Communion the same unity as Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic. Let it first be remarked that 'unity' does not characterize any of the three groups which declare themselves the true Church. For centuries the Eastern Orthodox has been divided into national Churches, each with separate and distinct outward organization, and some with marked differences of practice and faith. One example must suffice to illustrate the point; Constantinople and Moscow have at no time possessed a commonly agreed standard of requirements for the reception of Latins and Protestants into their respective Churches. While one recognizes the baptism of Roman Catholicism and Protestantism the other does not; thus the 'unified' Eastern Orthodox Communion is divided on a matter which it considers absolutely fundamental. The 'unity' of the Roman Catholic Communion is equally a matter of appearance rather than actuality. "The orders and congregations of the Roman Church correspond to the 'sects of Protestantism'",⁴ and it is well known that the

3. The Catholic Faith p. 20.

4. T. A. Scott Evangelical Doctrine-Bible Truth p. 39.

struggle for mastery within the body politic of Roman Catholicism is both ruthless and continuous. Furthermore, Rome is not even one in universal belief and practice, save in the outward acknowledgment of the Vicar of Christ at the Vatican. The French Church and the Mexican Church, for example, have much in common with the national churches of Eastern Orthodoxy. The position of the High Anglican is so anomalous as to be almost absurd: for it claims unity while recognizing Rome and not being in communion with her. All these views are based on a mistaken conception of what unity means. The exclusiveness of their conception limits the operation of grace to a particular organizational sphere.

Since the Reformation crystallized the distinction of visible and invisible Church the teaching of the Reformed Communion has stood in distinct contrast to the views noted above. When our doctrine of the Church springs from our conception of God as the Loving Personal Being who seeks by this means to save society in grace, it becomes clear at once that the sphere of that grace cannot be organizationally delimited. The unity of the Church as the Body of Christ is the unity of His Spirit. Wherever the Spirit of Christ is, there is the Church. A communal society we must have, but that society, by its orders and laws, exists to serve men, and its purpose is to increase freedom rather than to limit our self-determination. The unity of the Church as the body of those

who are in a state of grace takes form in visible societies, and it must do so if it is to serve God's purposes; nevertheless its Builder and Maker is God, and its true unity is the fellowship of all who constitute the household of faith.

We may sum it up in the words of the poet,

He drew a circle that shut me out -
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle that took him in: 5

The unity of the Church of Christ is the unity of love which hesitates long before excommunicating any man, and which covets the salvation of all.

"The Church is 'Holy' because her Founder is Holy and her function is to make her members holy".⁶ This Eastern Orthodox statement is akin to the Roman Catholic statement, "the true Church is called Holy, because her invisible head, Jesus Christ, is holy ... and apart from her, there is not, and cannot be, true holiness."⁷ Both these formulations contain great truths, but fail to make explicit the fundamental fact that the holiness of the Church rests neither on Jesus as an historical Founder or Head nor on an imparted essence, but on the present possession of the Spirit. In the inevitable

5. E. Markham Outwitted.

6. Gavin op. cit., p. 244. Cf., Palmer op. cit., p. 52.

7. The Catholic Faith p. 20.

decline of enthusiasm which followed the first warm pulsations of devotion, and with the intrusion of those who were less sincere the Church ceased to be 'Holy' in the sense of 'a visible society of saints'. The Church is 'Holy' only as she is the Church of the Living God, the fellowship of those whose service is motivated by holy love in accord with divine direction.

"Because she is not limited to any place, nor time, nor people, but contains true believers of all places, times, and peoples", the Church (which here is the Eastern Orthodox Communion) claims to be truly Catholic. It is essential for salvation that every believer belong to her, and all who cut themselves off by doubting the received and enunciated Orthodox doctrine are heretics and therefore outside the ark of salvation. "It is thus clear that the Orthodox Church claims not only to be the Catholic Church, but to be the whole and only Church."⁹ These claims of the Eastern Orthodox are countered by corresponding assertions on the part of Roman Catholicism.¹⁰ To such affirmations our reply is that the Church ceased long ago to be 'Catholic' in the sense in which these communions use the term. Variations of both doctrine and government appeared very early in the history of the Church,

8. Palmer op. cit., p. 53.

9. Gavin op. cit., p. 254.

10. The Catholic Faith pp. 20-21.

and continue to the present day. The word 'Catholic' is the rightful designation of the Church as the body of Christ, the organism of the Spirit's operation; it has been appropriated here to the service of a particular group, and has become the badge of a party. The true universality of the Church is concerned not with exclusiveness, but with inclusiveness. It therefore recognizes no national and sectarian boundaries, but numbers as its members all those who live in a state of grace.

Finally, the Church is marked by apostolicity. Here is the crux of the whole matter; for by our interpretation of 'apostolic' much of our doctrine of the church is determined. When we hold with Eastern Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism and High Anglicanism that a definite unbroken succession of doctrine and gifts through the laying on of consecrated hands is essential to the validity of the Church's grace-conveying power, we lay ourselves open to the charge of ignorance, wilful disregard of evidence, or magic. To be unaware of the numerous breaks in the line of succession is sheer ignorance of historic facts or wilful disregard of the same. To maintain that such a succession is essential to the efficacy of sacrament or solace is to make the succour of God's grace dependant upon exact formulae and a particular priesthood. The inward apostolicity which is continuance in the faith of the first apostles and openness to progressive revelation

of God does find notable expression in the visible Church, but its true nature is oneness of spirit rather than oneness of formulae according to the letter of the law.

If apostolic succession means the necessity of a particular priesthood, grace is not God's unvarying disposition of love toward man, His gracious and freely imparted gift, or the succouring state of present fellowship with Him wherein we stand. A Priest is,

"a man set apart from his fellows by ordination who has thereby received a peculiar grace, and whose intervention is necessary to the proper worship of God, and necessary for the bestowal upon other men of God's covenanted grace." 11

Upon the validity of the priestly office, in both hierachial and hierurgical churches, depends the certainty of communion with God and the delineation of the true Church's borders.

Aside from the fact that no Christian minister is designated as a priest in the New Testament, there are serious diffuculties inherent in the very conception of a mediating priesthood.

What grace can be bestowed on the minister of Christ which is not at the disposal of every true member of His Church?

The very essence of the meaning of grace is that God deals with all men as His children. How then can we say that intervention needs to be made on behalf of a 'lay' class by a 'clerical' class? All that is necessary for the bestowal of God's fellowship is penitence and faith. This is an individual

11. Scott op. cit., p. 206.

response elicited by our perception of God's revelation in Christ. Assuredly that insight comes through the medium of the Church, but in personal fellowship, not by priestly mediation. If the members of the Church receive grace because of an external apostolic succession, grace is an ecclesiastically dispensed potency which can be doled out to recipients only by duly certified ministerial agents.

The modern evangelical Christian repudiates a sacerdotal ministry. A minister is a man, called by God in his own conscience, and set apart by the Church to serve his fellows, because of peculiar personal fitness. The ministry is an office and not an order. It is divine because of personal communion with God issuing in work which is done in harmony with His Will. This "conception of the divine element in the ministry as something conscious, moral, personal is certainly higher and truer than that which represents it as a mysterious and indelible character transmitted by the imposition of hands."^{12a} The type of reasoning which forces proponents of conveyed grace to attach significance to the priest's grace-dispensing powers apart from his own life and character is ill-founded. If the minister of Christ falls into sin and becomes personally disqualified as a Christian, we hold that his service as a minister of Christ is invalidated also.

^{12a} A.C. Knudson The Doctrine of Redemption p. 459.

The gospel of God's grace is to be proclaimed by the personal witness of those who live in a state of grace.

The marks of the Church are the marks of love. As the divine society its unity is a unity of all who are loving in spirit. Its holiness is a holiness of individual lives and present corporate character. Its catholicity is a universality which embraces all those of every place, time and creed, who love and serve God. Its apostolicity is its persistent witness to the revelation of God's grace in Christ, and continual openness to new revelations of the Spirit. Its ministry is composed of those who are called of God and set apart by the Church for its service. In this sense the Church is the medium through which God in grace seeks to redeem society - the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

THE SACRAMENTS.

In our historical review we saw repeatedly the importance attached to the sacraments as the media by which grace is conveyed to man. This association still characterizes the doctrine and practice of the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic Communion. Both hold that the sacraments, rightly administered, are a means of grace, indeed, the chief means of grace. Both insist that Baptism is the only door by which men can come into the experience of forgiveness. Both maintain,

with varying degrees of emphasis, that penance and the Eucharist are essential if we are to continue in a state of grace, and each of the other five sacraments convey peculiar graces or powers in accordance with their special character.

The basic assumption of Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic doctrine and practice is the false notion that grace is a quasi material element which can be poured into the soul of the believer at the behest of the Church. The absurd complications to which this leads are themselves evidence of its utter futility. Often we hear Roman Catholics condemn the 'Calvinistic doctrine of total depravity', but they seem to forget that it is their own church which is forced to hold that the child is a hopeless, lost sinner until and unless baptized.^{12b} The use of indulgences may not be so general to-day as it was immediately before the Reformation, but the odious practice of purchasing remission of sins, and even transferring the same to others, continues to be urged upon the faithful with great promises of reward attached thereto.¹³ Eucharistic doctrine drives Roman Catholicism to maintain that the service of the Mass actually 'appeases' God, as though we could give Him the satisfaction due for our sins, or as if our Loving Father needed to be appeased by the children whom He is ever seeking to bring to Himself. From

13. The Catholic Faith pp. 98-99.

12b. For the more important Roman Catholic solutions of this problem see Rohls-Breuss Grace, Actual and Habitual p. 163 ff. The Catechism of Trent holds that "infant children have no other means of salvation except Baptism." (Eng. trans. by McHugh and Callan p. 178)

this same source springs the pagan notion of *celebrating Mass in honour of* the Virgin and the Saints in order to gain, by their aid, graces and helps which God ordinarily does not bestow, as if the givingness of God could be increased beyond the bestowal of His very Self in Christ. The fundamental premise is so flagrant a misconception of the gospel of Jesus Christ that closer analysis could hardly be expected to yield a more Christian conception of grace.

Because of the prominent position occupied by this subject in the historic discussions concerning grace, we proceed to the consideration of the sacramental principle, especially as it is evidenced in the two sacraments commonly acknowledged by all the churches. Baptism and Communion are the only two of the Lombard seven which receive mention in the pages of the New Testament, and only they appear to have had an unbroken history from the time of Christ to the present day. What, then, is a sacrament?

A sacrament, according to Eastern Orthodoxy is, "a holy act, through which grace, or, in other words, the saving power of God, works mysteriously upon man."¹⁴ Roman Catholicism defines thusly, "A Sacrament is an outward and efficacious sign of grace, instituted by Jesus Christ for the sanctification of our souls: and every sacrament signifies by

¹⁴ Palmer op. cit., p. 56. (the word 'mysteriously' undoubtedly is used here in the Greek sense of 'wondrously' rather than the English interpretation 'incomprehensibly').

means of outward things the divine grace which it effects in the soul."¹⁵ For the right performance of a sacrament both maintain that three things are needful; correct matter, right form, and duly qualified administration. Obviously the word sacrament is interpreted narrowly, in conformity with the precepts of a particular dogmatic system. The underlying assumption upon which this doctrine rests is the misconception of the nature of grace mentioned above. Each of these definitions asserts that an external rite, correctly administered, will effect a change in the soul of man by the introduction of a substance designated 'grace'. But the realization that grace is the expression of love in and through personal relationships implies the rejection of all impersonal modes of action, and therefore precludes our acceptance of the Eastern-Roman conception of the sacraments as grace-conveying vehicles which apply a quasi physical force to the individual soul at the command of the Church.

However, there is a sacramental principle which guides us to a more adequate understanding of the subject. God indeed, communes with us by means other than the direct impact of truth presented as an object of thought. Every effort to exalt the intellectual capacities to lordship over the whole personality fails to recognize the authority exercised by feeling and will-

15. The Catholic Faith p. 65.

ing. We have no right to assume, and no data upon which to assert, that God deals with us through the mind alone. On the contrary, all of us recognize that great numbers of uneducated and relatively unintelligent persons come into the fellowship of the blessed life through the instrumentality of God's grace functioning by means other than the intellect alone. Even as the intercourse of friends requires media of expression beyond the appeal of spoken language and therefore resorts to the universal language of action, so religion possesses in the sacraments analogous media for the fellowship of God with His children. In an excellent discussion of the sacraments Lily Dougall¹⁶ points out that the language of action is essential to the expression of the deepest things in our own soul and is a necessary concomitant of communal life. Action is often used to express what words fail to convey. In the succour of our spirits, therefore, our Father employs means which satisfy our whole personality, and not simply the intellect; and this implies the use of symbols.

It is common to regard a symbol as something which pretends to be some other thing which it is not, and on cursory survey this idea may seem to be true. However, when we analyze the concept, we discover that a symbol is in reality something which,

16. The Language of the Soul in B. H. Streeter The Spirit p. 221 ff.

carrying a meaning beyond its intrinsic force, "manifests to human sense a non-sensuous reality."¹⁷ If we wish to convey to another person the sense of national loyalty which pervades our own being we do so by means of well-known symbols. On every higher level of life we can communicate with one another only by means of symbols; as for example, the handclasp of friendship and the kiss of affection. While this incapacity to commune except through symbolic media confines our ability to express our inmost being, on the other hand, it preserves the frontiers of the personality by limiting the extent to which invasion is possible. Without symbolic mediation powerful dominant personalities would completely over-rule less assertive individuals. We deduce from these data that symbols are legitimate and essential modes of communication between persons, and we think therefore, that the use of such means in the communion of God with us is both natural and desirable. Indeed, if our personalities are not to be over-ridden completely by that of our Father, and if we are to know God as the Supreme Person through our entire personality, the succour of the language of action is essential. Furthermore, while we have used the analogy of human experience repeatedly in attempting to envisage the relationship of God and His child, we

17. Dougall op. cit., p. 237.

must recognize also the great truth enshrined in the classic expression, 'love is a relationship of equals, but grace always flows down.' In His communion with us through every personal means God, while using these media, is not simply a person like ourselves, but the Supreme Holy Person. He is God; we are men. Thus, in the communion of human and divine, symbolic means of expression rightly are used to manifest the unseen reality of God's grace to our human senses in manner such that we are able to receive it. The sacramental principle is that God communicates with us by means of symbols. The sacraments are means of revelation.

In a previous chapter we discussed the first and foremost Christian sacrament, which is Jesus Christ. In Him we have a human, historical, ethical revelation of God's grace. Next, as the extension of the Incarnation, we place the Church. Through the medium of those who live in a state of grace society is succoured and saved. Within the Church, as particular expressions of its life, Baptism and Communion are sacraments. Finally, in close association with Baptism and Communion the Word mediates the graciousness of God to the soul; and as a personal appeal of God acting through the preacher it is a sacrament of grace.

BAPTISM

The application in Baptism of the sacramental principle enunciated above, leads to a more adequate interpretation of

the rite than is attained otherwise. Baptismal regeneration is the professed doctrine of the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches. In two well balanced chapters, Scott attacks their conception as unbiblical and magical, but in the definition of his own view he says that Baptism "marks the point where their (the benefits of the new covenant) application begins."¹⁸ The biblical evidence adduced against baptismal regeneration is abundant and conclusive and the charge of magic is severe and telling, but Scott himself falls under the latter condemnation by regarding the act of Baptism as marking the beginning of God's gracious influence upon the child. On another page¹⁹ he agrees with Bushnell, holding that children are members of the household of faith by birth. If this be affirmed, and surely it must be, we are assured that God's grace does not commence to succour the young life at Baptism (how does that really differ from baptismal regeneration?) but is present right from the moment of entry into a Christian home. Baptism, in New Testament times, was almost exclusively an adult experience, an outward symbol by the washing of water of the inner cleansing of the spirit. Due to the influence of the mystery cults and the increasing recognition of the Christian family, the baptizing of infants gradually grew in importance until adult Baptism was over-shadowed. The ecclesiastical

18. Scott op. cit., p. 109. Cf. Chapters VI and VII.

19. Ibid p. 104 also p. 109, where "the grace which has been his since Baptism" is recognized. (underlining by present writer).

doctrine of baptismal regeneration was formulated in an attempt to adjust to this new situation. While logically there is much in its favour, the presumption that God our Father withholds His grace until we perform a certain ritual act is unwarranted. Furthermore, the idea that it is in man's power to dispense God's grace likewise is untenable.

There remain three chief ways in which we may interpret the commonly accepted practice of infant baptism. We may hold that even the tiny babe is able to accept the sacrament in faith (admitting the elemental quality of that trust), or we can say that the little one is baptized in the faith of his parents, or we may maintain that it is a rite of dedication. Each of these views claims distinguished supporters; none is devoid of truth. In infant baptism the minister of Christ, on behalf of the Church, formally recognizes the babe as a member of God's household of faith, calls upon the parents to nurture the child in love, and by the use of water symbolizes anew the eternal availability of cleansing in Jesus Christ. It is quite possible that, the capacity to appropriate non-sensuous reality by sensuous means being an early emergent, some effect is induced in the babe, but this cannot be accepted as an attested fact. Clearly the infant does not, and cannot, possess faith and penitence, for the consciousness

of sin²⁰ does not appear for some years. On the other hand, believing that the Father succours His children even from earliest days, we cannot exclude Baptism as a possible means of grace. Baptism in this sense does not mark the beginning of God's influence upon the child, neither is it regenerative in character. It is a particular influence, being one in a series which is as continuous as life itself unless and until the relationship of the Father to His child is disrupted by sin. Because of its historic associations, and peculiarly valuable symbolism Baptism rightly maintains a unique place in the life of the Church.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Middle Ages were dominated by the sacraments, and in particular by the Eucharist. Rome, by means of excommunicatory power which separated men or even whole groups of men from the influence of grace, controlled the Western World. The bases of this ecclesiastical rule were the idea of grace as a substance, the consequent conception of a priestly caste, and the accompanying teaching of transubstantiation. The Reformation revolt from Rome's standpoint resulted in the varied views which were presented in a previous chapter. For our purposes

20. See Chapter II on Grace and the Consequence of Sin especially p. 277 ff., for present writer's idea of sin.

these may be divided into three main classes: those which, with Roman Catholicism,^{hold} some form of the transubstantiatory doctrine, those which join Socinianism in acknowledging a commemorative significance only, and those of the figurative type which yet insist upon a real spiritual meaning of Communion.

Transubstantiation is founded on literalism. Whether Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic or High Anglican, the emphasis is on 'what the Bible says.' But obviously such a criterion is quite useless unless carefully and rightly applied. Now, there exists a universal habit of speech which uses 'is' to mean 'represent' or 'suggest' rather than identity, and in Christ's parabolic utterances this representative use of 'is' finds frequent expression. What other meaning could the words of Jesus in the Upper Room possess for the disciples? Did they imagine that the bread and wine were the body and blood of the man who supped with them? Further, the variant readings in the New Testament present insuperable difficulties to a literalist. Moreover, Jesus did not mention the wine, but rather the cup, and if it be said that 'cup' means 'wine', the whole literalistic case is denied thereby. Finally, if we must take the New Testament for what it says, we are compelled to notice that the wine is described as 'the fruit of the vine' and the bread as 'bread' after consecration.²¹

21. Scott op. cit., p. 130. notes this point.

Transubstantiation fails to attach the right significance to the word 'symbol'. To believe that the bread we taste in our mouth is actually the body of Christ is most trying to our senses, and no less so to our minds. Here is the difficulty, the symbol is said to be what it is not. It is not defined as that which manifests the super-sensuous through sensuous means: it is the unseen reality, and conveys the unseen power ex opere operato. Nor can support be found in the Fathers of the Church. On the contrary, the doctrine of transubstantiation is a development of the early middle ages and received comparatively little mention in the Church of the first nine centuries. Finally, this doctrine of Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and High Anglican churches is subject to criticism because of the idea of God upon which it is based. The end in view is not the fellowship of a Father with His children, but the placating of an angry Deity and the securing of privilege for the few by magical means.

There is also an extreme of the commemorative interpretation which we cannot accept. According to this Socinian view the Lord's Supper is only and solely 'in remembrance of' the historic Jesus. But such a doctrine ignores the present fellowship of the Church; yet it is precisely in this relationship that the Holy Supper is kept indeed. Unquestionably an act of commemoration, even of an historic personage, does symbolize something, but the point at issue here is that Christ

is a present living person whose fellowship with us in and through the Supper is not merely past and memorial, but more especially present and vital.

The sacrament of communion is an opportunity to realize the presence of Jesus Christ. This occasion is a particular instance of the continual succour of God's grace in the Church by which those in a 'state of grace' are enabled to carry out the Father's will for the redemption of society. The sacrament does not consist of the elements, bread and wine, but of the entire action by the symbolism of which unseen realities are brought near to our spirits. As such, the sacrament is primarily a communion of God with His Church, and of the members of that Church one with another. Being a relationship of persons, through the language of action, the Supper depends for its effectiveness on reciprocal intercourse - man responding in penitence and faith to God's offer of succour. Hence the association of the spoken Word with the material symbols, which Calvin emphasized, is of central importance. When we recognize that Special Presence in the Eucharist means our special awareness of God's presence (for He is seeking us always), we understand this linking of Word and Symbol. The audible Word and the visible Word are two aspects of the one experience of communion with God. In the Supper the use of both media enables us to know God's presence in a unique sense. This is so because of the inherent fitness of the symbols

used (emblems of fellowship), the rich historical associations of the rite (marks of our oneness with all Christians) and because Jesus Himself used these symbols and words. The Supper is, then, a rite of Christian fellowship wherein those who live in grace assimilate the Word, renew their consecration to God and His tasks, and express the oneness of the Church in faith and service.

Corporate prayer is likewise sacramental in character. Through the minister, the Church seeks to realize anew the presence of her Head through the utterance of adoration, praise, thanksgiving, intercession, petition and confession. If the worshippers are united in spirit this is a real intercourse with God, as we can appreciate when we experience it. Herein the Church, as the blessed society, is conscious of her dependence upon God and consequent freedom to bring to Him all her sorrows, joys and aspirations. Just as the individual seeks his Father's presence for communion and renewal so the Church turns to her Head that by the succour of His grace she may better perform her task in saving society.

To sum up, the sacramental principle is that God communicates with us by symbols. These evidences of things not seen contain no special supply of a substance named 'grace'. Grace is the activity of Holy Love, more specifically the expression of God's Fatherly care for men. Grace is always available, but in the sacraments we become particularly aware of God's

presence, because of the nature of the symbols used, because of their historic associations, because of their New Testament derivation, and because they are expressions of ^{the} life of the Church as the blessed society in which the Holy Spirit works. The sacraments are special media by which those who live in a state of grace come into ever closer communion with their Father, and thus learn to live more fully as His children, redeeming the sinful society in which they, as the Church, are the means of proclaiming the salvation of God.

HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH

Peter Lombard identified grace and the Holy Spirit, but the equation was opposed by Thomas Aquinas, and is not accepted by the Roman Catholic Church to-day. The reasons given for this disavowal are significant; "To say that the Holy Ghost is poured forth in the hearts of men, or that He may be increased by good works, would evidently savor (sic) of Pantheism."²² In short, ecclesiastical grace being a substance, cannot act as a Person. It is this very mark of personalness which has led N. P. Williams to declare that "'The Spirit' and 'grace' are synonyms."²³ He suggests that this equation guards against all mechanically impersonal ideas of grace, solves the problem of Augustinianism and Semi-Pelagianism (by

22. Pohle-Preuss Grace Actual and Habitual pp. 331-332.

23. The Grace of God p. 110.

an ingenious interpretation of the Trinity wherein gratia, or the Holy Spirit, is an intensification of assistentia generalis; or the Logos), and provides an explanation by means of which we can understand God's personal method of dealing with us (the analogy of the psycho-therapist, acting by suggestion through the sub-conscious, being adduced). We agree that the conception of grace and that of the Holy Spirit are related very closely one to the other. Certainly, the Roman objection to their equation, being founded on a false idea of grace, is invalid. Professor Williams' suggestion is commendable because of the personal emphasis which it secures, but it would be still more explicit to describe grace as the activity of God as Holy Spirit in the succour of our personalities in the personal fellowship of His Kingdom. We cannot say simply, "Grace is God." Grace is primarily God's Fatherliness which, in the activity of God as Holy Spirit, is made manifest as the Father's continual, intimate succour of those who have entered the life under grace. As Holy Spirit God works in the Church by grace. Careful analysis of the New Testament (especially Paul's epistles) the experience of the Church (as in the sacraments), and our own personal relationships (as members of the Church), supports this view. Avoiding a discussion of the Trinity, since this is not the place for it, we accept the usual definition of the Holy Spirit as God working in men. We immediately add that the Holy Spirit does not work in us as the private

possession of a solitary individual. He is the Inspirer of the Church, the society of those who are in a state of grace. In fact this possession of the Spirit, that is, the Presence of God, is the precise mark of the unity of the ~~the~~Body of Christ.

The retention of the scholastic distinction between assistentia generalis and gratia is one of the weaknesses of Professor Williams' proposal. Explanation of this differentiation in terms of the doctrine of Perichoresis does not solve the difficulty: for, as he remarks on another page, there are not two healing powers going forth from God, but one, and if gratia is an intensification of assistentia generalis then it is assumed that God is more healing in one instance than He is in the other. No distinction concerning the quality of the grace available for our succour is possible; for the proffer of fellowship on God's part is never partial and reserved, but always free and full. To maintain that He gives Himself partially in the Logos, and fully in the Spirit is to be untrue to the New Testament and to our own experience; for, it is in and through Christ that we are able to perceive God's revelation of Himself to us as Holy Spirit. In the New Testament the Spirit is sometimes referred to as the 'Spirit of Christ'. Finally, the sphere of the Spirit's activity is the ~~the~~church, and the Church is the extension of the Body of Christ. Thus we conclude that there is one continuous influence of God upon men, which is always the

same grace no matter through what media it may be made manifest. The only distinction we can make concerns the degree in which we accept God's offered succour. At every point in our history God seeks to reveal Himself to us, but because we are persons, His Givingness is attuned to our receptiveness. The difference is in us, not in the measure of God's Self-bestowal.

Professor Williams explains the personal operations of the Spirit in terms of psychotherapy. Led on by this suggestion he characterizes the influence of the Spirit as 'interior divine impulse' working in or by the sub-conscious. Thus it is maintained that the individuals who were removed from life by the collapse of the bridge in the novel The Bridge of San Luis Rey were shepherded by God "on to the bridge at the precise moment when it would in any case have collapsed."²⁴ The sub-conscious is proposed thereupon to be the 'part' of our personality which is most accesible to direct Divine influences.' In spite of all declarations to the contrary, this view fails to allow for the freedom of man. If freedom is self-determination according to our own self-direction in our own self-conscious world, we have here under different guise a recurrence of the familiar example of the master chess player and the inadept novice. The death of those who fell with the bridge is determined as completely by sub-conscious control as it

24. Williams op. cit., p.113.

would be if God directly and immediately caused the atomic structure of the edifice to be altered at that exact moment. Nor is true dependence on God assured by this view; for we are not consciously dedicating ourselves to His service and seeking His will. It is as though a child, whose activity was controlled by his mother without his conscious awareness of the fact, should be called truly dependent. Dependence demands activity on the part of both the person depended upon and the one who is dependent, and if this activity is in the sub-conscious we are neither truly dependent nor really free. However, our rejection of the theory of sub-conscious influences does not imply that the psychotherapy analogy must be discarded in its entirety. One of the fundamental principles of psychiatry is that little can be done for a distraught person until that one comes and asks for help. The conscious, deliberate, free act of placing oneself in the care of the physician of the mind is a pre-condition of successful healing. Moreover, the results become permanent only as they are accepted consciously by the patient, only in fact, in so far as physician-fixation is replaced by personal allegiance to the truth. Applied to the operation of the Spirit in men this means that we are directed by the Spirit if we have come, by penitence and faith, into the household of God wherein the Spirit works.

Entering ever more deeply into the fellowship of the

Spirit, those who live in a state of grace are filled with the desire to save society, because they realize more fully how greatly the world needs the gospel. Furthermore, experiencing the joy of personal communion with God in the fellowship of Spirit with spirit, we are imbued with God's passion for the redemption of the world, because we come to know that the Spirit is "the Spirit of redeeming Love that animated Jesus Christ,"²⁵ now operative in the Church. This realized, we recognize that God, having chosen to save society and its members severally by the Church, does not leave us to attain this end by ourselves, but that, by the Spirit, He comes to work in and through us in building His Kingdom. Christians enter into fullness of life when the Spirit lays hold upon them. This blessedness is life in a state of grace, and since that life develops only in the blessed society, holiness grows out of the fellowship of God's household. God's purpose, therefore, includes the building of a society in which personal values and holy lives are fostered. His end is not an isolated, individual salvation, but the building of a Divine Order wherein individuals find their truest freedom in dependence upon God and service to others. The animating Spirit of this Kingdom is redeeming Love.

25. H. R. Mackintosh The Divine Initiative p. 99. Cf. F. R. Barry The Relevance of Christianity p. 102.

The Holy Spirit is God working in the Church for the redemption of society. In the fellowship of those who are in a state of grace, God as Holy Spirit leads us to the conscious, eager acceptance of His will that all shall be united in a Divine Order of mutual love, righteousness and service. By the contagion of His Spirit of redeeming Love we are inspired to work for the Kingdom. Freely accepting this blessed task we find the fulfillment of our lives, and therein also we discover ourselves to be completely dependent upon the succour of God in grace, without which we would be unable to see our brother's need, and would be unwilling to supply the answer to his soul's necessity.

THE KINGDOM AND THE CHURCH

The Kingdom of God is not a man-made social order. It is communal and men are the members of its societal body, but it is founded and sustained by God. The opposition between the ethical and eschatological conceptions of the Kingdom is apparent more than actual, and rests on the inadequate assumption that everything in this present life is to be accomplished by men, and all in the life to come is to be the work of God. The Kingdom of God is not so; but is both present and future. God's care for His children is eternal, and our development into His likeness never ceases. A shallow interpretation which sees the Kingdom of God in the upward thrust of 'progress'

or the unfolding of 'the Christian ideal' neglects the all important fact that we come to value our fellows as brethren only through seeing what they are worth to God.

The Church, as the fellowship of those who live in a state of grace, and as the sphere of the Spirit's activity, is the Kingdom of God on earth. Since, "the prime condition of entering the Kingdom is to share the standpoint of the King; and that involves being reborn into it,"²⁶ if a new world is to be constructed on earth, the basis of its 'social gospel' must be a personal relationship to God in penitence and faith. Hence also, the Divine Order is to be built through the medium of the Church; for in that fellowship alone does the Spirit work, and therefore only by that means can we live as God's children. Those who live in a state of grace are members of the Kingdom here and now. The Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches, and their imitators, identify the present Kingdom with the extent of their several ecclesiastical bodies and consequently, regarding grace as a quasi physical substance, compromise with the world and yet retain a good conscience, being unaffected by their own worldliness. Certain sects seek to attain the true fellowship of believers by withdrawal from the world. Others retreat into the subjective aspects of their own religious experience and search for the Kingdom of God

²⁶. Barry op. cit., p. 7.

only and solely within. The failures of these several views are many, but their greatest fault is neglect of the Church's purposes. The Church is the Kingdom of God on earth because, having tasted the liberty of God's children, and being under the inspiration of His love, it exists in a sinful society as the agent for the redemption of that communal order. As God Himself cannot suffer one sinner to go unsuccoured, so we partaking of His Spirit, enter His Kingdom when we are unwilling that any should be lost and therefore bend all our efforts to save all.

The first object of religion is to reconcile us to God here and now. Then, as we live in a present state of grace and produce good works by the Spirit's inspiration, the fullness of the life in the Spirit is such that this temporal existence is too small to hold it. Consequently, our best assurance of a blessed hereafter is a present life in the Kingdom of God. For this reason the Socinian error of commencing from the idea of immortality is fatal to all vital religion. Our desire is not to escape the world, evil though it is, but rather to live in mastery over it. Immortality as such holds no attraction for us; for the infinite prolongation of this sinful existence is not an adequate consummation of personal life. It is only as we are assured of ever increasing fellowship with God that a future life promises a valid fruition of all that is personal. In other words, as Christians we enter into life when we dwell in the household of the Father.

Many volumes have been written about grace and glory; most of them by members of the Roman Catholic communion. Grace now, and glory hereafter is their constantly recurring theme. Usually grace used rightly now is supposed to earn glory in the time to come. There are two chief failures in this view. First, grace as the personal succour of God is glory both now and hereafter. A materialistic conception of heaven leads to a system of merit by which we can lay up for ourselves treasures in the life to come by appropriate action now; but a spiritual conception of grace directs our attention to present fellowship with the Father of our Spirits. This leads to a present blessedness which partakes here and now of the spirituality which characterizes the Father's love. The Kingdom of God is both future and present; its glory is made manifest wherever God's Will rules in the lives of men. Second, the 'grace and glory' conception is unduly individualistic. In the New Testament 'glory' is practically a synonym for blessedness. Now, while the welfare of the individual person is never overlooked by One who can be called 'Our Father', yet the achievement of individual fruition "is caught up and absorbed in the greater and richer expectation of a redeemed order; an order in which the people of God . . . shall serve

Him in the unbroken communion of saints."²⁷ Thus glory is the present possession and future hope of those who live in a state of grace.

SUMMARY

The Church is the sphere of the Spirit's activity, and we as its members are elected to the task of saving society and its component persons severally. This true Church is marked by Love in its oneness, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity. Its sacraments are the language of action by which God speaks to us, preparing us for the building of the Divine Order. The Holy Spirit is the Inspirer of this household of the Father, which is the Kingdom of God in the present and which looks forward to a future consummation because it finds the blessedness of its present fellowship too large to be confined to this world. Our hope of future glory is anticipated by the light of His presence now illuminating our lives. In all these ways, grace as God's Fatherliness is made manifest 'in His succour of our personalities in His Kingdom, so immediately and constantly present in the personal fellowship of this blessed order that His Fatherliness is reflected in us', so that we become the effective instruments of His redeeming purpose. The Church, then, is the fellowship of those under grace, in which God moves to the establishment of His Divine Order.

27. Mackintosh op. cit., p. 101.

CHAPTER XVII

C O N C L U S I O N

We wish to draw together in a few brief paragraphs the main lines of development which have been sketched in this thesis.

First, the conception of grace found in non-Christian religions was defined as 'God's (or the god's) helpful relation to men dependent upon and initiated by the Divine.' Everywhere we found evidence of God's givingness, and especially in Judaism and in the Hellenistic environment prior to the first century we discovered special preparation which heralded the approach of the unique New Testament conception of grace. However, neither in the immediate antecedents, nor yet in the larger context of world religion did we find a conception of grace truly comparable to that of the New Testament.

Second, our New Testament analysis disclosed a threefold use of $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ as active disposition in God, as God's gift to men, and as a state of life 'under grace'. The witness of the synoptic gospels was in general accord with the teaching of the Pauline epistles, and these in turn were corrobor-

ated by the later New Testament writings. The latter however, presented variations of emphasis pointing toward subsequent developments.

Third, chiefly under the influence of ecclesiastical association, the conception of grace underwent a change in regard to its intrinsic meaning, its sphere of operation and its mode of manifestation. This was due to many influences, but fundamentally the error lay in the dissociation of grace as 'gift' and 'state' from a right relationship to the Giver and Sustainer. Thus grace became a substance obtainable only through the agency of the Church, and therein chiefly by the instrumentality of the rightly administered sacraments. Under the leadership of the classical reformers a protest against the crassness of this view was made, but it issued in a change in the idea of the sphere of grace without rectifying the errors in regard to manifestation and definition.

Fourth, beginning in the nineteenth century there emerged a succession of brilliant thinkers who clarified the conception of grace in all its aspects by re-emphasizing its intimate association with a personal God. Thus the present stage of this progression is marked by the application of this viewpoint to the varied problems which arose in the historic development of Christian thought about grace.

Fifth, guided by our New Testament analysis, and under the inspiration of nineteenth century and contemporary theology grace was re-defined as God's Fatherliness, manifested as active

disposition, as gift and as state. The content of this definition was exhibited in terms of modern evangelical thought concerning personality and its significance for theology.

Sixth, each of the great historic problems associated with the conception of grace was analyzed in the light of our definition. In each instance we found that the adoption of the intimate, personal approach mitigated the difficulties involved. We cannot claim that all mystery is hereby removed, which is obviously not the case. But we do hold that this interpretation makes the several doctrines discussed more understandable and more convincingly Christian.

Finally, the centre from which all Christian thought about grace must move is God as He reveals Himself in His Son, the supreme gift of grace. The God and Father of Jesus Christ comes to succour us, without destroying our freedom, yet with a cogency which draws us to Himself by the freedom of our own acceptance. Moreover, having entered the fellowship of His Kingdom we realize that He continues to succour us and through us reaches out in grace to redeem those who are yet under the bondage of sin. In blessed communion with God we know the miracle of grace and we understand the thought of the New Testament author who summed up the Divine initiative, man's response, God's gift of His presence, and the ensuing fellowship of His Kingdom in these noble words:

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock:
if any man hear my voice, and open the door,
I will come in to him,
and will sup with him, and he with me.

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