THE PAULINE CONCEPT OF CHARISMA

AND

ITS PROPER USE IN THEOLOGY

by

Joan H. Timmerman, A.B.

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School, Marquette University, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts

Milwaukee, Wisconsin
July, 1968
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**INTRODUCTION**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. CHARISMA AS EXPRESSED IN CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGICAL WRITING</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Rahner, *The Dynamic Element in the Church*  
The Documents of Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium* | |
| II. WORD STUDY AND EXEGESIS: CHARISMA | 11 |
| Generalized and Dictionary Notions | 11 |
| Charisma in Romans | 16 |
| Charisma in First and Second Corinthians | 21 |
| Charisma in Ephesians and First and Second Timothy | 38 |
| Development of the term *charisma* within Paul's vocabulary and patterns of word usage | 41 |
| III. THE RELATIONSHIP OF CHARISMA TO CHARIS | 43 |
| Fundamental meaning of *charis* in Paul | 43 |
| Secondary meaning of *charis* in Paul | 46 |
| The relationship of "grace-gift" to "grace" | 48 |
| IV. CONCLUSIONS FROM WORD STUDY AND EXEGESIS | 50 |
| ADDENDUM APPLICATION OF CONCLUSIONS OF STUDY TO CERTAIN THEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS | 55 |

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**  

Page 65
PREFACE

All theological terms are subject to periodic review and refinement. This process is necessary to keep precision, as far as possible, in the working theological vocabulary. The term charisma is one which needs fundamental source study today to establish its proper use in theology. "Charismatic" has come to be applied to campus leaders, politicians, even public relations men. These popular usages are mushrooming at the same time that theologians are awakening with interest in the whole area of Pneumatology.

The problem which I am attempting to investigate in this thesis is a problem of the proper theological use of a Biblical term. The term is charisma; its interpretation has been adequate for the purposes of theology in the past. However, new light could possibly be thrown on the notion of charisma and a stereotyped concept corrected by a serious study of the Pauline use and development of that term. In order to limit the scope of this study, I propose to proceed from the interpretation of charisma found in the writings of Karl Rahner and reflected in the "Document on the Church" from Vatican II. Certain elements of these interpretations of charisma will then be measured against the Pauline use of that term. There will follow a brief treatment of the relationship of charisma to charis as it appears in St. Paul's epistles. The conclusions of the study should then bear out a theory affirming three elements as indispensable to the proper use of charisma in a theological context.

My purpose is not to question the soundness of certain aspects of the
traditional treatment of charism, nor to suggest that so eminent a theologian as Karl Rahner does not adequately understand the Biblical notion of charis. My intention is to call attention to those aspects which he underplays but which belong, also, to a proper understanding of the term; then it should be possible to apply the necessary correctives to those statements about the charismata which, however well understood by the scholar, leave their readers open to false and superficial conceptions. The specific choice of Rahner is, for this study, incidental - his work merely provides a springboard into the topic. His source work has dealt with charis rather than charisma. Were he to have continued where he left off, and treated the topic of charisma for its own sake, this study would not be necessary. But since it is, it aims at making available a more adequate appreciation of the proper Pauline use of that elusive term.
The Pauline Notion of Charisma and its Proper Theological Use

I. Introduction

Charisma, charismata, and charismatic are words which have only recently enjoyed a revival in the learned and popular theological writing of Roman Catholics. Its emergence as a useful sign of meaning came almost simultaneously with the Second Vatican Council and Pope John’s well publicized plea (in mass media and public prayer) for a New Pentecost upon the church of the 20th Century. All the associations with the original manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit had somehow remained in the core of the church’s subconscious knowledge. They were now at least potentially roused and ready to rise to the surface of Christian thought and experience with the call of some theologian, writer, or thinker. Such an emerging concept is charisma. In a diocesan newspaper it merited something like a birth announcement in 1963.

"Charism comes from a Greek word meaning literally a gift of love. As used by theologians it describes a special talent freely bestowed by the Holy Spirit on an individual for the benefit of others rather than for his personal benefit. In this vein, Cardinal Suenens of Belgium told his fellow Fathers that we must today recognize the existence of charisms for a balanced view of the Church seeing them not as accidental additions, but as part of its nature."

1 The Catholic Messenger, Davenport, Iowa, November 7, 1963. Much more frequent are the statements about the "Charismatic era" and its duration as if it were dead and a scholar happened to stumble inadvertently against the tombstone half buried. Cf E.B. Allo, Saint Paul: Premiere Epitre Aux Corinthiens, Paris: J. Gabalda et Cie, Editeur, 1935. "The charismatic period extended into the third century."; p. 317.
When a long-unused word is resurrected from its theological limbo, it is no unmixed blessing. One of the hazards of such an operation is a great chance of imprecision, inaccuracy, or at least a diminution of the biblical and historical significance behind the term.

Because this concept was anesthetized through the years, and represented in that inert form with its stereotyped definition, it was easy for the fact to escape theologians that this was a notion from revelation that was badly in need of a source study. Instead the lexicons, encyclopedias, concordances, and scholars (each of whom would employ it only by the way and indirectly to touch upon some other immediate matter of concern) would quote each other, content that their predecessor's interpretation was adequate. Moreover there seemed to have been no epochal movements of the Spirit within mainline Catholicism that jarred them into realizing that the Spirit's action is a matter of faith seeking understanding. It was treated too often as a matter disturbingly esoteric and, anyway, hardly essential. Herbert Haag, in his section on "Gifts of the Spirit" wrote as late as 1951:

"Still, even though important for building up the church, the charismata do not belong to the essence of the church. She is not in the first place charismatic, but institutional, that is, built upon the apostles and their authority. Therefore Paul places love above the gifts and treats of charismata with apostolic authority."\(^2\)

A second inadequate and hardly careful designation of charism is to be found in a very recent theological textbook for college students. This excerpt illustrates a falsifying emphasis which is almost prevalent as the notion illustrated above - that charism is subordinated to, and

\(^2\)Herbert Haag, "Geistesgaben" in Bibel-Lexikon, Zurich, Benziger Verlag, 1951, p. 541.
in opposition to the institutional element in the Church. The insistence on "extraordinary" in a sense of dramatic or spectacular is a very frequent element in superficial definitions of charism.

The term charisma is also to be met with an occasion; to denote the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit which are designed for the common good of the Church rather than the sanctification of the recipient and are often miraculous. 3

It is the continuing task of theology to refine the understandings it has already managed to achieve in whole areas of revelation. And it is love for truth, and fidelity to revelation that impels the theologian to go back to the scriptural sources to test the philosophical and theological conclusions that have been posited. Although the living Spirit of God guides the Church through the centuries, He does not guarantee unmistakeable progress toward clarity in every detail. There is a very human and realistic possibility of misunderstandings being continually perpetuated. The result, if not falsity, is at least distortion by inadequate treatment or by unbalanced emphasis.

"The history of the church can just as easily be the history of a constantly renewed understanding as of a constantly repeated misunderstanding," 4 wrote Edward Schweizer.

To discern where the truth lies and to provide a scientific and philosophical setting to enhance it are themselves gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is not the function of this study to discriminate what is or is not charismatic in specific cases, or to provide criteria by which


counterfeits of the Spirit's action may be detected. My problem of charisma is not even primarily the historical problem of how it was understood and applied in the Church's life. The problem I propose to study is the theological problem of how Paul understood "charisma" in the New Testament Church and expressed that understanding of it.

To accomplish this objective, I will study three areas in which a divergence appears between New Testament understandings, and theological statements. I will begin with statements from sources commanding the highest respect in the theological community today. These statements will have reference to the notion of charisma specifically in these three areas: the relationship of the so-called "charismatic" to the so-called "institutional", the relationship of charisma in general to its context of "extraordinary or ordinary", and the relationship of charism to grace (charis). This division, while it does not encompass every element in the traditional definition of charisma, has been chosen because these are the aspects which appear repeatedly in the popular stereotype of the notion of charism. They are also cluster concepts, which involve, at least implicitly, the total understanding of the biblical notion of charism.

From an exegesis of the New Testament passages concerning charism, I will attempt to derive the proper theological use of the notion of charism. Then, as an Addendum to the thesis, I will apply the necessary correctives to the understanding of charism currently being employed by even the best and most conscientious of theological spokesmen. This last step seems to me to be necessary since gains in source knowledge are sterile unless they are able to affect and measure the teaching that is
presently forming Christian minds. Moreover, the contrast between the biblical meaning of this term and the unwarranted emphases often given it in theological writing will serve to show more clearly the conclusion that has been reached. It is a simple case of making "what is" more clear by showing what it is not.
Chapter One:

Charisma as expressed in contemporary Theological Writing: The Present State of the Question

"A history of the theology of charismatics in and for the church has not yet been written," according to Karl Rahner, "because it has not yet been developed." A history of charisma has to do with recording events and is therefore required to record individual charismatics and is burdened with the prohibitive task of determining which charismatic is authentic. Yet what Rahner asks for is rather a history of the theology of charismatics, and it is precisely this which has not been developed. The essential first step is to investigate the theologizing which Paul himself did upon the charismatic people and their doings in the early Christian Church. Unfortunately Rahner himself does not undertake this. He does not go into a fundamental and detailed study of Paul's teaching on the spiritual gifts in the Christian. In the book which came closest to dealing directly with this subject matter, The Dynamic Element in the Church, he refers the reader to the texts of I Cor. 12-14; Romans 12: 1-3; 16:1; Eph. 4:1-16, and cites as well, in footnote style, the words of Allo, Marichaux, the Dictionaries, H. J. Brosch, and O. Karrer.


6 Paul did much more pastoral exhorting about the use of charismatic gifts than reflecting upon its meaning in the Christian life. It was seen even then as a fact that needed to be handled more than a wonder that needed to be pondered and understood.

Rather than probe the fundamental sources himself, Rahner relies on the second-hand reference work that has passed from scholar to scholar on this topic. He launches into a discussion of the distinction made after the apostolic times between the administration and the charismatics. He defends the non-institutional charismatic forms as necessary to the Church’s being, as necessary as the hierarchy and sacraments. The difference is illustrated by the always new, formerly unknown forms in which the non-institutional charismatic tends to appear. Rahner admirably exhorts the institutional elements to "allow it to appear" and to promote it and coordinate it into the life of the whole Church. He condemns a "false totalitarian view which inevitably equates office and charisma," and affirms the charismata which operate in addition to and outside her official ministry. His whole discussion grows from a supposition of tension, but hoped-for harmony, between the two "structures" of the Church, the institutional and the charismatic. Such harmony can only be guaranteed by the one Lord of both and that ultimately and somehow miraculously itself. In the meantime each requires a screen to protect it from the opposition. The rule of orderliness in all transactions is the protection granted official authority from unruly and merely apparent spiritual gift; the charismata seem to be still in search of their safeguard from the authorities. By actual definition Rahner’s concept "charismatic" opposes the category of "institutional" in the Church, as he explains; ... "if we

---


9Ibid.

10Rahner, *Dynamic Element*, p. 49.

11Ibid., p. 55.

12Ibid., p. 52.
understand by charismatic what is in contradistinction to what is purely institutional, administered by men, subject to calculation, expressible in laws and rules.\textsuperscript{13}

So it seems that Rahner, in attempting to write an apologia for the "charismatic" element in the church, does in fact do it a disservice by assuming dichotomy between the two "structures" of the church, the one, the institutional popularly regarded as the normal and reliable church; the other, the charismatic as a somewhat suspicious and lively rival. As a theologian, Rahner himself is clearly aware of an operative unity in the life of the Spirit in the church. He is surely aware that Pauline epistles which treat of the charismata do not dichotomize them from the regular and normal life of the church. The battle for unity that Rahner is fighting, by implication, is a battle that is not apparent in St. Paul, as a careful study of the texts will reveal, unless there is a rampant abuse in charismatic quarters. And then, it is not a battle between "institutional" and "charismatic" but between true and apparent gifts of the Spirit.

Because a theologian of Rahner's stature writes of charism in such a way as to leave the reader open to an impression of dichotomy between the normal workings of the Holy Spirit and "charismatic" operations, a more adequate and thorough reading of the Pauline sources is required. Inadequate treatment of a subject or treatment open to misunderstanding by its readers needs to be corrected as much as an objectively false statement, as Rahner himself will testify in a similar context.

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p. 44. Note the connotation of the German word "wenn," stronger than the English "if," closest to the word "since."
"But when supposedly obvious things are passed over in silence or it is considered they are no doubt dealt with elsewhere and from other angles with other concepts, there is considerable danger of their being overlooked."  

With charisma, it has been not only the danger but the fact that previous concepts were indiscriminately accepted, and conclusions were based on inadequate study of the basic material of revelation.

No less a distinguished document than the statement of Vatican II on the Church, the apostolic constitution "Lumen Gentium" show signs of the same hand-me-down uncritical approach to charisma. The traditional exaggeration fallen into here is that of the extraordinary elements, in the sense of a spectacular or dramatic character assumed to accompany the workings of spiritual gifts or charismata.

"Allowing his gifts to everyone as he will (I Cor. 12:11) the Holy Spirit distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts he makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks or offices advantageous for the renewal and upbuilding of the church, according to the words of the apostle, the manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit; (I Cor. 12:7). These charismatic gifts, whether they be the most outstanding or the more simple and widely diffused, are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation for they are exceedingly suitable and useful for the needs of the Church. Still extraordinary gifts are not to be rashly sought after, nor are the fruits of apostolic labor to be presumptuously expected from them. In any case, judgement as to their genuineness and proper use belongs to those who preside over the church, and to whose spiritual competence it belongs, not indeed to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to that which is good. (I Th. 5:12, 19-21)  

\[\text{\textsuperscript{14}}\text{Ibid., p. 56.}\]

A footnote immediately following points out rather hopefully that the constitution does not intend to identify the charismatic with "rare", extraordinary and spectacular phenomena. 16

However, the necessity of such a clarifying footnote is itself an indication that the emphasis on "special" and "extraordinary" elements is strong. If such statements in the most up-to-date of modern theology cannot be accused of encouraging misunderstanding, they at least fail to add new and overdue light to a very important and increasingly frequent concept in popularized theology.

To the problem then: How did Paul and the New Testament Church as reflected in his writings understand charisma and express that understanding? To accomplish this I will suggest a number of possibilities deducible from the writings of Paul and of various theologians reflecting upon the New Testament. From a word study of charisma and exegesis of the texts in which it occurs a conclusive interpretation of biblical meaning should be attainable. These conclusions will then be applied to the three specific areas: the relationship of the charismatic to the institutional, to extraordinary phenomena, and to the possession of divine grace (charis).

16 Ibid., n. 41.
Chapter Two:

Word Study: Charisma

I. Generalized and Dictionary Notions of Paul's Possible Meanings:

Charisma is generally approached in opposition to, or at least as not being, some other better understood entity. Very strong since the development of the theology of gratia gratis data in the Middle Ages is the notion of a gift for others or for the service of the Church as opposed to "grace" which would promote one's own spiritual upbuilding or sanctification.

The Oxford Dictionary refers to charismata as "the supernatural graces which individual Christians need to perform the specific tasks incumbent on them in promoting the spiritual advancement of their fellows." 17

Also the Interpreters' Dictionary stresses the aspect of charisma which makes it possible for a Christian to fulfill an apostolic vocation, styling the charismata as "special endowments of the members of the Church for its service." 18 They are gifts meant for re-giving, powers and abilities which of their very nature have been seen to constitute a commission and a vocation. The somewhat popular Catholic Biblical Encyclopedia assigns to charismata the following definition in the "strict


technical sense: "Certain gratuitous supernatural gifts which show the action of the Holy Spirit in the church by giving certain individuals the faculties to perform extraordinary works, principally for the good of the entire church."19

Relating charism to grace, not so much as distinct from, but as consequent upon it, is the notion of E. B. Allo. For him, charisma is the fruit of the gratuitous favor (charis) of God.

"The word Charism (χαρίς), from its etymology indicates the effect of the favor (charis) of one of superior position. So according to Paul, it designates all the favors of God."20

Thus for Allo, there is no strict technical sense. In the Epistle to the Romans, V-VI, charisma refers to the broad gifts of redemption, grace, and beatitude, in VII:7, it indicates the vocation to marriage or virginity; in the Pastoral Epistles, it is the character of the ministry of the gospel, and in Corinthians it speaks of extraordinary and superhuman manifestations of the Spirit's power.

The fascination of the extraordinary, moreover attached to a specific historical period, is apparent in other explanations of charisma.


"It is a gift of grace, a free gift, especially of extraordinary operations of the Spirit in the Apostolic Church, but including all spiritual graces and endowments."\textsuperscript{21}

Thayer, who defines the term etymologically as a free gift of divine grace, goes on to assert that the technical Pauline sense denotes "extraordinary powers, distinguishing certain Christians to serve the Church -- due to the power of divine grace operating in their souls by the Holy Spirit."\textsuperscript{22}

Finally, in the list of possible ways of explaining charisma, the ways that are actually in the common theological treasury, includes those which stress the opposition between this free gift of spirit and the charge of official ministry. So Liddell and Scott read the word $\chiρισμος$ as it occurs in I Cor. 12:4 to stress free as the opposite of $\νομικός$ or "salaried Services."\textsuperscript{23}

Consistent with the influence of Rahner, the Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche states that charisma signifies, "grace given not so much through institutional sacraments as by the free workings of the Holy Spirit in the faithful."\textsuperscript{24} The character of wonderworks and extraordinary phenomena is associated, in this view, very closely with the discussion of charisma. Charisma remains somehow outside the normal and regular workings of God in the Church.


\textsuperscript{23}Liddell & Scott, A Greek-English Lexikon, New Edition (Stuart Jones & McKenzie, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1953, entry:

\textsuperscript{24}Lexikon, loc. cit., p. 1025.
Charisma is a word rare outside the New Testament. However, the reality of a dynamic spirit manifesting the power of Jahweh is a major theme running through the Old Testament. It appears in the Septuagint in Sirach 7:33,25 in Deuteronomy 28:49, Isaiah 28:11 and Joel 3:1.

Even in the New Testament, charisma is almost exclusively Paul's word. Christ's promise of such a phenomenon is recorded in Matthew (10:19), Mark (16:17) and John (14:12) but without a general term to cover the gifts and powers of which he spoke. Luke mentions the fact of the Spirit's action throughout the whole of Acts, but specifically in Acts 2:4-13; 10:44-46; 12:6; 8:18. His is not a reflection or a theology of charism but an account, a descriptive documentary of those events as gathered from participants who saw or heard or experienced them. The only New Testament use of the actual word charisma that occurs outside the Pauline writing is I Peter 4:10. "As every man has received a gift (κώρισμα), even so, minister to each other as good stewards of the manifold grace of God (ποικίλης ἱπτώς θεόποι)."26 This usage in the epistle of Peter, dated much later than the major Pauline sources, 64 or 67 A.D. (depending on the martyrdom date), indicates a very specific emphasis on charism. The special abilities are used or responsibilities assumed for

25. Abbott Smith, loc. cit. It is interesting that the word gift of divine grace appears also in Philo: (30 B.C. - 50 AD) de alleg. legg. III Sec. 24... διαφέρει κατ' ουσίαν καὶ κώρισμα εἰς τὸν κόσμον καὶ τοὺς ὁ κόσμος τοῖν.)
See Thayer, loc. cit., p. 667.

26. The popular translation of J. B. Phillips makes this text come alive: "Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you, as faithful dispensers of the magnificently varied grace of God. If any of you is a preacher than he should preach his message as from God." The New Testament in Modern English. New York, Macmillan Company, 1962, p. 518.
the well-being and growth of the local Church, and service to others is in proportion to the gift of each.

Charisma is clearly a Pauline word. It is the specific understanding of this concept that Paul had in the early Church and expressed in his epistles that we wish now to probe.
II Charisma in Romans

Paul speaks directly of *charisma* in five places\(^{27}\) in his epistle to the Romans. His theologizing on the Spirit is concerned with the distinctive action of the Spirit. For Paul, the Spirit of God is related to God as the spirit of man is to man. The *πνεῦμα* of a man is his "man"-ing, his person-in-action; and the same is true of God's *πνεῦμα*. It is his *δύναμις*; consequently if the Spirit is acting, that is God acting. (Rom. 8:10 ff). The *πνεῦμα* of Paul bears the same characteristics as the Ruah of the Old Testament: divine origin, supernatural power, intimate relation to the development of the spiritual life of recipients. However, in the Old Testament it was partial and occasional in its manifestation. In the New Testament it is general, pervasive, constant.\(^{28}\) Paul's development of the notion of the Spirit acting in the Christian through his Self-bestowing, was the Pauline advance on the concept of Ruah. The notion of *charisma* represents that advance. It is a *dandum*, a gift that is not given (datum) but being given and hence is more accurately a Christian-being-empowered than a static power or quality. The *charisma* gives a man a way of being *πνευματικός*, or spirit-led; Paul writes to his congregation at Rome: "I long to see you that I may impart to you some spiritual gift (*χριστίμα*...*πνευματικόν*) to the end that you may be strengthened, that is, that I may be comforted together with you by our mutual faith." He seems to be speaking here of *charisma* as the general gift, their common gift of the truth of the gospel and their faith. Similarly in Romans 6:23; "For the wages of sin is death,


but the free gift (χριστισμα) of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Why is it that a word such as charism which was used so few times (perhaps 16) should have later become identified almost exclusively with those few instances where it referred to extraordinary and specialized phenomena? The weight of its usage for such a normal and essential item to the Christian faith as eternal life is equally great. In Romans 5:15-16, χριστισμα refers to the forgiveness of sin which came to man through the redeeming death of Christ. In this passage, another word for gift (δωρον) is used practically interchangeably with charisma. The dating of this epistle after that to the Corinthians, or at least within the same time span, argues against the possibility that Paul would take a word that he specifically coined to handle unruly and extraordinary phenomena, to use it for the most essential elements of the Christian faith. The need grows clearer for expansion of the commonly accepted technical theological use of the term charisma. Far from being the flighty and somewhat luxurious equipment it is regarded in the popular mind to be, the charismata seem to constitute, once given, an intrinsic part of the Christian's life. In Rom. 11:29, Paul says: "For the gifts and calling (χριστισμα, υπερ καιρος) of God are without repentance." Thus they may not be repealed; yet from Paul's own expressed desire it seems possible for them to multiply, for one Christian to impart them to another (See above 1:11). Finally Paul indicates that every Christian possesses some of the charismata with varying degrees of fullness. Rom, 12:11: "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and everyone members of one another. Having then gifts (χριστισματα) differing according to the grace (χριστισματα) which is given to us, whether prophecy, let us
prophesy according to the proportion of faith, or ministry, let us wait on our ministering or he that teaches, on teaching; or he that exhorts, on exhortation, he that gives, let him do it with simplicity, he that rules, with diligence; he that shows mercy with cheerfulness." Eduard Schweizer contends that it is significant that in this passage Paul does not use the phrase so typical of him, "the grace given to me." He uses rather the plural form, 29 "the grace given to us," thus indicating not separation for special service but God's eternal choice that has been revealed in Jesus. The notion of charism for Paul includes all ministries, official, unofficial, general, specific, public, private. The fact that pastoral problems will ensue for him to handle 30 does not negate the experience that leads him to recognize and name the Spirit's work in a whole people as a normal and generalized experience of the Christian life. Paul continues through chapter 12 to describe the "gifted" man, the charismatic man, the Christian until the magnificent climax of his thought in Rom.13:11: "for love is the fulfilling of the law."

This is not really a "list" of the charismata. It is often referred to as such. 31 It is rather a description that preserves a sense of the difference of the graces given to each. These functions Paul speaks of: teaching, exhorting, giving, are not orders of ministry but rather the

29Eduard Schweizer, op. cit., p. 179, n.657.

30It seems to me very significant that Romans, written in the winter of 57-58 at Corinth, is dated even later than the letters to the Corinthians. Even though Paul had to grapple with abuses and ersatz spirituality, there is no touch of cynicism or even "technical distinctions" in his use of charism. It is free and clear of cautions and qualifications.

same people acting at different times. This diversity is the fruit of unity, for it is a body which is working; and the Holy Spirit brings about unity through diversity of action. Because many types of organization are needed, none in the Church, at least no responsible body member, can exclude the gift of any other without stultifying his own witness. The charismata, when genuine, are free gifts of the Spirit, not destined for exhibition but bestowed to promote salvation and love in the community, and conditioned by a God-consecrated and sanctified life.

"The particular function of the grace that is given man, particularly to the individual as his special task, is decided by God's vocation and by the distribution of the charismata of the Spirit, which are nothing but the special directions in which one and the same Spirit unfolds its action."

The charismatic gift, while it has a beginning and is observable, is not an absolutely new faculty of the soul, and its exercise is not absolutely distinguishable and separable from ordinary activities and capacities. The entrance of the Spirit does not supersede man's self-consciousness. His power compels, but does not coerce; it leads and directs, but does not over-ride the personality of those who are thus directed. The biblical image of Spirit descending "like a special anointing" on certain chosen persons illumines the manner of the Spirit's action upon man. His "coming down" acts as a sign of his presence and creative activity and at the same time is the harbinger of an outpouring


which will spread this Spirit over the entire community. But *charisma* goes a step further than "having" the Spirit in a permanent possession. It is "to-be-led-by-Him." In the Greek there are two terms for leading: one denotes violent and irregular propelling, the other refers to constant, unbroken, abiding force, acting sweetly and powerfully. The first is ψειδόμενον (being borne by the Spirit), used by Peter in his Second Epistle (1:21). The word used by Paul in Romans is, by contrast, ἀγωνότατον (8:14); the child of God is led by an active agent to an end determined by the Spirit and along a course marked out by the Spirit, but nonetheless by virtue of the soul's own power of action and through its own strenuous effort. If this is not his meaning, then why the note of exhortation in Paul, even as he celebrates with the Christians the free gifts they are receiving from the Spirit?

---


38 While these are gifts, they are operative as activities, as suggested by the frequent use of the words "service" and "working."
III Charisma in First and Second Corinthians:

The best known scriptural passages concerning the charismata are contained in Paul's letters to the Christian Communities in Corinth.39 Synonymously with charismata, Paul uses θεοματικον (spiritual things) or θεοματα (the plural form of the word spirit). An interesting facet of the discussion in Corinthians and one that has tended to divert the whole and accurate understanding of the notion Paul is dealing with is the range of charismata he displays here - from the ecstatic to the norms of everyday religious practice. Actually a close look at the way Paul spoke of this phenomena and the context of his remarks greatly modifies the traditional, narrow, technical, and dichotomized view of charismatic experience.

The First Letter to the Corinthians was written probably in A.D. 57. Paul had already received some disturbing information from Corinth, apparently in a letter from there (see I Cor. 7:1). The greater part of Chapters 7 through 16 of Paul's letters was based on the communication he had received earlier.40 Thus the occasion is very much a rejoinder.

39 I Cor. 1:7; 7:7; 12:1, 9, 28, 30, 31; II Cor. 1:11.

40 From a clue in I Cor. 5:9-11, John C. Hurd has constructed a theory that two events preceded the composition of the First Letter, namely, a three-fold arrival of news from Paul to them. The origin of I Corinthians, N. Y., Seabury Press, 1965, p. 48. Actually he sees the First Epistle to the Corinthians as we know it, to be the fourth state in an exchange of communication. Stage 1: Paul's first preaching in Corinth and the founding of that church. Stage 2: Paul's supposed previous letter to the Corinthians. Stage 3: The information which came, partly oral and partly written, in reply. It was apparently brought to Paul by Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, and by "Chloe's people." Some of this correspondence was in the form of questions addressed to Paul by the Church; some in the form of comments on the situation in Corinth by some or all the travelers. Stage 4: I Corinthians, Paul's response both to questions he had been asked and to news about situations in Corinth which he believed needed correcting.
Any reader who has one piece of one-side of a two-way correspondence is well advised to be cautious in interpreting meanings. This is a complex and manifold document assuming unspoken knowledge about the problems of the early Church. It is very difficult to reconstruct exact meanings from having overheard only one end of a telephone conversation. Hence, that very one-piece character of this letter militates against it being used as the exclusive evidence in coming to a theological conclusion. Secondly, the attitude in which the first letter to the Corinthians was written is not detached theological speculation. It is rather a pastoral emergency, and Paul responds with some hurt and anger. The Corinthians put a question to him to this effect: Concerning spiritual men (πνευματικοί), how are we to distinguish between them? How is it possible to test for the Spirit? Paul’s answer indicates that their question was not just a polite request for his opinion on the matter. The Corinthian Congregation seemed to hold one opinion quite firmly, which Paul had to struggle to uproot.

"Paul’s length, complexity, and singleness of purpose indicate that he was attempting to persuade those who hold a view contrary to his own..." 42

Paul’s argument in Chapters 12 through 14 is designed to broaden the view of spiritual gifts that was tending to become narrowed and constricted to a gnostic sort of elite. His intention thus is not the simple

41 The majority of commentators take πνευματικοί as a neuter meaning "spiritual gifts." However, J. Weiss makes the point that Paul has added the idea of a variety of spiritual gifts whereas the Corinthians had thought only of the gift of glossolalia, or tongues. Therefore it is probable that in this letter the term refers to spiritual men (masculine). Another scholar, Parry, suggests that the ambiguity is related to the fact that the Corinthians used the word "spiritual things," in the narrow sense, and St. Paul, without at first directly combating this view, uses their term in such a manner that the wider sense becomes dominant. See Hurd, op. cit., p. 194.

42 Ibid.
practical one of trying to promote unity. That will be done on the everyday level of order. Rather the theory that is being furthered by his exhortations is a defense of diversity. His intention was not to preserve an administrative unity that was breaking up through unruly charismatic elements, but the reverse - to encourage diversity as the only possible way the Spirit can work in world of limited beings! His "body" image is integral to the discussion of charismata, in Corinthians as well as in Romans. A body cannot consist of one perfect member, but must be many members, each of which is imperfect alone. He was asking for a broader viewpoint among the Corinthians. They should see variety (not balance of power between two types, but variety) as the best way for the Spirit to work. His work is with men, who are in existence variously. Because the Corinthians seemed to regard speaking with tongues as the only or best gift, he put it as the least gift to show them the importance of the others they were overlooking as ordinary. It was not to demote tongues, but to elevate in their eyes the real gift they were not seeing. This aspect of the Epistle to the Corinthians is typical of its remedial approach. Things are weighted, not absolutely, but according to the teaching needs of this particular group in their particular dilemma. To generalize lightly to a theology of charisma from these spiritual first-aid treatments, would be hazardous at best. However, from the discussion, many bits of information can be culled which contribute to a more integral understanding when all have been pieced together.

Some excerpts from I Cor. 12, translated in the clear English prose of J. B. Phillips can serve to illustrate the remedial approach that modifies every statement in this epistle.
"Now I want you to understand as Christians that no one speaking by the Spirit of God could call Jesus accused, and no one could say that he is the Lord, except by the Holy Spirit. Men have different gifts (phrase omitted), but it is the same Spirit who gives them. There are different ways of serving God, but it is the same Lord who is served. God works through different men in different ways, but it is the same God who achieves his purposes through them all. Each man is given his gift (manifestation phrase omitted) by the Spirit that he may use it for the common good... He gives some examples, and then concludes: Behind all these gifts is the operation of the same Spirit, who distributes to each individual man as he wills." (I Cor. 12:1-12)

Similarly after his description of the manner in which a body works together in organic unity, sharing the common joy and suffering, Paul prepares the point for correction. What about the reported rivalry and jealousy among the Corinthian Christians?

"Now you are together the body of Christ, and individually you are members of him. And in his church God has appointed first some to be his messengers; secondly, some to be preachers of power; thirdly, teachers. After them he has appointed workers of spiritual power, men with the gifts (phrase omitted) of healing, helpers, organizers, and those with the gift of speaking in "tongues." As we look at the body of Christ do we find all are his messengers... preachers... teachers?... No, we find God's distribution of gifts is on the same principle of harmony that he has shown in the human body. You should set your heart on the best spiritual gifts (phrase omitted), but I will show you a way which surpasses them all." (I Cor. 12:12-31.)

These words are designed to change an attitude, to show them where to "set their hearts" rather than to teach a clear and definite doctrine. Moreover, the manifestations of the Spirit which Paul describes are not from the scriptures or the world of theoretical formulation. They are from the real existential order, a turning of the Corinthian's attention to the things which are evidenced everywhere about them. The message is essentially low-key. So what if there are different kinds of gifts he
seems to say. Don't get jealous and funny. Take it easy; stay cool. By his choice of so "normal" an example as the human body, Paul is associating the gifts, not with wonders and spectacles, but with the distribution of the ordinary in life. Then when Paul goes on to speak of the "best" gifts, it is in the context of love, not in the exalting tone that, far from attributing to the charismatic, he ridicules.

I Cor. 1:5-7: "In everything you are enriched by him, in all utterance and in all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that you are lacking in no gift (μη δειν ηδονοπαθητη) waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

As clearly as he praises the wonder and the power of God among the Corinthians, Paul is at pains to keep from identifying that power, either in himself or in them, with the miracles and brilliant displays of the pagans. Far from giving an impression of extraordinary means, he claims his authenticity as an apostle of Christ in that his power was not so.

"In the same way my brothers,...I did not come equipped with any brilliance of speech or intellect... As a matter of fact, in myself I was feeling far from strong; I was nervous and rather shaky. What I said and preached had none of the attractiveness of the clever mind, but it was a demonstration of the power of the Spirit! Plainly God's purpose was that your faith should rest not upon man's cleverness but upon the power of God (Δυναμεις θεου) (I Cor. 2:1-6).

Whatever demonstration of power Paul was remembering here, he assumed the Corinthians would also remember. And in that memory they would discover the co-incidence of spiritual power and ordinary means. Just preceding, in chapter one, with a hint of rebuke, Paul
put the miraculous elements, but not the *charismata*, plainly in opposition to the real Christian message.

"For the Jews ask for miraculous proofs and the Greeks are intellectual panacea, but all we preach is Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the Jews and sheer nonsense to the gentiles but for those who are called whether Jews or Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. And this is really only natural for God's foolishness is wiser than man and his weakness is stronger than men." (I Cor. 1:22-26)

The way of life that a man chooses follows upon the free gift, the "charisma" given to him. Paul had the capability and desire to remain unmarried, and was convinced of it as a good way to live. However, this suggestion is not his but the Spirit's to give:

"But every man has his proper gift (τῆς ἡματίας τῆς ἡμῶν) from God, one after this manner and another after that." (I Cor. 7:7)

Marriage, like continence, is a way chosen as a result of a spiritual gift to be the social condition of a Christian. This gift enables the individual man to fulfill his task in the service of the brethren: the normalcy and realism again accompany the charisma which

---

43 Paul implied that the Corinthian's worship was too similar to the enthusiastic worship of idolators. In contrast to such pagan enthusiasms, the Spirit's action is accomplished in order and love.

44 The many attempts to build up a theology of the religious life based on the "charismatic" character of virginity supposedly supported by this text are just not warranted. The "charisma" Paul speaks of is a gift prior to the choice of marriage or virginity; he does not canonize anyone way of life as charismatic. The texts must be read closely.
is being accepted and followed. After the section on vocations and how to handle sexual questions, Paul comes to the practical matter of facing reality.

"I merely add to the above that each man should live his life with the gifts that God has given him and in the condition in which God has called him. This is the rule I lay down in all the Churches." (I Cor. 7:17)

It will become more explicit in later chapters, but again as in Romans the climax of the discussion of charism says by implication: it just doesn't matter what the circumstances are - love God.

In Chapters ten through fourteen of First Corinthians Paul has incorporated his most detailed and urgent advice on the troublesome matter of spiritual gifts. This is living reflection, not prefabricated instruction known by everyone but the Corinthians. The process of theologizing, of reflecting on an event of revelation in the light of former revelation and applying to it the skills of the other sciences, is clearly being carried on within the verses of these chapters. Paul is grappling with the existential fact of the Spirit's manifestation and trying to show the people how this fact forms an integral part of their Christian experience. These chapters cannot be turned into a catechism lesson on the definition of charismata.

How did Paul and the early Christians understand the variety of realities that they named charismata? Paul mentions nine different gifts in I Cor. 12:8-10, and with slight variation in I Cor. 12:28-29.

---

Sometimes "lists" of charismata are spoken of. Paul has four such catalogs - the two in Corinthians, one in Romans 12:6-8, and one in Ephesians 4:7-12. These are obviously not intended as formal listings or hierarchical assignings of value. Paul is rather picking specific examples rather haphazardly from the air.
The number is in no way important; rather the stress is on the variety and diversity of spiritual powers. This emphasis is clear even in the literary form, for repetition is used (the word for varieties, διαφέρεται, occurs three times) as well as variation of terminology. (In place of charismata, Paul sometimes uses ἐνεργεία or θεωρικά or θεαματικά).

As equipment for service, Paul mentions wisdom (τοῦ σοφία) and knowledge (γνώσεως), but as spoken, that is for teaching. There is faith (πίστεως) and healing (σωμάτων) and miracles (ἐργατικά δυνάμεις).

The wonder works or workings of power that Paul names as charismatic gifts are in a direct line from Jesus' own activity. The synoptics apply the same concept of δυνάμεις to him and say that he bestowed on his disciples the δυνάμεις (power) in addition to the ἐξουσία (authority). These works of power are thus more than external marvels; they witness rather to the presence of the Holy Spirit and of the time of messianic fulfillment.

The gift of prophecy (τοῦφήστερον) is valued as a direct gift of

---

The faith Paul includes here is that which leads to healing, the faith that is constantly spoken of in the Synoptics (Mk. 5:34; 10:52; 11:22; Lk. 17:6). However one wonders if there can be two kinds of faith - the Pauline kind necessary for salvation and the "charismatic" kind. It would be more consistent with the total Pauline thought to consider every man of faith a charismatic; one possessed and led by the gratuitous Spirit.

The apostles needed the authority from Christ in order to exert the power. Εξουσία could be used to describe the societal position which afforded the capacity for wielding dynamis. See also Rudolf Ott, op. cit. p. 73.
the Spirit. The Church needs their service, but it no more chooses prophets than it chooses apostles. It can, however, recognize them and test them, and either allow or refuse them a place for prophesying in the assembly of worship. It would seem from Paul's statements that all members of the congregation are regarded as potential prophets, likely to prophesy at any time. From I Cor. 11:1 it could be concluded that there were women prophets, although from I Cor. 14:34 their utterance seems very restricted. The symbolic language used in prophecy is a sign, according to Paul, not to the unbelieving but to believers. Whereas the teachers taught *prophētēs* of the faith (I Cor. 11:22) the prophets were concerned with *tō παντα μυστήρια* I Cor. 14:2. Here Paul places the strategic gift, so far as the Corinthians were concerned, the gift of speaking in tongues (γενναίος ρητορικός), in no special order. It is just one of the many gifts. However, once it is thus placed in proper context, he will take it up again to solve the small practical problems which have characterized its use among the Corinthians.

---

48 "Prophecy as Paul uses it is the gift of expounding scripture rather than of foretelling." Dictionary of Christian Antiquities, p. 350. Prophecy is the only one of the Pauline charismata which is mentioned anywhere in the writings of St. John. See Jn. 16:12-15. The office of the Paraclete is to include "declaring" or "reporting" divine things. The word John uses - to report το έρωμενον, is to predict the future, i.e. prophecy. See International Critical, Vol. II, p. 511.

There is the gift of discernment of spirits (διακρίνεις πνευμάτων), whereby prophesy can be properly evaluated and tested. There is the ability to interpret tongues (ἐρμοθέα τῶν οἰκου). All are gifts designed to give unity, solidarity and healthy growth to the Christian body. All have value in proportion as they further this end, for each gift is in a relationship with every other gift. (I Cor. 12:12).

The enumeration of charismata in I Cor. 12:28 treats them more as ministries functioning institutionally than as interchangeable gifts acting upon a particular occasion or need. There is a different arrangement here from that in the parallel passages already studied. The gifts of administration and service are included; the privileged threesome of apostles, prophets, and teachers is given deliberate ranking and glossolalia is left to the very end. Paul's arrangement of the various examples hardly deserves the minute analysis and conjectures to which it has been subjected. All of Paul's energies so far have gone into an attempt to convince the Corinthians that there is no absolute "order of importance" in the charismata other than that given by love and service of the brethren.

"God has set (ἐθέτω) some in the Church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers. After that workers of miracles, then gifts of healing, services (ἐρμοθέα τῶν οἰκου), administration (κυριεύσεως), diversities of tongues. (I Cor. 12:28-31).

50 This gift can illustrate how the charismata include, even while they surpass, the natural faculties of the person. Discernment surpasses while it undoubtedly takes into service the natural gift of feeling what is going on in the soul of another. There is not a basis in Paul to split the charismata from the ordinary experience of life. See Otto, op. cit., p. 356.

51 See for example Eduard Schweizer, op. cit., p. 182.
There are diverse theories on the precise significance of Paul's first... second... third order. Harnack saw the "triad" of apostles, prophets, and teachers as a distinguishable group, even an itinerant group in the service of the universal church, in this way contrasted with, and held in higher esteem than the leaders of the local churches. Schweizer argues that this cannot be demonstrated. In some of the "lists" e.g., Eph. 4:11, the stationary administrative pastors are put with the evangelists before the teachers. In Acts 13:1, there is a conjunction of prophets and teachers, but they belong to the local church and their functions do not relate to the universal Church. Nor are they set side by side with the apostles. Luke probably regarded both terms "prophets" and "teachers" as two names for the same men. Moreover, concludes Schweizer, even if there were prophets and teachers working with the apostles, they did not form a group to be contrasted with other people.52

The Interpreter's Dictionary indicates the order of importance as depending upon the scope of the ministry. Thus the apostles were highest because their mission was to the whole Church, not just to a community. Schweizer's point of view is again in direct opposition. His reading of Paul convinced him rather that... "for Paul no one is an apostle for the whole body of Christians but for the particular Church for which the commission is given" (I Cor. 9:2; Gal. 2:8; 1:16).

This group of "apostles" is also much larger than the traditional twelve plus Paul.54 It seems, however, that to continue a discussion on "which of the gifts is greatest and why" is again to go completely against

52Schweizer, op. cit., p. 182.
54Schweizer, op. cit., p. 195.
the spirit of Paul's previous teaching on the charismata. There is no correct answer to a false question, and undue stress on the importance of lists and arrangements is to falsify the issue that was central to Paul.

Another difficulty should at least be mentioned. Where do the "bishops" or pastors or ἐπίσκοποι find their place? At first glance it would seem to be with the administrators, deacons, and financial officials (II Thess. 5:12; Eph. 4:11; Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1). They, with the social workers, such as miracle workers, healers, and helper, function more properly in a more local situation. But the administrators are subordinate to the apostles, prophets, and teachers. The office of the ἐπίσκοποι is not at all clear.55

But Paul concludes in his now familiar way - to establish once again the solid everyday context of the christian life.

"But seek earnestly the best gifts. I will show you a more excellent way." (I Cor. 12:31).

Not all may share in everyone of the gifts enumerated above; but in love, all may share, for it is the gift which binds the community.

Paul contrasts ἀγάπη (the undeserved love received from God and responded to with love) with tongues, prophecy, and knowledge.

The effect, in a close and careful reading of the text, is not to demote the more specified gifts, but to place love in its proper perspective; to elevate it from its place of little value by the very appreciation the Corinthians had for the gifts Paul placed below it. After verse 1, not a single descriptive adjective is used in the Greek text. He uses verbs, for love is dynamic and active. It will not come to an end,

55Richardson, op. cit., p. 334.
but the other gifts will pass away. And Paul emphasizes their ephemerality by repeating three times the word pass away (καταποιεῖται). The need for tongues and almsgiving and prophecy will pass away; but love, which should have been served by all the other gifts, will never pass away.56

Chapter thirteen is a link for Paul between his general discussion of spiritual gifts and the direct encounter with the practical questions relating to tongues and prophecy that were fascinating the Corinthian community. The chapter on love puts the whole discussion once more into perspective. For those who needed a still more direct approach, as well as those who would find a conflict between the charismatic and the Church represented by Paul, the first verse of Chapter 14 is made to order.

"Follow after love and desire spiritual gifts." Only then is the corrective note introduced. Of the two gifts pertinent to the Corinthians' needs, Paul recommends that they value prophecy higher than glossolalia.

The admiration of the more spectacular charismata, such as "tongues" was a mark of the spiritual immaturity of many in the Christian community. Paul does not deny that glossolalia is a genuine sign of the Spirit's activity. He even admits that he himself speaks with tongues as such as any of them.57 Yet he insisted that its utterance in the assembly should be intelligible and its performance orderly so that it would not distract from more important things. What became the major issue between them and him was their exaggerated emphasis on speaking with tongues.

---

56 The relationship between the charisma and love should indeed be causal. Love is "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us" Rom. 5:5.

57 I Cor. 2:4; I Cor. 14:18.
The clear implication is that here again is a topic on which he did not wish to contradict his former teaching, but which he had to deal with firmly as a pastor.\footnote{John C. Hurd, loc. cit., p. 287.}

Paul shows clearly that in the situation of public worship, of which he is speaking here, the gift of prophecy is of greater value to the congregation. But then he adds—unless the man who speaks with tongues also has his message interpreted. Far from condemning tongues through this faint praise, Paul ends up in a "Why not both?!!" position.

"I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding also." (I Cor. 14:15)

The worship service in these early communities allowed for many different manifestations of the Spirit's activity. There were spontaneously composed psalms or hymns (Eph. 5:14; I Tim. 3:16); Lessons (given by the teachers); Revelations (by the prophets);\footnote{I Cor. 14:24 The results of prophetic preaching would provide material for a complete study in itself: (1) conviction of sin (and here the same word, \textit{\underline{\text{\textalpha\textlambda\nu\sigma\tau\iota\nu}}}, is used which Christ in John 16:8 applies to the Paraclete); (2) judgement... (The spiritual man judges all things \textit{\textalpha\omega\nu\alpha\kappa\rho\iota\omicron\upsilon\omicron\nu} and is himself judged by no one) and (3) disclosure of the secrets of the heart (I Pet. 3:14).} Speaking in tongues\footnote{It is difficult to ascertain the precise phenomenon which takes place when a person speaks "in tongues." It seems to be essentially prayer—speech directed primarily toward God and only secondarily concerned with the community. The Interpreter's Dictionary, p. 196, states that it is not to be understood as speaking in foreign language, yet cases are recorded where "tongues" was intelligible as Polish or Chinese or Hebrew or some little known African dialect. (See John Sherrill, They Speak with Other Tongues, New Jersey, Spire Books, 1964), p. 22 ff. Sometimes tongues are called "heavenly language," "Tongues of angels," or "unknown tongues," emphasizing that without an interpreter they seem to the hearer to be nonsense syllables. C. J. Sirks (p. 84) states that glossolalia can refer simply to interpreting scripture with new righteousness and insight. The popular use of the term "gloss" to indicate a marginal clarification may support this point of view, but it is not shared by other scholars.} (only if an interpreter were present); and Discernment (by the total community...
whose function it was to test the spirit, weigh the prophecies, and
discern the source of the inspirations at work.\textsuperscript{61}

The charismatic manifestations in the assembled church were seen
as fulfilling a two-fold function. First, they were a sign that the
Holy Spirit had taken possession of this person, that he had been
"baptized by the Spirit." This sign itself served the advantage of
the Church, for it disposed unbelievers either to accept the truths
of the gospel and be converted or to manifest their infidelity.
(I Cor. 14:21-25).\textsuperscript{62}

Secondly, the gifts could function as a continuing power to be expe-
rienced for the edification of the one possessing it and used for the
service of the brethren. Even tongues, least useful to all, conferred
certain clear benefits on the Church. They were a help to praise God;
yhey enabled a man to pray even at times when he was not sure what to
ask for; and they provided a direct vehicle of communication between

\textsuperscript{61}The Interpreter's Bible, X, p. 208.

\textsuperscript{62}Steinmuller and Sullivan, op. cit., p. 101. See also Gal. 3:2.
God and man when, in public worship, they were accompanied by interpretation.  

Paul's advice to the Corinthians then is rather toward an attitude concerning a truth they both accept than a doctrinal dissertation. "My brothers, don't be like excitable children," he writes, "But use your intelligence." (I Cor. 14:20) and..."God is not a God of disorder but of harmony, as is plain in all the churches" (emphasis mine, I Cor.14:33). Paul here is clearly one who really values all the gifts and sees them operating. His corrective language is merely to preserve them from diminishment by the theatrical.  

The Pentecostal Churches take their form of worship, even today from I Cor. 14. It is part of their doctrine that tongues, as a sign, always accompanies the baptism of the Holy Spirit and sometimes remains with the person as a functional gift. This movement has received increasing momentum from the fact that members of many organized religious bodies have undergone, in recent years, spiritual experiences place them in an affinity with the Pentecostals. This description of a Pentecostal service, by a journalist who was assigned to cover it, illustrates the suitability of the body image that Paul chose to show the ideal of unity and harmony that should prevail in a spirit-led congregation.

"The crowd psychology aspect of it fascinated me. I'd heard of group mind, but never until we walked into that room did I know that such a thing existed. There was an indefinable bond, an almost palpable concord between the separate human beings in that room. The order was a living organic thing, not a response to rules or the direction of a chairman, but to some inner urging like the calls of a body working together." John Sherrill, op. cit., p. 22.

The intimation grows that the popular fear and misconception about charismata has come from a superficial identification of the spiritual gifts with their abuse, against which Paul cautions. This could also account for the notion that they are in conflict with the institutional element, as disorder would be in conflict with order. However, genuine charismata in Paul stand as firmly for order as he himself does.
and summarizes his "middle-of-the-road" recommendations. In conclusion then, my brothers, set your heart on preaching the word of God while not forbidding the uses of tongues. Let everything be done decently and in order." (I Cor. 14:39-40).

In conclusion then, my brothers, set your heart on preaching the word of God while not forbidding the uses of tongues. Let everything be done decently and in order." (I Cor. 14:39-40).

In Second Corinthians there is just one use of the term charisma, but it is a most interesting one. Paul writes... "here you can join in and help by praying for us, so that the gift (Χάρισμα) bestowed upon us in answer to many prayers will mean eventually that many will thank God on our behalf." (II Cor. 1:11). Christians then are able, through prayer, to mediate the gifts of the Spirit to each other. The implication is strong here that the gifts of grace are to be bestowed on every member and that every member is called to service of the others, just as it is understood that every member of the Church can baptize. 65

The charismatic gifts are not, then, to be consigned to the realm of an abnormal elite.

"The charismata are not primarily extraordinary, but common; they are not of one kind, but manifold; they are not limited to a special group of persons, but truly universal in the Church. All this implies also that they are not a thing of the past (possible and real only in the early Church), but eminently contemporary and actual; they do not hover on the periphery of the Church but are eminently central and essential to it. In this sense one should speak of a charismatic structure of the Church which embraces and goes beyond the structure of its government. In the widest sense this charisma is God's call to the individual person in view of a specific service within the community, including the ability to perform this service. Charisma, call, and service are interconnected. The services and charismata presuppose the call." 66

65 Schweizer, op. cit., p. 28.


IV Charisma in Ephesians and I & II Timothy:

The actual word charisma does not appear in Ephesians; however the enumeration of gifts is so close to those of Romans and Corinthians that Paul is obviously speaking about the same reality. He shows how each one of us is given grace according to the measure of Christ who gave gifts (δώρα) to men.

"He gave (δόθη) some apostles, some prophets, evangelists, pastors, (ποιμένες) and teachers for the perfecting of the saints according to the work of (διακονία) the ministry, unto the building up of the body of Christ." (Eph. 4:11-12).

This "building of the body of Christ," a process achieved by the charismata functioning harmoniously, has another end in view...

"until the time comes when in the unity of common faith and common knowledge of the Son of God, we arrive at real maturity that measure of development which is meant by the fullness of Christ."

Paul understands and expresses these gifts as a normal stage in the whole process of maturation. There is no special character implied here, nor any spectacular element that would take the charismatic out of the well-trodden path of the ordinary Christian trying to live the gospel.67

Once a particular gift has been recognized, that person's call to service does, however, take him to specific duties and claims. The work of the ministry, in the wider sense of Ephesians 4:12, was carried on by every member of the Church according to his personal charisma of the Spirit received at baptism. But there was also, from the earliest days of the Church, the special or ordained ministry. The relationship of

---

67Gal. 5:22. "The Spirit, however, produces in human life fruits such as these: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, fidelity, tolerance and self-control -- no law exists against any of them."
There is, no doubt, then, that this group was of apostolic institution. Moreover the apostles may have been inspired by the Essene organization, with one mebagger (inspector) who presided over gatherings, and another responsible for communal property. The Greek name for this official is ἐπίσκοπος, which is reminiscent of ἐπίσκοπος. The close likeness between the two offices can hardly be coincidental. 70

Jewish Christian texts attest to other offices in the community besides that of the episcopoi. The Didache speaks of prophets (XIII, 4), prophets and teachers (XV, 2) and apostles and prophets (XI, 3); and refers to them as similar to each other. Hermas mentions "Apostles and teachers who preached unto the whole world" (Sim. IX, 25:2) and also speaks of prophets in similar terms to those of the Didache (Mand. XI, 7, 12, 15, 16). 71 All of this points to an organization, a strictly ordered hierarchy with bishop, presbyterate and deacons. Danielou considers this typical of Jewish Christianity since it takes its inspiration from what had previously existed at Jerusalem only. Slowly, however, the pattern of a two level hierarchy spread throughout the universal Church.

"It is now possible to form a fairly comprehensive picture of the Jewish Christian hierarchy. There is first of all a higher degree, that of the successors of the apostles, who are not yet called bishops, but as founders of the Church. At first itinerant, they gradually acquire fixed headquarters. The lower rank of the ministry includes two groups. On the one hand, there is a missionary priesthood, apostles, prophets, and teachers who are a continuation of the group of 'disciples of Christ' and who have others, men and women as their associates, who do not have the priestly character; on the other, a local priesthood consisting of presbyters and episcopoi, who replaces the missionaries once the churches are organized." 72

70 Danielou, op. cit., p. 347f.
71 Ibid, p. 349.
72 Ibid, p. 356.
It is definitely not a question, then, of charisma on one side and institution on the other, but rather that prophets and presbyters, teachers and bishops are all both ministries and charismata. The institutional ministries do not represent a second impoverished stage in a christianity which had at first been simply a mystical movement.  

V Development of term Charisma within Paul's own Vocabulary and Patterns of Word Usage:

Because the word charisma appears only sixteen times in the writing of St. Paul and is concentrated in a few letters, it is almost impossible to detect a mind-change or development in his theology concerning it. All the letters lie within a period of a dozen years from A.D. 50 to 62. The most notable difference to be observed is the greater breadth Paul gives to the concept of charisma in Romans than it has in Corinthians. However, that fact could be attributed as easily to the specific needs of the Corinthian audience as to development within Paul himself.


74 Some scholars, e.g., Windisch and W. D. Davies see the difference between I Cor. 15 and II Cor. 5 as indicating a change in Paul's eschatological hopes. Others, e.g., Lightfoot detect a development of the faith works antithesis from II Cor. 1-9 through Galatians to Romans. Dodd notes an increasing openness and universalism. Schweizer sees the pastoral letters as much closer to the theological conceptions of Luke than those of Paul on the idea of the Church. Acts refers very often to the reality of charismatic activity, but does not use the words charisma or charismata. See Acts 2:14; 4:8, 31; 9:17; 13:9, 52; 10:46, 47 (δωρεά); 11:15, (Δωρεάν); 2:38-40 (δωρεάν); 5:15 (signs and wonders); 15:17, 18 (δωρεάν); 14:3; 19:7, 11 (demonstrations of power: δυναμεία).
The relative lateness of Paul's letters militates against the likelihood of real theological development with the period of the letters.\textsuperscript{75}

The difference in Paul's vocabulary and word usage is probably also without major significance. Charisma occurs only in the Epistles to Romans, Corinthians and Timothy. The word \textit{σοφατα} is used to mean the same sort of spiritual gift in Ephesians and Philippians \textit{(4:17)}. Elsewhere in Colossians and Galatians some variation of \textit{τελευμα} or \textit{δυναμις} is used. Throughout all the epistles, however, charis is found.\textsuperscript{76}

\textsuperscript{75}Hurd, op. cit., p. 8.

\textsuperscript{76}Moulton (ed) A concordance to the Greek Testament, Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1950, "\textit{Χαρις}" p. 1005. While charis does appear often in Paul and Peter, and quite often in Hebrews and the Lucan writings; it is not frequent otherwise, occurring only six times in the Johannine writings, not at all in Matthew or Mark, and once in Jude. Bibel-Lexikon, p. 590.
Chapter Three:

The Relationship of Charisma to Charis:

There are fundamentally three possible types of relationship that charisma could have to charis: complete identity; complete distinction, that is, absence of relationship; or functional continuity while remaining distinct entities. Although this point is not the sole concern of this thesis, it is essential enough to the question of charism to deserve recognition. How did Paul, in the Church of the New Testament, understand and express his understanding of that relationship?

I. Fundamental Meaning of Charis

The Greek word, charis, was used in the Septuagint version of the Bible to translate the Hebrew chen, meaning a favor accorded to someone, or the favor in which one holds someone. In the Old Testament the favor God shows his elect is generally accompanied by an almost motherly compassion (rahamim) and is manifested first of all in his loving kindness (hesed) and then in his faithfulness (emet), as in the important text of Exodus 34:6. In the New Testament, charis, pregnant with all these associations, is used by Paul to designate the whole of the new economy established by Christ on the basis of the forgiveness accorded to men through Christ's death. This negative aspect is coupled with a positive aspect: the adoption that makes us children of God in the risen Christ through the Spirit. 77

The content of grace, or The Favor, in the New Testament is what God gave us in giving his Son, and more precisely, the gift of the Spirit by whom we become sons in the Only-Begotten Son.

"For God has not destined us to the terrors of judgement, but to the full attainment of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." I Thess. 5:9

"But God, rich in mercy, for the great love he bore us, brought us to life with Christ even when we were dead in our sins; it is by his grace you are saved." Eph. 2:5

"...for through him (Christ Jesus) we both alike have access to the Father in the one Spirit." Eph. 2:19

The greatest gift, then, is Christ himself, whose power breaks the rule of Satan and brings in the kingdom of God. Charis, from the pen of Paul, is an active word expressing an active reality. The grace of God is the sending of His Son. If it is understood in this fundamental sense as God's self-giving more than man's receiving, grace is not so much a quality transferred to a man by God; it is rather a manifestation, in a particular person, of the purpose and power of Christ. For further clarification, however, it ought to be noted that this "working" is not the operation of an impersonal power on man, but Christ acting personally. And Christ speaks personally to men's spirits by the Holy Spirit.

"For all who are moved by the Spirit of God are sons of God. The Spirit you have received is ... a Spirit.

---

78 In the New Testament, the word charis appears often in Paul and Peter; often in Hebrews and the Lucan writings, but otherwise seldom (six times in the Johannine writings and once in Jude).

that makes us sons enabling us to cry 'Abba! Father!' In
that cry the Spirit of God joins with our spirit in
testifying that we are God's children; and if children,
then heirs...." Rom. 8:14-16

"By His Spirit," writes Guillet, "God infiltrates hearts in order
to transform them, to open them up to His word, to make them His bearers
and martyrs." The Spirit who speaks in this way speaks of only one
thing: Jesus; and as Paul points out over and over; He has but one movement:
toward the Father.

In this reciprocal movement can be seen the dynamism of grace. And
when grace is understood as this active "gift-ing" of man, it becomes
possible to discuss a relationship between it and the notion of charisma
as presented in Paul's epistles. By grace, Paul meant something prior
to and conditioning all the energy of the charisms. But, as Torrance
demonstrates, he avoided using charis in the sense of an energising
principle. The Spirit (πνεύμα ἱνων) is the energising
principle. And when Paul spoke of grace-gift in the sense of an effect
of Spirit-possession, it was charisma, not charis, which he used.81

So while there is a distinction between the grace, identified with
Jesus Christ, and the charisms, identified with the Holy Spirit, these
manifestations have a profound continuity. For, as regards his
manifestations and effects in the revelation of Acts, the Spirit who is
revealed is none other than the Spirit of Jesus, the Spirit of the Son,
the "Spirit of grace" (πνεύμα τοῦ Χρίστου) Heb. 10:30.

81 T.F. Torrance, op. cit., p. 57.
II. Secondary Considerations on Charis

In a secondary or applied sense, for example, the sense used in his greetings, Paul's use of charis is more elusive. In those passages (also I Cor. 3:10; Gal. 2:7; Rom. 12:3; 15:15) it seems to refer to the results of God's favor as embodied in the Christian's character and conduct. The emphasis here appears to be on the "inward quality" aspect of grace.

Karl Rahner, whose conclusion on the subject of charis I would accept as established, has taken up the problem of inward quality versus God's dynamic action, and comes down firmly in favor of the emphasis on grace as God's communication of Himself to man. Rahner points out that in the Scholastics, especially Bonaventure and Thomas, created or habitual grace is required as a basis for divine self-communication.

"Uncreated grace (God's communication of Himself to man, the indwelling of the Spirit) implies a new relation of God to man. But this can only be conceived of as founded upon an absolute entitative modification of man himself, which modification is the real basis of the new real relation of man to God upon which rests the relation of God to man." 83

On the other hand the Greek Fathers of the Church see the created gifts of grace as a consequence of God's substantial communication to justified men. Irenaeus, whose work has been thoroughly studied by P. Saechter, represents the personal Spirit of God and his gifts as forming a single, indissolubly linked principle of man's sanctification. 84

---

82 This is, of course, a question of emphasis, not a mutually exclusive definition.


84 Ibid, p. 322.
When Rahner himself looks at Pauline theology, he notes that "man's inner justification and renewal is primarily seen as being endowed with the \( \text{Ρνεϊμα} \) \( \text{κύριον} \), being indwelled in by it, and led by it.\(^65\)

"...for St. Paul man's inner sanctification is first and foremost a communication of the personal Spirit of God; and he sees every created grace, every way of being, as a consequence and a manifestation of the possession of this uncreated grace. Thus, at least from the point of view of his concept of pneuma and its structure, we should say that we possess our pneumatic being (our "created sanctifying grace") because we have the personal Pneuma of God. The converse proposition, corresponding to the ordinary view of the scholastic teaching on grace ("God's Pneuma is present in us in a special way because we have created grace") lacks the same measure of immediate and explicit support in St. Paul."\(^66\)

In the book, Mission and Grace, originally published six years after the essay quoted above, Rahner reaffirms his acceptance of the dynamic aspect of grace as the primary one.

"By grace, which means in the last analysis, God's self-communication to his creature in a quasi-formal causality and not...a created reality produced by efficient causality, man is in his very being elevated into an order which is essentially higher than that of a merely natural spiritual person. ...Then, by grace, it follows that \( \text{a man} \) possesses a "grace-given pneumatic individuality."\(^67\)

\(^65\)Ibid., p. 320. He refers to Rom. 5:5, 8:9, 11, 15, 23; I Cor. 2:12, 3:16; 6:19; II Cor. 3:3; 5:5; Gal. 3:2, 5; 4:6; I Thess. 4:10; II Tim. 1:14; Tit. 3:5; Heb. 6:4.

\(^66\)Ibid., p. 322.

Leaving aside the scholastic terminology, the understanding of grace made available through such studies make it possible to glimpse the relationship which Paul assumed, even as he chose the words, between charis and charisma.

III. The Relationship between Charis and Charisma

The Spirit gives to each Christian his peculiar grace-gift and so enables him to perform his allotted ministry within the Church.

"This is the Spirit we have received from God, and not the spirit of the world so that we may know all that God of his own grace (χαρίς) gives us, and...we speak of these gifts of God in words found for us not by our human wisdom but by the Spirit...A men gifted with the Spirit (πνεύματι) can judge the worth of everything, but is not himself subject to judgement by his fellowmen. For, in the words of Scripture, 'Who knows the mind of the Lord? Who can advise him?' We, however, possess the mind of Christ." I Cor. 2:12-16.

There is a continually marked continuity between the manifestation of this Spirit and Christ.

While charism is evidently not the same entity as grace, then, it is not totally unrelated. The continuity between the two is illustrated in frequent juxtaposition of the terms in New Testament passages.

"Through the grace of God (χάρις) we have different gifts (χαράκτερα)." Rom. 12:7

"Stephen, full of grace (χαράτως) and spiritual power (οὐρανικός) continued to perform miracles and remarkable signs among the people." Acts 6:8

"Serve one another with the particular gifts (χαράκτερα) God has given each of you, as faithful dispensers of the magnificently varied grace (χαράτως) of God. I Peter 4:10"
In the New Testament, the term charis actually becomes the designation of a man's apostolic ministry. Grace is not a general benevolent attitude or even something that demonstrates God's loving, but self-contained, nature. Rather it is a particular action directed to an existing man, personally. In this sense, conversion, turning by grace to more grace, must always be understood as a call to serve. What is called "functions" of the body in Romans 12:4 is called "gifts (charismata) differing according to the grace (charis) given us" in Romans 12:6. Because this giving of God's grace continuously recurs, "ministry" can have taken on the association of a gift that is permanent and unchanging. That gift-for-action is, however, related minute by minute to grace that is toward, with, and given to man.

A definite relationship of continuity can, then, be affirmed of charis and charisma as they are expressed in the New Testament. The charismatic gifts are traced by Paul back to the Spirit who is Himself the seal of God's favor (or substitute, for more striking clarity, the word "grace" or even "God's making of us sons in His Son").

The Spirit who is the pledge of God's favor (charis) is the source of His gifts (charismata), or better, the charismata are the putting-into-action of the potential in a specific graced man.
Chapter Four:

Conclusions from Word Study and Exegesis

I. Charisma Belongs to the Ordinary and Universal Features of the Christian Experience.

How intrinsic is the charismatic equipment to Christians and to the ecclesial community? Is it merely accidental and exceptional or does it belong to its essential inner nature? Paul affirms the latter. Men possessed of the charismata are not completely exceptional, marvelous, miraculous beings, but have gifts which can appear in all believers who have received the Spirit. And all believers should expect to have the Spirit. "Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him." (Rom. 8:9). Everyone without exception is given his ministry, and the diversity of these rests on their free distribution by the Spirit himself, who gives what he pleases to everyone (I Cor. 12:11). As gifts/tasks given by the Spirit they are all fundamentally equal. Whether one functions in a position of superiority or subordination is to be regarded as only incidental. Moreover, Paul includes among the gifts of grace such "natural" ministries as the guidance of the Church or the care of other people -- things it would never have occurred to the Corinthians to associate with the "supernatural" or the effects of the Spirit. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit was bestowed only on those who were specially called to special tasks. The Old Testament did not expect a general outpouring of the Spirit until the last days, and then only in extraordinary forms of expression such as miraculous cures or speaking in tongues. In the New Testament however, the Spirit is given

---

to all men redeemed by Christ. The natural gifts of these men—organization, even for ecstasy, can be accepted for service by God's Spirit and so become charismatic ministries. In fact, Paul even lays stress on the non-ecstatic gifts because they promote the building up of the Church and edify the non-believer. Thus a person's natural personality is not to be effaced in responding to a charisma.

"The fulness of grace is shown in God's taking man, together with his full responsibility, into his service." 89

The charismata are an ordinary part of the life of the whole Church as well as of the individual Christian. There has been no time when they were lacking although often they went without recognition. Charismata did not disappear after the age of the New Testament Church, 90 although there were many variations in the way charismata were understood and still more in the content ascribed to them. The trend was steadily toward the spectacular and extraordinary. It is time that this trend be corrected by a careful reading of Paul.

II. The "Charismatic" is not placed in opposition to the "institutional" in the teaching of St. Paul; rather the so-called "institutional" ministries represent one of the varieties of the charismata.

How does Paul show charisma in relation to the institutional? Paul was perhaps the only one to work out the question of institution vs. charismatic theology, and he explicitly repudiates any separation. They are not two parallel problems. A certain variety of gift is

89 Schweizer, op. cit., p. 166.
90 Jouyer, op. cit., p. 174.
ministry that is institutionalized and made permanent, but only permanent by
the certainty of the Spirit's continuing presence to the Church.

The dynamic power of charism is what is operative in the minister and the
existential aspects of the ministry. In the Pauline churches, and
genearly in the primitive Church, the charismata and the hierarchy are
always found existing together. There is not a single text or a single
fact which presents systematic opposition of one to the other. Obviously
there existed at Corinth cases of conflict between certain charismatics
and certain authorities - or between authorities themselves. But this in
no way contradicts the fact that, in the ordinary course of events,
the experience of the charismata and the experience of the hierarchically
organized life of the Church formed but one entity.91

Fundamentally the New Testament knows no distinction between ministry
and office. The Pauline view sees ministry (διακονία) as synonymous
with gift of grace and manifestation of power so that it keeps its

91 Bouyer (op. cit., p. 168) notes the "existence of an imaginary
opposition between a kind of charismatic life in the Church (presumably
primitive) and an institutional one that progressively stifled it, "but
he calls it a "prejudice of Protestant origin to which impartial historical
criticism can lend no support." Harnack did make a distinction between
"charismatic" and "administrative" that has since been exaggerated. A
later Protestant scholar, Eduard Schweizer, puts that opinion in perspective,
and warns against overvaluing the charismatic in Harnack's sense. "As
far as we can now see, it can only be said that even the Primitive Church
ordered certain ministries by means of appointment, while others were carried
out more spontaneously. But this separation...is not that between
"natural" and "charismatic" ministries - Paul and Barnabas; and in the
Pastoral letters the administrator-presbyter-bishops are themselves called
on to teach (I Tim. 3:2; 5:17; Titus 1:9). loc cit, p. 154.
dynamic character. At the same time, the charisma have within themselves the kernel of organization, the need to stabilize in order to serve. The charisma requires a form, though of course its own form, and thus readily sets out in a direction that will somehow institutionalize itself. Paul then allows for no dichotomy between the so-called charismatic and institutional elements in the Christian life.

III. The relationship of the Pauline Charisma to Charis is one of functional continuity.

Is Paul's notion of the charisma related to his understanding of grace? The key to this particular relationship is an adequate understanding of the Pauline concept of charis. If he really meant by grace the impression made popular by the traditional catechisms - a quality inhering in the soul - the charisma rightly seem to belong to another world. But if Paul is understood to be saying that charis is the love of God bestowing himself upon men in an active self-giving that transforms them, then everything about Pauline charisma follows with the perfect logic of the divine economy. Man's process of being "graced" is not completed without the gifts of the Spirit which are ordained not only to show that the salvation of individual men is being accomplished, but to bring humanity to that point when totality of Spirit can be manifest - in the last days. To men the Father gives the Son; the Son gives the Spirit; and the Spirit gives the gifts and powers that will ultimately give men to each other and to God as the well-formed and matured body of the Son. This is the continuity of grace. To cut off charisma from this organic process and handle it like occasional fireworks would be not
only to misread Paul, but to miss profoundly the unity and simplicity that is constant in the revelation of how God acts with men.92

92The whole structure of theologizing that was built upon the gratia gratis data beginning with the scholastics of the Middle Ages appears slightly irrelevant at best. There seems to be nothing in Paul to justify the distinction of those graces which sanctify the man himself and those others which are for the people around him, and somehow come through him without touching him. It implies again that fallacious concept of grace or even charisms as quantities to be kept or distributed at whim. In I Tim. 4:13, Paul tells Timothy not to neglect the gift he was given for preaching, but to cultivate it by study and hard work. (What could be more ordinary?) Then he goes on to say: if you do this you will save not only your own soul but others as well. A similar multiple association of grace - gift - work - grace is implied in II Tim. 1:14: "Take the greatest care of the good things which were entrusted to you by the Holy Spirit who lives within us." (emphasis mine)
ADDITIONUM:

Application of conclusions to certain theological problems related to the charismata:

A problem of great moment and interest in the Church today is that of authority in the Church. It is that same preoccupation which stands behind Rahner's writings on charisma. If, however, charisma is understood in its biblical context it should have something pertinent to say in discussion of authority. The Pauline charisma would not face the hierarchical authority as a "man without an office" thereby likely to be somewhat persecuted or at least out-ranked by the office-holder. The notion of "authority" is much wider than that of administration or particular function within the ministry. Authority in a Christian context is Christ's way of exercising authority - by the greater love and service that calls out to others and strikes a response of love and service. In the Pauline understanding, no man runs after another's gift, nor resents him for it, but rather each takes joy in the gift of the other. Paul would not seek to harmonize two "elements" or "structures" in the Church, but rather to inspire the individual Christians with the attitude of having mutual love as body members. Rahner may defend the charismatic element in the Church saying that without it she would not be complete.93 Rather one should say that the Church does not have a charismatic element, she is a charismatic, Spirit-led community.

There is a lesson to be learned about the generalized notion of authority in the experience of a Church council. Vatican II inspired some discussion of who is to be listened to in government, but suffered from an inadequate and underdeveloped theology of the Holy Spirit. When that theology, including the theology of charism, has flourished it is probable that Christians from every level and phase of life will be invited and expected to contribute to the on-going government of the Church. The function of the total Church to discern and test Spirits might even then be recognized and called for, although because of human nature; individual factions can be expected to carry on their struggles for supremacy and secrecy.

An adequate understanding of charisma can speak, as well, to the questions of freedom and self-determination that are today philosophically and politically in advance of their theological formulation. The Spirit does not override the personality of those who are directed by Him, turning them into "church-service machines" or pseudo magicians. He is, in fact, the Spirit of liberty, releasing men from bondage to the law (Gal. 5:13-18; Rom. 8:2; II Cor. 3:16, 17; Jn. 8:31-36) even to the laws of their own making: limitation, selfishness, isolation. Nor is he the Spirit of an elite; but of every man in Christ, of the anawim.

The apostolate of the Christian follows from his possession by the Spirit. That this apostolate belongs to the laity along side the clergy could never have been questioned by Paul. The Documents of Vatican II say many true things about the apostolate. It is, however, unfortunate that it should have to be affirmed at all, as if at this late date a theory had to be found to justify the full participation already
being demanded by non-clerical Christians.

"For the exercise of this apostolate, the Holy Spirit who sanctifies the people of God through the ministry and the sacraments gives to the faithful special gifts as well (I Cor. 12:7), allotting to everyone according as he will, (I Cor. 12:11)". Thus may the individual "according to the gift that each has received, administer it to one another" and become "good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (I Peter 4:10), and build up, thereby, the whole body in charity (Eph. 4:16). From the reception of these charisms or gifts, including those which are less dramatic, there arise for each believer, the right and duty to use them in the Church and in the world for the good of mankind and for the up-building of the Church. In so doing, believers need to enjoy the freedom of the Holy Spirit who "breathes where he wills" Jn. 3:8. At the same time they must act in communion with their brothers in Christ, especially with their pastors. The latter must make a judgement about the true nature and proper use of these gifts - not in order to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to what is good. (I Th. 5:12, 19, 21)94

and:

"Indeed everyone should painstakingly ready himself personally for the apostolate, especially as an adult. For the advance of age brings with it better self-knowledge, thus enabling each person to evaluate more accurately the talents with which God has enriched his soul and to exercise more effectively these charismatic gifts which the Holy Spirit has bestowed on him for the good of his brothers."95

Very much study needs still to be done on a theology of missions. The Vatican Council did however speak of the Holy Spirit, who distributes His gifts, as also inspiring certain individuals with a missionary vocation. Not only individuals but whole groups seemed called by him to devote themselves to the task of spreading the gospel and a human


95 Ibid. p. 519.
environment that will promote its growth through the whole world. The
mystery of the *charisma* on the individual level is no more profound than
in the matter of vocation, whether they imply an institutional ministry or
a free and individual consecration, to a particular work in the Church. As the notion of *charisma* is better understood, individuals may seek with
more seriousness to discern what is the particular problem of the world
to which the Spirit of God wishes to speak through them.

No emphasis on universality or freedom can diminish the basic
identity of the Church as a sacramental system. As sacramental theology
became more biblical, it also became easier to ascertain the pertinence
of the notion of *charisma* to certain questions on the sacraments. The
conferring of a sacrament is causal in initiating a person into the sphere
of the operation of the Holy Spirit. But which sacrament? Baptism,
which is the initiation into the whole Christian life is also seen by some
theologians as the bestowal of the charismatic Spirit.

"The individual's baptism was also the occasion of endowment with the Spirit, who is assigning to him his particular task within the total ministry of the Church also imparted to him the gift of grace (ΧΑΡΗ) that enabled him to perform it." (I Cor. 12:12-31) 97

96 A study still needs to be made on the special *charismata* of founders
and foundresses of religious groups. Do their followers participate in the
same gift as the founder? Is this what draws a particular person to a
particular group? The difficulty in handling the question is this: the
problem can hardly be approached theologically. Such phenomena are not
evident in the New Testament writings. Because it would have to be
approached somehow phenomenologically, and analyzed historically, the
conclusions might be interesting, but one could hardly be assured that the
same thing as Paul's *charisma* was at work.

97 Richardson, op. cit. p. 110.
"In his baptism the individual Christian was ordained to
the ministry of Christ's Church and given his personal
of the Spirit to enable him to
fulfill his God-given
(1 Cor. 12:4-13)98

On the other hand, Rahner sees Confirmation as the sacrament which
imparts a charismatic role within the Christian community.

"It is clear that the Spirit conferred by the imposition
of hands in this sacrament (Confirmation) is always
regarded as a Spirit that manifests itself externally
in the charismata."99

Actually the charismata should be expected to manifest themselves
within a Christian according to the will of the Spirit and the
cooperation of that person. From scripture we can affirm that there is no
genuine charisma without the Spirit. Moreover, it will always lead to a
glorification of Jesus and toward union with the Father. In this way,
because the existential order of salvation is tied to the sacramental
Church, the charismata are also related to those sacraments. But again,
to cut fine distinctions and try to specify times and places that would
bind the giver of charismata would be to lose everything that has been
gained in understanding, and to contradict the very word for "free gift."

98Richardson, op. cit. p. 350.

See also Boniface Luykx, C. Braem. "Theology of Confirmation", Theology
Digest II, (1963), p. 83: "Confirmation is the sacramental substructure of
all further functions in the Church: Catholic action, religious life,
special charisms, and all forms of Christian witness."
It can be stated with assurance, however: in so far as the sacraments bring a man into a closer relationship with the three Persons of the Trinity, to that degree will the Spirit's action in that man's life be promoted. 100

The discussion of the relationship of charisma to grace suggests a question about faith and healing. Is this not an analogous situation? As the synoptic writers spoke of Christ's power to heal, they always stressed its dependence upon the faith of the man who faced Christ. Faith is of the order of grace, but it brings about the order of charism as well. Are there two kinds of faith - one that is dynamic and leads to works of wonder and one that is a static quality and insures salvation? This is hardly the case. It is not in line with the concept of faith present in the writings of either the synoptics or Paul. Then, is every man of faith a charismatic man? Yes, in the sense in which charisma should be understood. Its range, from the most ordinary to the most extraordinary effects, is a straight line, a continuity; not different levels. The faith that promotes healing and the faith that says "Jesus is Lord" are one faith.

There is a theological point of concern with worship; namely its forms and the order that ought to prevail in public assemblies. Rahner's interpretation of the "orderly way" seems to be slightly different from Paul's.

100 It may be, therefore, that the Eucharist could give the deepest insight into the meaning of charismata.
"Now it is no doubt a rule, a normative principle and a law for the spiritual gifts themselves, that they should operate in an orderly way, that they are not permitted to depart from the order prescribed by authority. As a consequence it is possible to use as a criterion of their authentic spiritual origin the fact whether or not they do this...\textsuperscript{101}

Paul does certainly call for order, and use order - that is, the situation in which all the members of the congregation can hear and profit from each gift - as a criterion of the Spirit's genuineness. However, Paul does not speak of an order arbitrarily set by authority. He is referring rather to the harmony of personal relationships that makes human action, in this case, worship, possible. Such a standard for order is not set like an agenda or timetable by any chairman, but is required by the nature of the Spirit of love who judges authority and charism on every level.

Through the gifts that are operative in a community worshipping together, the body of the Church can be certainly strengthened. There are those who can expound scripture in the Spirit so that the veil is taken away from it in men's hearts (II Cor. 3:14-18) and the dead letter begins to live (II Cor. 3:6, II Tim. 3:16). In a setting of worship, it is undeniable that certain individuals with certain gifts, today as in apostolic times, have a special ministry for passing the Spirit of God to others.

The most fascinating subject in contemporary theology is certainly Christ. In Christology, too, there is a whole world of study to be done

\textsuperscript{101}Rahner, *The Dynamic Element in the Church*. p. 52.
in the light of a theology of charism. At this present stage that world is populated with question marks of every shape and size. Was Christ apparent to his contemporaries as a "pneumatic" or charismatic man or was it only after his resurrection that their reevaluation was done? Did the Spirit refrain from manifesting himself, even through Jesus because "Jesus was not yet glorified?" Can one speak of the humanity of Christ as anointed with the "charism of the divinity?" How did Christ, in his human consciousness, experience the presence of that "charism?" Were his charismatic powers natural powers raised to a new efficacy? What was the relationship of grace and charism in Christ's humanity? For him to be self-consistent, there had to be an essential connection between the person of Christ and his message. To what extent was that connection a conscious and aware thing?

The notion of charisms is integrally related to eschatology and the theology of the last things. For Paul the outpouring of the gifts of the Spirit meant both the realization of eschatology and a reaffirmation of it. Ultimately the dynamic love at work in Christians, the love that is the signature of the Spirit on his gifts, is the Spirit himself at work to advance the eschatological order. Present possession of the Spirit points to the fact that part of the future is already attained and the just past remains in the future. The first disciples waited for a Spirit which they had, but which they needed more of. And it is in line with sound Christian tradition to expect the new Pentecost again and again.
..."The consummation of the kingdom of God is to be
marked by a great revival of the charismatic happenings. Both leaders and people will be Spirit - filled and
Spirit - empowered on a scale hitherto unknown."102

General Conclusion:

The delightfully chaotic outpourings of the Spirit yield rhythmically to more ordinary and organized expressions, but the charismata in the Church are no less operative today than they were in the beginning. As the Spirit penetrates more deeply into the world, he is able to act more surely and universally from within. The gift of healing is not less powerful when it is exercised through sacramental signs and scientific methodologies. The gift of teaching can be exercised in colleges and universities no less than in forums and synagogues. The proper theological use of the word charisma is evidenced in St. Paul as something other than the technical use of the term "charismatic" as it has haphazardly appeared in theological writings. Where the technical use stresses extraordinary and spectacular performances, Paul speaks of these gifts as intrinsic to the normal life of the ordinary Christian. The presence of "charismata" in any community is not a reason for surprise or comment from him until such time as abuses should set in. Those abuses have to do with human behavior, not with the character of the gifts themselves. Where the technical use implies an order apart from and potentially in conflict with the institutional order of the Church, Paul affirms rather the variety of gifts; and because there is one Spirit and many members of a body he shows that diversity is to be valued rather than inspire jealousy and conflicts. Where the technical use separates

The charisma from grace, the Pauline writings indicate that there is one line of continuity - the Spirit bestowing on men a share in the favor of God by making them sons in the image of His Son, receivers also of the gifts of His power, in order to bring one another to the fulness of the stature of the Son. The Pauline texts, then, I submit, support the notion that charisma is continuous with charis and integral to the life of the Christian.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

TEXT:


LEXIKONS:


CONCORDANCES AND GRAMMARS:


**DICTIONARIES: ENCYCLOPEDIAS: WORD STUDIES:**


SECONDARY SOURCES:

BOOKS:


---


ARTICLES:


Moran, W. "Charismatic Ministry in the Primitive Church" Irish Theological Quarterly 17, (1922), 48-55; 101-111.

Olshausen, H. "Nachtragliche Bemerkungen über das charisma des Theologische Studien und Kritiken 2, (Hamburg) (1829), 538-549.


