

**A SOCIAL-SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF HONORING PARENTS IN
THE WORLD OF THE APOSTLE PAUL AND ITS THEOLOGICAL
IMPLICATIONS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 4:14–21**

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ABSTRACT

This study postulates that an anthropological investigation of honor and grace (as opposed to honor and shame) will shed new light on Paul's understanding of familial and spiritual parent-child relations in 1 Corinthians 4:14–21. It contends that Julian A. Pitt-Rivers's grace—signifying reciprocity of hearts and the spirit of gift—is a more suitable paradigm to explore familial reciprocity and spiritual bonds between Paul and the Corinthians and between Christians and God in the social world of St. Paul, compared to previous social-scientific studies of family, honor, and reciprocity. Doing so demonstrates the inseparability of Paul's language of family and grace in speaking of how the divine χάρις in the person of Jesus Christ (the Christ-gift and the life-giving spirit) creates the family of God and preserves all Christians to be more generous and grateful followers in the divine gift-economy. Moreover, we learn that Paul is a “gifted” apostle of Christ and is graced to be the first one to initiate the Christ-gift to the Corinthians and to act honorably by demonstrating his fatherly gratitude (χάρης) verbally and practically because of God's superabundant χάρις in Christ. Finally, Paul's appeal to his Corinthian children to become imitators of him is an invitation to participate willingly in Christ's abounding grace in honor of him as a spiritual parent and for the glory of God.

Keywords: grace (χάρης), gratitude (χάρης), honor, the parent-child relations, non-reciprocity, the Christ-gift, and the spirit of gift (the life-giving spirit)

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On May 1st the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker

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ABBREVIATION

<i>ABD</i>	Anchor Bible Dictionary. Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992
<i>Aer</i>	<i>De aëre acquis et locis</i>
<i>AGJU</i>	<i>Arbeiten Zur Geschichte Des Antiken Judentums Und Des Urchristentums</i>
<i>AJ</i>	<i>Ajax</i>
<i>AJPS</i>	<i>Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies</i>
<i>Alc</i>	<i>Alcestis</i>
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</i> . Part 2, Pincipat. Edited by Hildegard Temporini and Wolfgang Haase. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1972–
<i>AThR</i>	<i>Anglican Theological Review</i>
<i>ATJ</i>	<i>Ashland Theological Journal</i>
<i>BBRSup</i>	Bulletin for Biblical Research Supplements
<i>BDAG</i>	Danker, Frederick W., Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000 (Danker-Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich)
<i>Ben</i>	<i>De beneficiis</i>
<i>BibInt</i>	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
<i>BibInt</i>	Biblical Interpretation Series
<i>BibSem</i>	The Biblical Seminar
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin: A Journal of Bible and Theology</i>
<i>BZNW</i>	Beihefte Zur Zeitschrift Für Die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
<i>CBET</i>	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CBQMS</i>	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
<i>CurBS</i>	<i>Currents in Research: Biblical Studies</i>
<i>CurTM</i>	<i>Currents in Theology and Mission</i>
<i>DPL</i>	<i>Dictionary of Paul and His Letters</i> . Edited by Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993

ECL	Early Christian Literature
EDNT	<i>Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by H. Balz, G. Schneider. ET. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990–1993
Eq	<i>Equites</i>
Eth. nic.	<i>Ethica eudemica</i>
Eth. nic.	<i>Ethica nicomachea</i>
EvQ	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
GBS	Guides to Biblical Scholarship
GEI	<i>Glasnik Etnografskog Instituta</i>
Hel	<i>Helena</i>
Hesperia	<i>Hesperia: Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens</i>
Hist	<i>Historiae</i>
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
HvTSt	<i>Hervormde theologiese studies</i>
IJST	<i>International Journal of Systematic Theology</i>
Inv.	<i>De invention rhetorica</i>
Isthm	<i>Isthmionikai</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JPT	<i>Journal of Pentecostal Theology</i>
JR	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
JSNT	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LPS	Library of Pauline Studies
LSJ	Liddell, Henry George, Rober Scott, Henry Stuart Jones. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996
LTQ	<i>Lexington Theological Quarterly</i>
Lys	<i>Lysistrata</i>

<i>Mem.</i>	<i>Memorabilia</i>
MTSR	Method & Theory in the Study of Religion
<i>Neot</i>	<i>Neotestamentica</i>
<i>NIBC</i>	<i>New Interpreter's Bible Commentary</i> . Edited by Raymond E. Brown et al. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1990
NIGTC	The New International Greek Testament Commentary
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
<i>NV</i>	<i>Nova et Vetera</i>
OCM	Oxford Classical Monographs
<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
<i>Oed. Col.</i>	<i>Oedipiu coloneus</i>
<i>Ol</i>	<i>Olympionikai</i>
<i>PGRW</i>	<i>Paul in the Graeco-Roman World: A Handbook</i> . Edited by J. Paul Sampley. Revised edition. 2 vols. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016
<i>Pyth</i>	<i>Pythionikai</i>
<i>Rhet.</i>	<i>Rhetorica</i>
<i>RevExp</i>	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
<i>Sam</i>	<i>Samia</i>
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLGNT	<i>The Greek New Testament: SBL Edition</i> . Edited by Holmes Michael W. Lexham Press; Society of Biblical Literature, 2011–2013
SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SIGC	Studien Zur Interkulturellen Geschichte Des Christentums
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SNTW	Studies of the New Testament and Its World
SP	Sacra Pagina

<i>SR</i>	<i>Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses</i>
STAC	Studien Und Texte Zu Antike Und Christentum
<i>ST</i>	<i>Studia Theologica</i>
<i>TBT</i>	<i>The Bible Today</i>
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976
TGST	Tesi Gregoriana, Serie Teologia
<i>Them</i>	<i>Themelios</i>
<i>TheolXaver</i>	<i>Theologica Xaveriana</i>
<i>TLNT</i>	<i>Theological Lexicon of the New Testament</i> . Ceslas Spicq. Translated and edited by James D. Ernest. 3 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
WBC	World Biblical Commentary
WGRWSup	Writings from the Graeco-Roman Supplement Series
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament

INTRODUCTION

Current social-scientific studies of 1 Corinthians 4:14–21 have contributed to our understanding of Paul’s parent-child language in the social world of St. Paul. However, those explorations overlooked the first-century cultural value of grace (χάρις) to appreciate Paul’s parent-child expressions replete with the genuine bonds of affection by showing generosity (χάρις) and favors (χάρις) and demonstrating gratitude (χάρις).¹ The cultural value of grace embodies the ideals of long-term relationships like friendship, parent-child ties, and divine-human relations.² Grace also communicates that reciprocal relations transpired through mutually exchanging gifts, favors and services.³ It further represents familial bonds of affection (e.g., joy, honor, and gratitude) that continuously sustain and strengthen existing

¹ Recent social-scientific investigations of grace as gratitude (χάρις) in the New Testament: for example, David W. Pao, *Thanksgiving: An Investigation of a Pauline Theme*, NSBT 13 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002); Stephan J. Joubert, “Religious Reciprocity in 2 Corinthians 9:6–15: Generosity and Gratitude as Legitimate Responses to the Χάρις Τοῦ Θεοῦ,” *Neot* 33, no. 1 (1999): 79–90; James R. Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace in Its Graeco-Roman Context*, WUNT 2/172 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 199–208, 212, 269–72; Zeba A. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion: Patronage, Loyalty and Conversion in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean*, BZNW 130 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004), 108–12, 132–9; “Grace as Benefaction in Galatians 2:9, 1 Corinthians 3:10, and Romans 12:3; 15:15,” in *The Social Sciences and Biblical Translation*, ed. Dietmar Neufeld, SBLSymS 41, (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 25–38; Georges Massinelli, *For Your Sake He Became Poor: Ideology and Practice of Gift Exchange between Early Christian Groups*, BZNW 251 (Boston, MA: de Gruyter, 2021), 113–9, 225–44, 255–60, <https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/9783110723946/html>.

² Tazuko van Berkel, *The Economics of Friendship: Conceptions of Reciprocity in Classical Greece*, *The Economics of Friendship* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

³ Harrison defines reciprocity as the return of favor for acts of generosity by a benefactor; *Paul’s Language of Grace*, 1, 165–210, 348. Crook’s summary on gift-reciprocity and grace in anthropological and biblical studies, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 54–89, 132–48. On “social facts,” see Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, Routledge Classics (London: Routledge, 2002), 101–2. Camille Tarot, *Sociologie et anthropologie de Marcel Mauss* (Repères ; Paris : La Découverte, 2003), 64–5. Andrew Edgar and Peter Sedgwick, *Key Concepts in Cultural Theory* (London: Routledge, 2005), 64. Andrew Edgar, *Cultural Theory: The Key Thinkers*, Routledge Key Guides (London: Routledge, 2002), 157. Émile Durkheim, “What is a Social Fact,” in *The Rules of Sociological Method* (New York: Free Press, 1982), 74. Michael L. Satlow, ed., *The Gift in Antiquity* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 5, 8. Denis Vidal, “The Three Graces, or the Allegory of the Gift: A Contribution to the History of an Idea in Anthropology,” *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 4, no. 2 (2014): 339–68, <https://doi.org/10.14318/hau4.2.024>.

relationships.⁴ More importantly, it (i.e., the spirit of gift) touches upon the spiritual relations among believers and between God and humanity. Therefore, a social-scientific study of Paul's language of grace (χάρις) concerning parent-child expressions will provide a unique window to delve into the social world of the Apostle Paul for understanding familial and spiritual interactions in early Christianity.⁵

This oversight of the cultural value of grace— “free” gift (χάρις), generous giving (χάρις), and reciprocating with gratitude (χάρις)—has resulted from uncritical reifications of Marcel Mauss's (1872–1950) gift-reciprocity in the New Testament studies of familial relations. In his “The Place of Grace in Anthropology,” Julian A. Pitt-Rivers (1919–2001) already articulated the cultural significance of grace. He contended that Mauss's *The Gift* insufficiently explained the non-reciprocal acts of genuine generosity—imposing no obligations to return-gifts, favors and services—and the familial reciprocity and spiritual bonds characterized by true affections like gratitude and enjoyment (of being generous and being favored) in Mediterranean cultures.⁶ Unfortunately, current Pauline studies of grace and familial

⁴ These aspects are mainly explored in philosophical and psychological studies of gratitude. See Fred R. Berger, “Gratitude,” *Ethics* 85, no. 4 (1975): 298–309; Robert A. Emmons and Michael E. McCullough eds., *The Psychology of Gratitude*, Series in Affective Science (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Aafke E. Komter, “The Anatomy of Gratitude,” in *Social Solidarity and the Gift* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 56–75; Peter J. Leithart, *Gratitude: An Intellectual History* (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2014). Ashraf H. A. Rushdy, *Philosophies of Gratitude* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

Other studies of gratitude in ancient societies include e.g., Hans van Wees, “The Law of Gratitude: Reciprocity in Anthropological Theory,” in *Reciprocity in Ancient Greece*, ed. Christopher Gill and Norman Postlethwaite (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 13–49; Bryan Natali, “Pietas: Gods, Family, Homeland, Empire” (Ph.D. diss., Calgary, AB: University of Calgary, 2014); Ingvar B. Maehle, “The Economy of Gratitude in Democratic Athens,” *Hesperia* 87, no. 1 (2018): 55–90; John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock, and Graham Ward, eds., *The Gift Exchanged: The Gift in Religion* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2021).

⁵ For example, Carolyn Osiek and David L. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World: Households and House Churches* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997); Halvor Moxnes, ed., *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 2, 13–41. Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*. Orrey McFarland, *God and Grace*, NovTSup 164 (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

⁶ Julian A. Pitt-Rivers, “The Place of Grace in Anthropology,” in *From Hospitality to Grace: A Julian Pitt-Rivers Omnibus*, ed. by Giovanni da Col and Andrew Shryock (Chicago, IL: HAU Books, 2017), 69–103. Pitt-Rivers's essay, “The Place of Grace in Anthropology,” was originally published in *Honor and Grace in Anthropology*, eds. Jean G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 215–46. The book was reissued in 2005. Since then, the article has been republished in *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 1, no. 1 (2011): 423–50; in *The Anthropology of Catholicism: A Reader*, ed. Kristin Norget and Valentina Napolitano (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2017), 52–62. From here on, Pitt-Rivers's articles will be referenced

reciprocity have not carefully observed Pitt-Rivers's grace-reciprocity ("grace-reciprocity" hereafter) as a corrective of the Maussian mechanisms of gift-reciprocity for a more accurate reading of the genuine acts of generosity and gratitude (i.e., non-reciprocal acts) and familial bonds of affections created and sustained through a chain of giving generously and reciprocating gratefully.⁷ More notably, his grace-reciprocity explores the possibility of non-reciprocity to incorporate the subjective or affective and spiritual aspects of interpersonal relations and moral virtues governed not by social conventions only but also by *religious beliefs*.

For the above reasons, this thesis presumes that parents' generous acts and children's return of gratitude in honor of parents (i.e., all parental figures) and God as an integral part of grace-reciprocity permeate all aspects of family life in Roman Corinth at the time of St. Paul. It proposes that a social-scientific study of honoring parents with Pitt-Rivers's anthropological grace will shed new light on parent-child language in 1 Corinthians 4:14–21 and the theological thrust of χάρις in the social world of Paul.

To support this argument,

(1). Chapter one critically reviews the relevant scholarship on parent-child relations in 1 Corinthians 4:14–21. It shows that current social-scientific studies of parent-child relations—centering mainly on Paul's uses of *pater/materfamilias* and social and religious functions as a founder or patron/broker—have not paid adequate attention to the cultural value of grace in the Corinthian context. In turn, it suggests that a social-scientific study of honoring parents with grace-reciprocity and a

according to the version collected by Giovanni da Col and Andrew Shryock, eds., *From Hospitality to Grace: A Julian Pitt-Rivers Omnibus* (Chicago, IL: HAU Books, 2017), unless they are noted differently.

⁷ Ibid. Pitt-Rivers, "The Kith and the Kin," 121–39; "Ritual Kinship in the Mediterranean," 141–61; "The Paradox of Friendship," 199–209; "Lending a Hand: Neighborly Cooperation in Southwestern France," 211–25, in *From Hospitality to Grace*.

fresh look at the first-century χάρις help reimagine family dynamics in the Mediterranean world and complement current Pauline studies of parent-child relations.

(2). Chapter two closely examines Pitt-Rivers's anthropological understanding of grace. It identifies distinctive features of familial reciprocity compared to other extrafamilial exchanges in Mediterranean cultures. Specifically, it contends that Pitt-Rivers's grace-reciprocity is vital for exploring familial and spiritual connectedness in ancient and modern cultures. His theory allows the possibility of non-reciprocity and highly values the affection of gratitude in long-term relations. It argues that his grace-reciprocity representing a distinctive form of reciprocal and non-reciprocal interactions sheds new light on the parent-child and God-human relations, especially in honoring parents and God with grateful hearts.

(3). Finally, chapter three applies the insights from grace-reciprocity to interpret Paul's uses of parent-child and χάρις-related terms in the Corinthian Correspondence anew. It will show that Paul's ample applications of familial terms and the cultural value of grace are intertwined since these expressions reveal the social *realia* of familial reciprocity. Therefore, grace-reciprocity is applicable to explain parent-child relations in the Corinthian correspondence, taking 1 Corinthians 4:14–21 as an illustration. Also, grace-reciprocity is vital to fathom Paul's explanations of his apostleship, apostolic service, and filial imitation, embedded in the understanding of God's superabundant χάρις in the person of Jesus Christ (i.e., the Christ-gift and the spirit of gift).⁸ More essentially, it will show that Paul's familial reciprocity offers a fresh look at his theological claim: God is the Father of all χάρις, and He shows His special favor toward Christian families in Christ, and, in return, the Corinthian children must respond

⁸ The expression of the Christ-gift is accredited to Barclay. See the discussion by Barclay, *Paul*, especially 331–3. Still, this study contends that the spirit of gift or the life-giving spirit should also be included in the expression of the Christ-gift. Detailed arguments will be presented later in this study.

with gratitude in words of thanksgiving and actions of generosity in honor of the Lord's ministers and the glory of God the Father.

The Question of Method

Cultural-anthropological insights are crucial for making sense of familial terms and relations in ancient societies and valuable for the social-scientific interpretations of biblical texts.⁹ For a few decades, New Testament studies have fruitfully engaged with anthropological insights like kinship, honor, and gift-reciprocity to analyze social and familial interactions within first-century Mediterranean cultures.¹⁰

⁹ For example, Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001). Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families*, 2, 13–41. For further readings see John J. Pilch, "Interpreting the Bible with the Value Orientations Model: History and Prospects," *BTB* 33, no. 2 (2002): 92–9; Bruce J. Malina, "Rhetorical Criticism and Social-Scientific Criticism: Why Won't Romanticism Leave Us Alone?," in *The Social World of the New Testament: Insights and Models*, ed., Jerome H. Neyrey and Eric C. Stewart (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2008), 6–21.

¹⁰ The key scholars for the development of social-scientific criticism are Mary Douglas, Bruce J. Malina, Jerome H. Neyrey, Richard Rohrbaugh, John Pilch, John H. Elliott, and Philip F. Esler. For introductory works to social-scientific studies of the Bible see John H. Elliott, *What Is Social-Scientific Criticism?*, GBS (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993); David G. Horrell, "Social Sciences Studying Formative Christian Phenomena: A Creative Movement," in *Handbook of Early Christianity: Social Science Approaches*, ed. Anthony J. Blasi and Paul-André Turcotte (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2002), 3–28. Further readings: e.g., John H. Elliott, "From Social Description to Social-Scientific Criticism: The History of a Society of Biblical Literature Section 1973–2005," *BTB* 38, no. 1 (2008): 26–36; Zeba A. Crook, "Critical Notes: Reflections on Culture and Social-Scientific Models," *JBL* 124, no. 3 (2005): 515–20; Halvor Moxnes, "Social-Scientific Readings of the Bible," in *The New Cambridge History of the Bible: From 1750 to the Present*, ed. John Riches (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 4:160–71.

For recent discussions concerning the honor-shame model application in New Testament studies: see Zeba A. Crook, "Honor, Shame, and Social Status Revisited," *JBL* 128, no. 3 (2009); Mark T. Finney, *Honour and Conflict in the Ancient World: 1 Corinthians in Its Graeco-Roman Social Setting*, LNTS 460 (London: T & T Clark, 2012), 6–16; Halvor Moxnes, "Honor and Shame," in *The Social Sciences and New Testament Interpretation*, ed. Richard L. Rohrbaugh (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996), 19–40; John J. Pilch, "Honor and Shame," *Oxford Bibliographies Online*, Biblical Studies, March 20, 2020, [DOI: 10.1093/OBO/9780195393361-0077](https://doi.org/10.1093/OBO/9780195393361-0077).

Useful discussions on reciprocity in New Testament studies are provided by Stephan J. Joubert, "One Form of Social Exchange or Two? 'Euergetism,' Patronage, and Testament Studies," *BTB* 31, no. 1 (2001): 17–25, <https://doi.org/10.1177/014610790103100104>. A brief history of gift-reciprocity and recent scholarship is offered by Chris Hann, "The Gift and Reciprocity: Perspectives from Economic Anthropology," in *Handbook of the Economics of Giving, Altruism and Reciprocity*, ed. Serge-Christophe Kolm and Jean Mercier Ythier (Elsevier, 2006), 1:208–22. See a brief introduction and the bibliographies on patronage/benefaction in the biblical world by Zeba A. Crook, "Benefaction/Patronage," *Oxford Bibliographies Online*, Biblical Studies, July 28, 2015, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OBO/9780195393361-0203>.

Further readings on patronage and benefaction in Paul, Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*; John M. G. Barclay, *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015), 40–65. John K. Chow, *Patronage and Power: A Study of Social Networks in Corinth*, JSNTSup 75 (Sheffield: Sheffield

These insights serve as guides and useful tools to reset Christian communities and texts within their social worlds, which are drastically different from ours.¹¹ As an exegetical tool for reading the Bible, social-scientific studies investigate the social history, socio-linguistic features of language as a means of communication, and symbolisms of social interactions to have a clearer idea of biblical beliefs.¹²

For example, Halvor Moxnes, Reidar Aasgaard, Kar Yong Lim, and others direct attention to the biblical language of kinship and family and determine their linguistic aspects and metaphorical functions.¹³ They delineate various correlations between metaphorical uses of familial terms and social reality. Specifically, Paul's frequent use of familial terms reveals his cultural rootedness, rhetorical

Academic Press, 1992); Stephan J. Joubert, *Paul as Benefactor: Reciprocity, Strategy and Theological Reflection in Paul's Collection*, WUNT 2/124 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000); Joshua Rice, *Paul and Patronage: The Dynamics of Power in 1 Corinthians* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2013); Peter Lampe, "Paul, Patrons, and Clients," in *PGRW* 2:204–38; Massinelli, *For Your Sake*.

¹¹ Moxnes, "Social-Scientific Readings," 160–71. The debates between David G. Horrell and Philip F. Esler: "Models and Methods in Social-Scientific Interpretation: A Response to Philip Esler;" "Models in New Testament Interpretation: A Reply to David Horrell," *JSNT* 22, no. 78 (2000): 83–105, 107–13. Further readings: David G. Horrell, *Social-Scientific Approaches to New Testament Interpretation* (London: T&T Clark, 1999); James D. Dvorak, "Edwin Judge, Wayne Meeks, and Social-Scientific Criticism," in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Sean A. Adams, Biblical Studies Series (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2016), 1:179–90.

¹² Elliott, *What Is Social-Scientific Criticism*, 6.

¹³ For example, Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families*. Reidar Aasgaard, *My Beloved Brothers and Sisters: Christian Siblingship in Paul, Early Christianity in Context*, JSNTSup 265 (New York: T & T Clark, 2004); "History of Research on Children in the Bible and the Biblical World: Past Developments, Present State—and Future Potential," in *T&T Clark Handbook of Children in the Bible and the Biblical World*, ed. Sharon Betsworth and Julie Faith Parker (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019), 13–38. Mary K. Birge, *The Language of Belonging: A Rhetorical Analysis of Kinship Language in First Corinthians*, CBET 31 (Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2002). Margaret Y. MacDonald, *The Power of Children: The Construction of Christian Families in the Graeco-Roman World* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014). Kar Yong Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation in Paul's Letters to the Corinthians* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2017). Susan (Eli) Elliott, *Family Empires, Roman and Christian*, Roman Family Empires: Household, Empire, Resistance (Salem, OR: Polebridge Press, 2018).

Other earlier influential studies: e.g., Robert J. Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community: The Early House Churches in Their Historical Setting* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980); Karl Olav Sandnes, *A New Family: Conversion and Ecclesiology in the Early Church with Cross-Cultural Comparisons*, SIGC 91 (Bern: Peter Lang, 1994); Osiek and Balch, *Families in the New Testament World*; Joseph H. Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001); Trevor J. Burke, *Family Matters: A Socio-Historical Study of Kinship Metaphors in 1 Thessalonians*, JSNTSup 247 (London: T & T Clark International, 2003); Peter Balla, *The Child-Parent Relationship in the New Testament and Its Environment*, WUNT 155 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003).

knowledge, and authorial intent. He purposefully optimizes these family terms as a vehicle to press his moral convictions and envisions new spiritual relations in their newfound faith in Christ.¹⁴

Alternatively, James, R. Harrison, Zeba A. Crook, and others devote their studies to social interactions.¹⁵ Especially, Harrison's treatment of grace (χάρις) through the Greek practice of benefaction demonstrates that the cultural value of honor and the social ethos of reciprocity govern and shape people's networks of obligations in public life.¹⁶ Crook, for instance, scrutinizes different types of reciprocity and their applicability in biblical studies. He categorizes them into two broad groups: familial and extrafamilial reciprocity. Extrafamilial reciprocity is further divided into symmetrical (or mutual), asymmetrical, and antagonistic exchanges, of which asymmetrical reciprocity is the most used model for examining the public practices of Roman patronage and the Greek benefaction in ancient societies.¹⁷ John M. G. Barclay and Orrey McFarland, on the other hand, refine Paul's theology of grace as God's incongruous and unconditioned gift in Christ to the unworthy and ungodly. For them Christian followers must respond with the obedience of faith and participate in missionary vision of the Christ-gift given for the salvation of all in the divine gift-economy.¹⁸ Notwithstanding, Georges Massinelli contends that

¹⁴ Aasgaard, *My Beloved Brothers and Sisters*, 287–95. Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 51–136. Birge, *The Language of Belonging*, 151–2. John H. Elliott, "The Jesus Movement Was Not Egalitarian but Family-Oriented," *BibInt* 11, no. 2 (2003): 173–210, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156851503765661276>.

¹⁵ Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 2–3, 280–2, 287–8, 346–52. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 132–9; "Grace as Benefaction," 25–38. Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 113–9, 225–44, 255–60.

¹⁶ Grace and its cognates occur 28 times in Corinthian letters and a total of 100 occurrences in Pauline letters. A. Boyd Luter, "Grace," *DPL*, 372. Ceslas Spicq, "χάρις," *TLNT* 3:500–6; Klaus Berger, "χάρις," *EDNT* 3:45–7. Hans Conzelmann, "χάρις," "εὐχαριστέω," *TDNT* 9:372–99, 406–14.

¹⁷ Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 56–9; 65–6; "Reciprocity: Covenantal Exchange as a Test Case," in *Ancient Israel: The Old Testament in Its Social Context*, ed. by Philip F. Esler (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 81, 91; "Critical Notes," 515–20; "Fictive Giftship and Fictive Friendship in Graeco-Roman Society," in *The Gift in Antiquity*, ed. Michael L. Satlow, (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 63–6, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118517895>. Cf. Marshall D. Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (New York: Routledge Classics, 2017), 168–213. Ekkehard Stegemann, Wolfgang Stegemann, *Jesus Movement: A Social History of Its First Century*, trans. O. C. Dean (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999), 34–6. Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 25–6.

¹⁸ Barclay, *Paul*, 331–3, 562–74. McFarland, *God and Grace*, 104, 148–9, 152–3, 191, 224. Thomas R. Blanton's recent work, *A Spiritual Economy*, touch upon the important topic of gift-reciprocity, "free" gift, and spiritual gift-giving as an inversion of human beneficence in the Corinthian correspondence. However, his work

gratitude (χάρις) is indispensable in social interactions, a key for reconsidering Paul's collection in 2 Corinthians 8–9.¹⁹ Relevant to our interest, these recent studies investigate how St. Paul exquisitely uses the language of grace permeated by the social ethos of gift-reciprocity to conceptualize a new kind of reciprocal and spiritual relation among the early Christian groups and with God.²⁰

Although these insights into family/kinship, honor, and gift-reciprocity are suitable for interpreting social interactions, they have not extended to discerning family dynamics expressed in the Corinthian correspondence (e.g., 1 Cor 4:14–21).²¹ On the one hand, socio-linguistic studies of kinship and family hesitantly adapt the cultural value of honor and the social ethos of reciprocity. On the other hand, social-scientific studies of honor and gift-reciprocity often imprudently treat familial exchanges as *public* social communications, not as a distinct category. In particular, parent-child interactions are analogously construed as patron-client or benefactor-beneficiary relations.²²

It is well-known that the arrangements of honor and mutual responsibilities in public life are central to Roman patron-client and Greek benefactor-beneficiary systems.²³ These systems are correctly understood as power relations, reciprocal but asymmetrical (or unequal). Accordingly, the social pressures of the inferiors' loyalty and obedience toward the more powerful are at the center of attention because of power struggles' asymmetrical and agonistic nature. Similar emphases on loyalty

does not concentrate on the Paul's language of grace; see *A Spiritual Economy: Gift Exchange in the Letters of Paul of Tarsus*, Synkrisis (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017).

¹⁹ Massinelli, *For Your Sake*.

²⁰ Barclay, *Paul*, 562–74. McFarland, *God and Grace*, 152–3, 191, 224. Two more recent studies in the Corinthian context are Joubert, *Paul as Benefactor* and Rice, *Paul and Patronage*.

²¹ For an understanding of early Christian communities as family groups see, Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 51–63. Articles are helpful to identify the subjects related family values; Bruce J. Malina, "Grace/Favor," "Patronage;" in *Handbook of Biblical Social Values*, ed. John J. Pilch and Bruce J. Malina, 3rd. ed., Matrix—the Bible in Mediterranean Context 10, (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2016), 75–8, 131–4.

²² Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families*, 31–5, illustrates how families are understood as a system of relations (e.g., intergenerational relations between [grand]parents and children, sibling relationships, marital relations between husband and wife, and relations between masters and slaves) in the New Testament world.

²³ Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 1–2, 199–208, 212, 269–72. Crook, *Recapitalising Conversion*, 67–8. Joubert, "One Form of Social Exchange," 17–25. Pao, *Thanksgiving*, 166.

and obedience (of faith) are undiscerningly adapted to decipher parent-child and spiritual relations in the Christian movement.²⁴

As a result, three areas of social interactions that pertain to family are inadequately developed. (1). Familial reciprocity—especially the parent-child tie—is often conflated with the agonistic and mechanistic understanding of patronage, benefaction, and the quest for honor.²⁵ In part, anthropological concepts of honor and gift-reciprocity are observed and formulated for understanding social interactions in public, outside of family.²⁶ (2). Familial bonds of affection like generous giving, gratitude, the sense of honor, and the enjoyment of each other's gifts and being in each other's presence—the glue of reciprocal relations—go unnoticed in the studies of family relations.²⁷ Even when emotions are recognized as affections in metaphorical analyses, as we will see, they are primarily understood as part of the rhetorical function of *pathos*, a mode of persuasion.²⁸ Thus, they undermine the real enjoyment of familial affection in long-term relationships and the impact of authentic feelings

²⁴ For example, John K. Chow, *Patronage and Power: A Study of Social Networks in Corinth*, JSNTSup 75, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992); Lampe, "Paul," in *PGRW* 2:204–38. John M. G. Barclay, *Obedying the Truth: A Study of Paul's Ethics in Galatians* (London: T&T Clark, 1988). Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*. However, Ehrensperger maintains that the patron-client models and feminist interpretations of power relations are inadequate to explain Paul's understanding of spiritual leadership and power. See Kathy Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power: Communication and Interaction in the Early Christ-Movement*, LNTS 325 (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2007).

²⁵ Pitt-Rivers was considered as one of the originators of patronage studies in Mediterranean cultures. Julian A. Pitt-Rivers, *The People of the Sierra*, 2nd. ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1971). The three main types of reciprocity (generalized, balanced and negative) are identified by Sahlins, *Stone*, 168–213. However, Ekkehard Stegemann and Wolfgang Stegemann contend that familial exchanges are different from non-kin based social interactions; *The Jesus Movement*, 34–6. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 56–9; Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 25–6. Crook, "Fictive Giftship," 65–6; "Reciprocity," 81, 91.

²⁶ Crook, "Honor," 609. Colin Patterson, "The World of Honor and Shame in the New Testament: Alien or Familiar?", *BTB* 49, no. 1 (2019): 4–14. Erlend D. MacGillivray, "Re-Evaluating Patronage and Reciprocity in Antiquity and New Testament Studies," *JGRChJ* 6 (2009): 37–81.

²⁷ Only a few studies touch briefly upon the significance of affections and gratitude in reciprocal relations; for example, Stephan Joubert, "Religious Reciprocity," 79–90; Jerome H. Neyrey, "God, Benefactor and Patron: The Major Cultural Model for Interpreting the Deity in Graeco-Roman Antiquity," *JSNT* 27, no. 4 (June 1, 2005): 465–92, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0142064X05055749>, 485–9; Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 75–7; Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 132–50; McFarland, *God and Grace*, 211–3; Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 107–9.

²⁸ Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 91–197. Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 3–48. Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993).

on one's moral and spiritual development.²⁹ (3). The early Christian movements and texts are perfunctorily compared to their contemporary social and religious groups and ancient texts. However, these studies have insufficiently highlighted the distinctiveness of the familial nature of early Christianity and theological thrusts of grace (e.g., non-reciprocal familial and spiritual relations).³⁰

Moreover, Julian A. Pitt-Rivers's (1919–2001) understanding of anthropological grace—representing reciprocity of hearts and the spirit of gift—has been underappreciated in the ongoing New Testament studies of cultural values and family.³¹ Specifically, Harrison, Crook, Barclay, McFarland, and Massinelli's recent comprehensive treatments of Paul's language of grace and gift-reciprocity display no in-depth discussions concerning Pitt-Rivers's reconsideration of family, honor, and gift-reciprocity through his grace-reciprocity.³²

²⁹ For a summary of recent scholarship on gratitude and family ethics see Jonathan R. H. Tudge and Lia B. L. Freitas, eds. *Developing Gratitude in Children and Adolescents* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 1–22, <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316863121.001>; Sara Etz Mendonça and Fernanda Palhares, “Gratitude and Moral Obligation,” 89–110; Lia O'Brien et al., “Relations between Parents' and Children's Gratitude,” 177–98. Robert A. Emmons and Michael E. McCullough, “Counting Blessings versus Burdens: An Experimental Investigation of Gratitude and Subjective Well-Being in Daily Life.,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 84, no. 2 (2003): 377–89, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.84.2.377>.

³⁰ A detailed discussion will be offered later. More recent criticisms of the honor-shame model and patronage/benefaction in biblical studies include Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 6–16; Daniel Y. Wu, *Honor, Shame, and Guilt: Social-Scientific Approaches to the Book of Ezekiel*, BBRSup 14 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2016), 8–21; Colin Patterson, “The World of Honor,” 4–14. David J. Downs rejects the the sociological model of patronage in explaining the divine-human relations, “Was God Paul's Patron? The Economy of Patronage,” in *Engaging Economics: New Testament Scenarios and Early Christian Reception* (eds. Bruce W. Longenecker and Kelly D. Liebigood; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 129–56. Massinelli rejects those models and argues that Paul's collection should be compared within early Christian movement, not with other social groups; in *For Your Sake*, 1–34, 334–40. See theological critiques of the notion of “pure” gift by Barclay, *Paul*, 10–65; McFarland, *God and Grace*, 9–19.

³¹ Gionvanni Col and Andrew Shryock, introduction “A Perfect Host: Julian Pitt-Rivers and the Anthropology of Grace” to *From Hospitality to Grace: A Julian Pitt-Rivers Omnibus*, ed. by Giovanni da Col and Andrew Shryock (Chicago, IL: HAU Books, 2017), xv. Crook, “Benefaction/Patronage.” Moxnes, “Honor”, 19–40.

³² Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 14, 18, 19, 20. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 67. Barclay, *Paul*, 16, 65. McFarland, *God and Grace*, 9–19. Massinelli, *For Your*, 73, 123–124, 126. Blanton's recent work *A Spiritual Economy* does not discuss the relevance of Pitt-Rivers's grace in family reciprocity and the gift of apostleship.

Pitt-Rivers, like others, holds that reciprocity is the basis for all social relatedness.³³ Nevertheless, Pitt-Rivers contends that due to an oversight of the Mediterranean concept of grace, the principles of gift-reciprocity have not been fully extended to the understanding of *family life* and *religious beliefs*.³⁴ To rectify the situation, Pitt-Rivers returns to Mediterranean cultures and re-evaluates the theological notion of grace anthropologically as “free” gift, generous giving in social practices, and a most used daily expression, “thank you” (which is rooted in the very idea of grace as gratitude or thankfulness).³⁵ He rediscovers that grace in everyday life consists of three intertwined aspects: (1) gratuity, (2) graciousness, and (3) gratitude.³⁶ In all these aspects, grace behaves like the cultural value of honor and confers one’s worth in the eyes of God and of people within one’s social circles. Thus, he redescribes grace in anthropological terms: “The only general rule that can be cited is that grace is always something extra, over and above ‘what counts,’ what is obligatory or predictable; it belongs on the register of the extraordinary (hence its association with the sacred).”³⁷

Pitt-Rivers’s grace-reciprocity re-evaluates gift-reciprocity as presented by Marcel Mauss (1872–1950) for Mediterranean cultural contexts.³⁸ Pitt-Rivers claims that grace as “free” gift presents new

³³ Especially the introductory work by Crook, “Benefaction/Patronage.” Other insightful discussions on reciprocity in the New Testament world see: David A. DeSilva, “Patronage and Reciprocity: The Context of Grace in the New Testament,” *ATJ* no. 31 (1999): 32–84; Neyrey, “God, Benefactor and Patron”; Joubert, “One Form of Social Exchange”; MacGillivray, “Re-Evaluating Patronage and Reciprocity.”

³⁴ Pitt-Rivers, “The Place of Grace,” 71, 73, 75, 79–80, 89–90, 93, 94–5, 99.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 69–70. Cf. Visser, *The Gift of Thanks: The Roots, Persistence, and Paradoxical Meanings of a Social Ritual* (Toronto, ON: Harper Collins Publishers, 2008).

³⁶ *Ibid.* “The Place of Grace,” 70–1 and 77–80. Vidal, “The Three Graces,” 339–68. The triple aspects of grace as in gifts, graciousness, and gratefulness or gratitude are found in current anthropological, psychological, and biblical investigations focus on grace as gift/favor/gratitude in social and spiritual relations. For instance, a useful survey offered by John M. G. Barclay, “The Lexicon of Gift: Hebrew, Latin, and English,” in *Paul*, 575–84. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 132–9. For the discussion on favor in economic anthropology, see David Henig and Nicolette Makovsky, eds., *Economies of Favour after Socialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 1–20. Philip C. Watkins, *Gratitude and the Good Life: Toward a Psychology of Appreciation* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2013), 14–6.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 72. Consult the definition of grace by Émile Benveniste, *Dictionary of Indo-European Concepts and Society*, trans. Elizabeth Palmer (Chicago, IL: HAU, 2016), 158.

³⁸ Mauss, *The Gift*. Sahlin, *Stone*. An introductory work on the gift by Alan D. Schrift, ed., *The Logic of the Gift: Toward an Ethic of Generosity* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Hann, “The Gift and Reciprocity,” 207–23; Mark

ways in which *familial* and *spiritual* relations may be reconceived through *non-reciprocal* and asymmetrical/symmetrical relations (as opposed to *reciprocal* and symmetrical and asymmetrical in gift-reciprocity).³⁹ The breakthrough of his grace-reciprocity from the previous studies of family and gift-reciprocity is threefold: (1). A meaningful relationship is more than mutual exchanges of useful “goods” (i.e., gift, favor, or service exchanges); (2). The familial exchanges must include the exchange of *hearts*—feelings of love, joy, honor, and gratitude—as an integral part of familial relatedness in secular and sacred spheres; (3). Familial affinities among family members and close friends are distinct social interactions from extrafamilial exchanges. Grace-reciprocity (in contrast with gift-reciprocity) can better explain familial reciprocity since it exemplifies the simultaneous exchanges of both useful “goods” and *hearts* in secular and sacred domains.

Furthermore, highlighting the feeling of gratitude in grace-reciprocity forces us to reassess our understandings of enduring relationships like the parent-child bond. That is to say, children as recipients of favors can be inspired by initial parental generosity (graciousness) and favors—not merely compelled by fear—to return the favors in kind. Children’s willingness to honor parents and the divine need to be understood as more than a social duty in the sense of debt. They can also evidence positive feelings like gratitude and loving respect in view of the sacred (one’s beliefs). Therefore, this study proposes that Pitt-Rivers’s grace-reciprocity can serve as a key to reinterpreting the social relatedness in family, family groups, and spiritual relations to God in the premodern world, a relatedness that mechanisms of honor and gift-reciprocity have inadequately and conveniently explained away.⁴⁰

Osteen, ed., *The Question of the Gift: Essays across Disciplines*, Routledge Studies in Anthropology 2 (London: Routledge, 2002), 1–42. John Milbank provides a useful summary concerning the philosophical, economic, anthropological, and theological debates on gift; “The Transcendality of the Gift: A Summary in Answer to 12 Questions,” *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia* 65 (2009): 887–97. Frank Adloff, *Gifts of Cooperation, Mauss and Pragmatism* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 1–52; Da Col and Shryock, “A Perfect Host,” xiii–xxxiv. Henig and Makovsky, *Economies of Favour*, 1–20.

³⁹ Pitt-Rivers, “The Place of Grace;” “The Kith and Kin,” 135.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 100.

The Limits of the Study and the Prospects for Other Research

Pauline studies of family relations need multifaceted inquiries into modern social sciences and family history.⁴¹ Thus far, social-scientific interpretation and socio-historical description of the Bible are two primary ways biblical studies of family relations engage with studies of family and parent-child relations.⁴² Both approaches enable modern readers to have a fuller view of the family make-up and a deeper appreciation of biblical faith expressed through familial terms.⁴³

This study mainly relies on an anthropological insight of grace-reciprocity to investigate family relations in the Corinthian correspondence, in which the Pauline language of grace and parent-child expressions are the focus. However, it acknowledges that there are other meaningful ways to engage in topics of family terms and familial relations in the New Testament world. Remarkably, Peter Balla and Reidar Aasgaard, among many others, advocate studies of children and childhood by investigating cultural ideals of parent-child relationships and children language as metaphors.⁴⁴ For example, Balla

⁴¹ Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families*, 2, 13–41.

⁴² Jerome H. Neyrey, “Social-Scientific Criticism,” in *The Blackwell Companion to the New Testament*, ed. David E. Aune, Blackwell Companions to Religion (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 177–91. See David G. Horrell for an excellent introduction: “Social Sciences Studying Formative Christian Phenomena: A Creative Movement,” in *Handbook of Early Christianity: Social Science Approaches*, ed. Anthony Blasi and Paul-André Turcotte (Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira, 2002), 1–28. An insightful debate between David G. Horrell and Philip F. Esler: “Models and Methods in Social-Scientific Interpretation: A Response to Philip Esler,” *JSNT* 22, no. 78 (2000): 83–105; Philip F. Esler, “Models in New Testament Interpretation: A Reply to David Horrell,” *JSNT* 22, no. 78 (2000): 107–13. Further readings: David G. Horrell, *Social-Scientific Approaches to New Testament Interpretation* (London: T&T Clark, 1999); Dvorak, “Edwin Judge, Wayne Meeks,” 1:179–203; Concerning the Context Group, see Philip F. Esler, “The Context Group Project: An Autobiographical Account,” in *Anthropology and Biblical Studies: Avenues of Approach*, edited by Louise Joy Lawrence and Mario I. Aguilar (The Netherlands: Deo Publishing 2004), 46–61.

⁴³ Neyrey, “Social-Scientific Criticism,” 178–181.

⁴⁴ For example, Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families*; Birge, *The Language of Belonging*; Balla, *The Child-Parent Relationships*; Burke, *Family Matters*; James M. M. Francis, *Adults as Children: Images of Childhood in the Ancient World and the New Testament* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006); Aasgaard, “History of Research on Children,” 13–38; *My Beloved Brothers and Sisters*; “Paul as a Child”; “Like a Child”; Beverly Roberts Gaventa, *Our Mother Saint Paul* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007); Jennifer H. McNeel, *Paul as Infant and Nursing Mother: Metaphor, Rhetoric, and Identity in 1 Thessalonians 2:5–8, ECL 12* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014); Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 59–63, 97–9. Abera M. Mengestu, *God as Father in Paul: Kinship Language and Identity Formation in Early Christianity* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013); Elliott, *Family Empires*.

employs the perspective of children and examines cultural expectations of children toward their parents in ancient literary evidence. Aasgaard's investigations of children and childhood metaphors have shown promising ways to achieve a more balanced view of Paul's parent-child expressions.

Balla and Aasgaard's undertakings have benefited from a rising interest in the perspective of children and the child-centered approach for a more comprehensive understanding of parent-child relations in biblical studies.⁴⁵ Biblical studies of children and childhood are a relatively new subfield of family history of antiquity, social history, and social sciences.⁴⁶ Despite this, the perspective of children and child-centered approaches akin to children and childhood studies are a prerequisite for discerning

⁴⁵ Mary Harlow and Ray Laurence, eds., *A Cultural History of Childhood and Family in Antiquity*, in *A Cultural History of Childhood and Family* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2010), 1:1–11. Reidar Aasgaard and Oana Maria Cojocaru, eds., *Childhood in History: Perceptions of Children in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 1–18. Christian Laes and Ville Vuolanto, eds., *Children and Everyday Life in the Roman and Late Antique World* (London: Routledge, 2017), 1–24, 318–31. Sharon Betsworth and Julie Faith Parker, eds., *T&T Clark Handbook of Children in the Bible and the Biblical World* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019), 1–64, 223–44.

Other important studies relevant to Pauline studies: Marcia J. Bunge, *The Child in Christian Thought* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001); Reidar Aasgaard, "Children in Antiquity and Early Christianity: Research History and Central Issues," *Familia (UPSA, Spain)*, no. 33 (2006): 23–46; *My Beloved Brothers and Sisters; Childhood in History*, 3–6; "Paul as a Child;" "Paul like a Child;" Christine Berger, *Paulus und seine "Kinder": Studien zur Beziehungsmetaphorik der Paulinischen Briefe*, BZNW 136 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005); Gaventa, *Our Mother*; Cornelia B. Horn and John W. Martens, *Let the Little Children Come to Me: Childhood and Children in Early Christianity* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2009); Margaret Y. MacDonald, "Reading the New Testament Household Codes in Light of New Research on Children and Childhood in the Roman World," *SR* 41 (2012): 376–87; *Power of Children*; "Paul and Family Life," in *PGRW* 1:253–81; McNeel, *Paul as Infant*; Sharon Betsworth, *Children in Early Christian Narratives*, LNTS 521 (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015). Kristine Henriksen Garroway and John W. Martens, eds., *Children and Methods: Listening to and Learning from Children in the Biblical World* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2020).

Some earlier research related to family and children: Daniel von Allmen, *La famille de Dieu: la symbolique familiale dans l'épaulisme* (Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981); Klaus Schäfer, *Gemeinde als "Bruderschaft": Ein Beitrag zum Kirchenverständnis des Paulus*, Europäische Hochschulschriften 23/333 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1989); Peter Müller, *In der Mitte der Gemeinde: Kinder im Neuen Testament* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1992); Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community*; Sandnes, *A New Family*; O. Larry Yarbrough, "Parents and Children in the Letters of Paul," in *The Social World of the First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne A. Meeks*, ed. L. Michael White and O. Larry Yarbrough (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), 126–141; William Strange, *Children in the Early Church: Children in the Ancient World, the New Testament, and the Early Church* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1996). Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families*. Hellerman, *The Ancient Church*; Baila, *The Child-Parent Relationship*; Trevor J. Burke, *Family Matters*.

⁴⁶ Especially, Betsworth and Parker, *T&T Clark Handbook of Children*, 1–38. Bunge et al., *The Child in the Bible*.

the cultural and theological significance of children and family relations in Pauline Christianity and texts.⁴⁷

Additionally, Pauline scholars of family and children already consider the socially non-elite and marginalized (e.g., women, children, and slaves) and their daily life.⁴⁸ In doing so, they have already moved away from a strictly Paul-centered research (e.g., Paul as *pater/materfamilias*, founder, or patron/broker). Instead, they strive to examine the physical, social, and ideological environments of the non-elite and marginal groups like children closely in order to understand Paul's own family language of parents and children more fully.⁴⁹

Finally, New Testament scholars like Christopher T. Hoklotubbe have demonstrated that the imperial promotions of the family value of *pietas* during the Augustan *principate* (27 B.C.E.–14 C.E.) have

⁴⁷ Just to name a few relevant texts: Amy Lindeman Allen, *For Theirs Is the Kingdom: Inclusion and Participation of Children in the Gospel According to Luke* (Lanham: Lexington Fortress Academic, 2019), xvi–xviii; Marcia J. Bunge, *The Child in Christian Thought* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001); Bunge et al, *The Child in the Bible*; Shawn W. Flynn, *Children in the Bible and the Ancient World*. Jan Grobbelaar, “Doing Theology with Children: A Childist Reading of the Childhood Metaphor in 1 Corinthians and the Synoptic Gospels,” *HvTSt* 76, no. 4 (2020): 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v76i4.5637>.

⁴⁸ See the paradigm shift in New Testament studies of family, David L. Balch and Carolyn Osiek, eds., *Early Christian Families in Context: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue* (Religion, Marriage, and Family Series; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003). More recently, Margaret Y. MacDonald, “The Shifting Center: Ideology and the Interpretation of 1 Corinthians,” in *Christianity at Corinth: The Quest for the Pauline Church*, ed. Edward Adams and David G. Horrell (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 273–294; Bunge and Fretheim, *The Child in the Bible*; Shawn W. Flynn, ed., *Children in the Bible and the Ancient World: Comparative and Historical Methods in Reading Ancient Children* (Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East; New York: Routledge, 2019).

⁴⁹ For studies on Paul as *paterfamilias*, founder, or patron/benefactor, see e.g., L. Michael White, “Paul and *Pater Familias*,” in *PGRW* 2:171–203; James C. Hanges, *Paul, Founder of Churches: A Study in Light of the Evidence for the Role of “Founder-Figures” in the Hellenistic-Roman Period*, WUNT 292 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012); Joubert, *Paul as Benefactor*.

For studies on Paul's metaphorical language of children, see Christine Gerber, *Paulus und seine “Kinder”: Studien zur Beziehungsmetaphorik der Paulinischen Briefe*, BZNW 136 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005). Reidar Aasgaard, “Like a Child: Paul's Rhetorical Uses of Childhood,” in *The Child in the Bible*, ed. Bunge et al. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 249–77; “Paul as a Child: Children and Childhood in the Letters of the Apostle,” *JBL* 126, no. 1 (2007): 129–59; Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 127–32. Jonathan Moo, “Of Parents and Children: 1 Corinthians 4:15–16 and Life in the Family of God,” in *Studies in the Pauline Epistles: Essays in Honor of Douglas J. Moo*, ed. Matthew S. Harmon and Jay E. Smith (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2014), 57–73. Grobbelaar, “Doing Theology with Children,” 1–9.

been vital for understanding early Christian groups and texts.⁵⁰ *Pietas* was one of the original Roman virtues that expresses ancestral traditions (*mos maiorum*) dating to the early Republic.⁵¹ Concerning family and family relations, W. K. Lacey, an historian of Roman family, reminds us that those political phenomena often find their roots in family life. He voices a growing conviction that “[p]ublic life followed the assumptions of private life and not vice versa.”⁵² Richard Saller, a Roman social historian, asserts that the principles of Roman virtue (*pietas*) and their reciprocal dutifulness between parents and children played an important role in regulating the proper relations between people and the limits of authorities in Roman society.⁵³ In tandem with this understanding of *pietas*, Balla’s *Child-Parent Relationship* confirms that “honor due to parents is expected even more emphatically in this period.”⁵⁴ He concludes that filial responsibility to honor parents is not “one duty among others, but is an all-

⁵⁰ T. Christopher Hoklotubbe, *Civilized Piety: The Rhetoric of Pietas in the Pastoral Epistles and the Roman Empire* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017), 13–5, 31–38. Kathy Ehrensperger, *Searching Paul: Conversations with the Jewish Apostle to the Nations: Collected Essays*, WUNT 429 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 195–227. Mary R. D’Angelo, “Ευσέβεια: Roman Imperial Family Values and the Sexual Politics of 4 Maccabees and the Pastorals,” *BibInt* 11, no. 2 (2003): 139–65, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156851503765661258>. Carolyn Osiek, “Pietas in and Out of the Frying Pan,” *BibInt* 11, no. 2 (2003): 166–72, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156851503765661267>. Margaret Y. MacDonald, “Editorial Introduction: Special Issue on Children and Childhood in Early Judaism and Early Christianity,” *SR* 41, no. 3 (2012): 341–49, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0008429812452082>. James Petitfils, *Mos Christianorum: The Roman Discourse of Exemplarity and the Jewish and Christian Language of Leadership*, STAC 99 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 66–7. Elliott, *Family Empires*, 72–4, 115–6.

⁵¹ Cicero, *Inv.* 2.65–6: *religionem eam, quae in metu et caerimonia deorum sit, appellat, pietatem, quae erga patriam aut parentes aut alios sanguine coniunctos officium conservare moneat*. Four central virtues during Augustan reign are valor (*virtus/ρρητή*), clemency (*clementia/ἐπιείκεια*), justice (*iustitia/δικαιοσύνη*), and piety (*pietas/εὐσέβεια*), in *Res Gestae Divi Augusti: Text, Translation, and Commentary*, trans. Alison Cooley (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 1–18. Piotr Berdowski, “*Pietas Erga Patriam*: Ideology and Politics in Rome in the Early First Century BC,” in *Within the Circle of Ancient Ideas and Virtues: Studies in Honour of Professor Maria Dzielska*, ed. Kamilla Twardowska, (Kraków Towarzystwo Wydawnicze “Historia Iagellonica,” 2014), 144.

Other earlier studies: Hendrik Wagenvoort, “*Pietas*,” in *Pietas: Selected Studies in Roman Religion*, *Studies in Greek and Roman Religion* (Leiden: Brill, [1920] 1980), 1:8–11; Gertrude Emilie, “Cicero and the Roman *Pietas*,” *The Classical Journal* 39, no. 9 (1944): 536–42; J. Rufus Fears, “The Cult of Virtues and Roman Imperial Ideology,” *ANRW II* 17, no. 2 (1981): 827–948. M. Owen Lee, *Fathers and Sons in Virgil’s Aeneid: Tum Genitor Natum* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1979). James D. Garrison, *Pietas from Vergil to Dryden* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992). Janez Kranjc, “Virtues in the Law: The Case of *Pietas*,” *NYU School of Law*, Straus Working Paper Series, no. 5 (2012): 1–140.

⁵² W. K. Lacey, “*Patria Potestas*,” in *The Family in Ancient Rome: New Perspectives*, ed. Beryl Rawson (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 123.

⁵³ Richard P. Saller, *Patriarchy, Property, and Death in the Roman Family*, Cambridge Studies in Population, Economy, and Society in Past Time 25 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 102–32.

⁵⁴ Balla, *The Child-Parent Relationship*, 79. MacDonald, “Editorial Introduction,” 342–3.

encompassing term: other duties are aspects of the duty of honoring one's parents."⁵⁵ These aforementioned interests in family studies encourage further social and historical investigations but require different methods and *foci*.

Having acknowledged the great potential of those approaches, this study of parent-child relations grounded in the social-scientific insight of grace-reciprocity becomes even more imperative for the following reasons. (1). It demonstrates that cultural values of honor and grace (contrasted with honor and shame) in *everyday life* are indispensable to traversing the biblical world and making sense of the familial scenarios expressed in biblical texts. (2). It reminds us of the importance of familial interactions for understanding family language in the Bible. Moreover, it offers new ways in which scholars of parent-child relations may incorporate the perspective of children as recipients of gifts, favors, and services and the cultural expectations of showing gratitude. (3). It calls attention to the genuine bonds of mutual affections, like gratitude and enjoyment in familial reciprocity, which is lacking in previous studies of parent-child interactions. It provides an alternative model for understanding Paul's parent-child expressions—not through fear in power relations like patriarchalism or authoritarianism—but with true generosity and graciousness, genuine loving care, and gratitude. Moreover, the affective or subjective studies of gratitude in grace-reciprocity will afford a new paradigm to explore familial relations and virtues in the New Testament world, essential to the discussions of family relations and the Graco-Roman family value of *εὐσεβεία* or *pietas*. Finally, (4) it offers a new perspective to bridge Paul's language of family and grace socially and theologically because they are deeply embedded in familial reciprocity and religious convictions. In turn, familial reciprocity reveals God's gracious gift in the person of Christ (i.e., the Christ-gift) as the governing principle and the rationale for Christian families to show generosity and gratitude in honoring their spiritual parents and God.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

CHAPTER ONE

CURRENT SCHOLARSHIP ON PARENT-CHILD RELATIONS AND A CRITIQUE OF HONOR AND RECIPROCITY CONCERNING THE CORINTHIANS

This chapter examines the history of scholarship on 1 Corinthians 4:14–21. It shows that current Pauline studies of parent-child expressions have not fully considered the social quest for honor and the social ethos of reciprocity concerning the language of grace for a robust debate of family relations. As children of their time, the Corinthians were not immune to their culture but had the same sensitivity to social honor, status, and relatedness as their contemporaries.⁵⁶ Although the cultural value of honor and the social ethos of reciprocity are indispensable for interpreting reciprocal social and familial interactions in early Christian family-groups and texts, they play little or no role in current explorations of Paul's parent-child relations. Conversely, questions like how Paul's familial terms and the language of grace may differ, or to what extent, from the cultures he lived in, are central social-scientific inquiries of Paul and his letters. Moreover, when familial terms are understood as metaphors, the primary interests seem to be in their rhetorical functions. Consequently, the heartfelt familial bonds expressed through emotions and positive sentiments like gratitude and enjoyment are not fully appreciated.

To this end, this chapter divides into two main sections: (1). A review of current socio-historical and rhetorical studies of parent-child relations in 1 Corinthians 4:14–21 with an overview of major approaches to the historical reconstructions and interpretations of 1 Corinthians 1–4; (2). A discussion of the limitations of current social-scientific studies of honor and gift-reciprocity in Pauline studies, which prepares a groundwork to contend for grace-reciprocity as a more suitable paradigm for understanding familial relations and the parent-child dynamics.

⁵⁶ Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power*, 12. Osiek and Balch, *Families*, 102.

A. Current Socio-Historical and Rhetorical Studies of 1 Corinthians 1–4

Recent Pauline scholarship on 1 Corinthians 1–4 revolves around the issues of the identification of opponents and the nature of their wisdom (σοφία).⁵⁷ Based on the literary unit of 1 Corinthians 1:10–4:21 and the social factions and the employment of skilled writing, social and rhetorical investigations appear appropriate to discern the situation in the Corinthian community.⁵⁸ As a common practice, critical studies often begin their discussions with the nature of divisions intertwined with wisdom traditions in Corinthian Christian assemblies to understand Paul’s religious message properly.⁵⁹ However, considering how extensive Pauline studies are, this short survey will highlight the major approaches but prioritize the socio-rhetorical and socio-historical approaches that pertain to the linguistic aspects of family terms and the cultural understanding of reciprocity in family interactions.

I. An Overview of Current Scholarship on 1 Corinthians 1–4

There are several ways that 1 Corinthians 1–4 has been reconstructed and interpreted historically. The widely known approaches, namely, the historical-critical method, literary-historical approach,⁶⁰ feminist re-reading, social and cultural analysis, and rhetorical analysis, build upon various hypotheses concerning the opponents of Paul and wisdom traditions. Meanwhile, catchphrases conveniently

⁵⁷ J. Paul Sampley, “The First Letter to the Corinthians,” in *Acts to First Corinthians*, ed. Leander E. Keck (New York: Abingdon Press, 2002), *NIBC* 10: 80–1. Oh-Young Kwon, “A Critical Review of Recent Scholarship on the Pauline Opposition and the Nature of Its Wisdom (Σοφία) in 1 Corinthians 1–4,” *CurBS* 8, no. 3 (2010): 386–427; *1 Corinthians 1–4: Reconstructing Its Social and Rhetorical Situation and Re-Reading It Cross-Culturally for Korean-Confucian Christians Today* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 14–58.

⁵⁸ Kwon, “A Critical Review of Recent Scholarship,” 387. Most of the studies confirm the unity of 1 Corinthians 1–4; see a detailed discussion by Matthew R. Malcolm, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reversal in 1 Corinthians: The Impact of Paul’s Gospel on His Macro-Rhetoric*, SNTSMS 155 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 58–112.

⁵⁹ As addressed in 1 Cor 1:1–12–17, 3:1–17, and 3:22–23. Rice, *Paul and Patronage*, 10–25.

⁶⁰ Harm-Jan Inkelaar, *Conflict over Wisdom: The Theme of 1 Corinthians 1–4 Rooted in Scripture*, CBET 63 (Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2011). Timothy A. Brookins, *Corinthian Wisdom, Stoic Philosophy, and the Ancient Economy*, SNTMS 159 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

capture the influential elements of the main theories regarding the text: the Petrine party,⁶¹ proto-Gnosticism,⁶² Hellenistic Jewish wisdom tradition,⁶³ and over-realized eschatology.⁶⁴

Ferdinand C. Baur's hypothesis of the factions (*Parteien*) in Corinth and his "history-of-religions" approach is a major landmark in the modern critical study of Corinthian correspondence.⁶⁵ Baur insisted that 1 Corinthians 1:12 ("Each of you is saying, 'I belong to Paul,' or 'I belong to Apollos,' or 'I belong to Cephas,' or 'I belong to Christ'") was the key to understanding Paul's teaching in the Corinthian community. Furthermore, his historical reconstruction of early Christianity proposed a dialectical process of two opposing movements: the Jewish Christian (Petrine and Jewish) and Hellenistic Christian (Pauline and Gentile). Although Baur's thesis on Christian origins (referring to the full-fledged religious parties) has been modified in many ways, more recently by Michael Goulder, many have abandoned it because of its Hegelian tendency.⁶⁶

Nevertheless, for over a century, Baur's historical reconstruction and interpretation of 1 Corinthians 1–4 has directly impacted the historical-critical approach and subsequent Pauline studies.⁶⁷ First, it developed a standard method in historical research by exploring the parallels between biblical

⁶¹ It has been advocated by F. C. Baur, Gerd Lüdemann, and Michael D. Goulder. For example, Michael D. Goulder, *Paul and the Competing Mission in Corinth*, LPS (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001).

⁶² Proposed by Water Lütgert 1908 and popularized by Walter Schmithals in the 1950s; continue to be supported by Ulrich Wickens, Dieter Georgi, Hans Conzelmann, Charles H. Talbert, Frederick F. Bruce, Elaine H. Pagels, and Todd E. Klutz. E.g., Elaine H. Pagels, *The Gnostic Paul: Gnostic Exegesis of the Pauline Letters* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1975).

⁶³ Main proponents are Birger Albert Pearson, James A. Davis, and Richard A. Horsley. For instance, Richard A. Horsley, *Wisdom and Spiritual Transcendence at Corinth: Studies in First Corinthians* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2008).

⁶⁴ Chief advocates are Albert Schweitzer, N. A. Dahl, P. H. Towner, and Anthony C. Thiselton. E.g., N. A. Dahl, "Paul and the Church at Corinth according to 1 Corinthians 1–4," in *Christian History and Interpretation: Studies Presented to John Knox*, ed. William R. Farmer and C. F. D. Moule (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 313–35; Anthony C. Thiselton, "Realized Eschatology at Corinth," *NTS* 24 (1978): 510–26.

⁶⁵ Ferdinand C. Baur, "The Two Epistles to the Corinthians," in *Christianity at Corinth*, 51–9.

⁶⁶ Adams and Horrell, *Christianity at Corinth*, 16.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 13. William Baird, *History of New Testament Research: From Jonathan Edwards to Rudolf Bultmann* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002), 222. James D. G. Dunn, "Reconstructions of Corinthian Christianity and the Interpretation of 1 Corinthians," in *Christianity at Corinth*, 295–310.

texts and a wide range of noncanonical and non-Christian sources.⁶⁸ Secondly, it persisted in relating the Corinthian “theology” to particular religious and philosophical traditions, mainly “Gnosticism” and Jewish eschatology.⁶⁹ Parallels to various cultures are helpful since the Corinthian assembly was not a *tabula rasa* when it came into existence. Any analytical approach needs to reckon with its members’ Hellenistic Jewish and Graeco-Roman cultural heritage.⁷⁰

Thirdly, some scholars (e.g., John C. Hurd and Anthony C. Thiselton),⁷¹ dissatisfied with Baur’s historical reconstructions and the Tübingen approach concerning parallels, suggested a misunderstanding hypothesis.⁷² Those theories turned back onto biblical texts and the Christian movement rather than looking outside for parallels.⁷³ For instance, Hurd was well aware that Paul’s letter (1 Corinthians) was only one part of the ongoing conversations between Paul and the Corinthian Christian community.⁷⁴ This observation opened up an array of possibilities. More concretely, one could suggest that not only might the Corinthians have misunderstood Paul, but Paul might also have changed his reasoning to adjust to Corinthian opposition. Therefore, Hurd argues that Paul had gradually matured in his understanding of human nature and attempted to clarify beliefs more pastorally in his subsequent dialogue with the Corinthians.⁷⁵

⁶⁸ Hughson T. Ong, “Ferdinand Christian Baur’s Historical Criticism and *Tendenzkritik*,” in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Sean A. Adams, Biblical Studies Series (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2016), 2:118–38.

⁶⁹ Adams and Horrell, *Christianity at Corinth*, 16–23.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 22. Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1989). Graham Tomlin, “Christians and Epicureans in 1 Corinthians,” *JSNT* 68 (1997): 51–72. F. Gerald Downing, *Cynics, Paul, and the Pauline Churches*, *Cynics and Christian Origins II* (New York: Routledge; Taylor & Francis Group, 1998).

⁷¹ John C. Hurd, *The Origin of I Corinthians* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1983), xxiii–iv, 273. Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, *NIGNT* 7 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000).

⁷² Adams and Horrell, *Christianity at Corinth*, 23.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 23–26.

⁷⁴ Hurd, *The Origin*, xxiii.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 287–8.

In contrast, Anthony C. Thiselton insists that the misunderstanding of the theological message of the divine grace in the crucified Christ on the part of the Corinthians caused deeper quarrels and discords. Accordingly, Paul addressed the Corinthians as recipients of divine favors who must not ignore the proclamation of grace on the cross of Christ but transform their lives by resisting the cultural influences of their age lest they empty the cross of power.⁷⁶ In retrospect, we can say that the dialogue did succeed in contributing to further developments in the literary-historical approach, feminist interpretation, and socio-historical and rhetorical analysis of Paul's letters.

For example, Harm-Jan Inkelaar represents a recent study based on a literary-historical method.⁷⁷ He correctly draws our attention to the profound influence of the Old Testament on early Christians and Paul's writings. However, his research does not convincingly show that the conflict over wisdom traditions was more pressing among early Christians than other social and theological issues.⁷⁸

Feminist scholars likewise have given considerable attention to the issues in the Corinthian community, especially women's role.⁷⁹ Feminist criticism rightly points out that no writing of history is entirely neutral. All writing is under the influence of various interests and ideologies.⁸⁰ Moreover, the feminist re-reading of Corinthian situations has gradually tended to challenge a "Paul-centeredness" and replace it with a "society at the center" or "women at the center" focus.⁸¹ Studies like these that focus on the non-elite have profound implications for the cultural understanding of children and childhood, a

⁷⁶ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 32–6.

⁷⁷ Inkelaar, *Conflict over Wisdom*, 18.

⁷⁸ H. H. Drake Williams, review of *Conflict over Wisdom: The Theme of 1 Corinthians 1–4 Rooted in Scripture*, *Them* 37, no.3 (2012): 511–2.

⁷⁹ Most notable scholars are Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroad, 1983); Antoinette C. Wire, *The Corinthian Women Prophets: A Reconstruction through Paul's Rhetoric* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990); Margaret Y. MacDonald, *Early Christian Women and Pagan Opinion: The Power of the Hysterical Woman* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

⁸⁰ MacDonald, "The Shifting Center," 273–294. Horrell, *The Social Ethos*, 291–5. Elliott, *Family Empires*, 37–9.

⁸¹ Adams and Horrell, *Christianity at Corinth*, 41.

voiceless group in the New Testament world.⁸² These developments again lead to new emphases on the social and cultural understanding of the Corinthian members and their social upbringing (the elite and the non-elite alike).

In recent decades, scholars have revisited the social nature of the conflict in the Corinthian community. Gerd Theissen, one of the early pioneers, was prompted by the Marxist conflict theory to investigate the social stratifications in the Corinthian community.⁸³ His study has generated multifaceted research proposals into early Christian communities' socio-economic, socio-cultural, and socio-political status (to name just a few). David Horrell and Edward Adams point out how social sciences have flourished in relation to the Corinthian studies; "It is not the parallels to be found in the history of religions that are seen as most crucial, but rather the sources relating to everyday 'secular' life."⁸⁴ Bruce W. Winter makes this point even more explicit. He avows that his study concentrates on the social background of the Corinthians and the Roman influence of first-century Corinth and not that of Paul.⁸⁵ Recent socio-historical works on Corinth use social perspectives, theories, and models to recreate the customs and practices associated with patronage, benefaction, litigation, and dining.⁸⁶

For instance, Peter Marshall, Stephan J. Joubert, Joshua Rice, and others utilize the notion of the anthropological gift to explore the ancient social practices of patronage and benefaction and tease out

⁸² For example, MacDonald, *The Power of Children*.

⁸³ Theissen, *The Social Setting*, 69–119.

⁸⁴ Adams and Horrell, *Christianity at Corinth*, 30.

⁸⁵ Bruce W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), xxi, 11, 20–22. Adams and Horrell, *Christianity at Corinth*, 30–1.

⁸⁶ See especially Frederick W. Danker, Andrew Clarke, Bruce W. Winter, David G. Horrell, Martin Dale and John Fotopoulos. On patronage and benefaction: Frederick W. Danker, *Benefactor: Epigraphic Study of a Graeco-Roman and New Testament Semantic Field* (St. Louis, MO: Clayton Public House, 1982); Chow, *Patronage and Power*; Andrew D. Clarke, *Secular and Christian Leadership in Corinth: A Socio-Historical and Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 1–6*, AGJU 18 (London: Brill, 1993). On cultural understanding of the Graeco-Roman world, for example, especially Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth*; Sampley, *PGRW*, 1–2 vols. Alan C. Mitchell, "1 Corinthians 6:1–11: Group Boundaries and the Courts of Corinth" (Ph.D. diss., New Haven: CT: Yale University, 1986); Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995); Horrell, *The Social Ethos*; John Fotopoulos, *Food Offered to Idols in Roman Corinth: A Social-Rhetorical Reconsideration of 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1*, WUNT 2/151; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003).

Paul's religious message in a highly honor-charged environment.⁸⁷ Marshall suggests that financial support to other Christians might have been at the center of the conflict in the Corinthian community.⁸⁸ Likewise, Joubert maintains that "[t]he person in ancient Graeco-Roman society was a reciprocal being, *homo reciprocus*. Any exchange of gifts gave rise to long-term relations between the transactors, such as patronage and various forms of public and private benefaction."⁸⁹ It would be reasonable to assume that any financial collection would have been a sensitive topic, and its handling can become volatile. In contrast, Rice—taking the ancient practices of patronage as a starting point—demonstrates that Paul's message contains three types of power dynamics: egalitarian (horizontal, equal in dignity) among the Christ-followers, hierarchical (vertical, divinely sanctioned) for the unity of the church, and subversive (opposing to secularism) to correct sinful behaviors.⁹⁰ To some extent, Paul's insistence on the subversive aspect of divine patronage may have rubbed people the wrong way.

Mark T. Finney, on the other hand, focuses on the cultural currency of φιλοτιμία (love of honor) in the ancient world as a key to understanding the various internal problems besetting the nascent community.⁹¹ Similarly, Laurence L. Welborn and others noticed that the slogans in 1 Corinthians 1:12

⁸⁷ Joubert, *Paul as Benefactor*; Rice, *Paul and Patronage*. Georges Massinelli provides an insightful history of scholarship on Christian collections and critiques Roman patronage and Greek benefaction as appropriate models for understanding Paul's collection; *For Your Sake*, 3–37.

⁸⁸ Peter Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul's Relations with the Corinthians*, WUNT 2/23 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 1–2, 12.

⁸⁹ Joubert, "One Form of Social Exchange," 24; "Religious Reciprocity," 79–90; "1 Corinthians 9:24–27: An Agonistic Competition?," *Neot* 35, no. 1/2 (2001): 57–68.

⁹⁰ Rice, *Paul and Patronage*, 145–6.

⁹¹ Mark T. Finney, *Honour and Conflict in the Ancient World: 1 Corinthians in Its Graeco-Roman Social Setting*, LNTS 460 (London: T & T Clark, 2012), 2–3; "Honor, Rhetoric and Factionalism in the Ancient World: 1 Corinthians 1–4 in Its Social Context," *BTB* 40, no. 1 (February 1, 2010): 27–36, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146107909355087>.

resembled that of ancient politics.⁹² The socio-political scrutiny furthered the interest in the rhetorical nature of Paul's letters. "The *polis*, after all, is the cradle of rhetoric."⁹³

Margaret M. Mitchell offers the most thoroughgoing rhetorical approach to 1 Corinthians 1–4.⁹⁴ Agreeing with Welborn, she considers that factionalism in the assembly is an inherently political problem. The deliberative rhetoric invented to promote political stability and unity was the appropriate oratory for such a challenge. Ben Witherington III agrees with Mitchell regarding the use of deliberative rhetoric, but he differs from her on the nature of the assembly. He believes that the Corinthian community was a church, not a secular assembly. He prefers a social division over teachers or rhetors rather than patrons or party leaders.⁹⁵

Moxnes, Aasgaard, and others have advocated that family metaphors played a central role in understanding first Christians' identities and interpreting biblical texts.⁹⁶ They contend that early Christian groups are not typical secular or political assemblies or associations but a family and household of God.⁹⁷ They believe that family metaphors are a means by which Paul and his Christian followers thought about their relationship toward God, Jesus Christ, one another, and non-Christian believers. In

⁹² Laurence L. Welborn, "On the Discord in Corinth: 1 Corinthians 1–4 and Ancient Politics," *JBL* 106, no. 1 (March 1987): 85–111; "A Conciliatory Principle in 1 Cor 4:6," *NovT* 29, no. 4 (1987): 320–46; and *Politics and Rhetoric in the Corinthian Epistles* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997).

⁹³ Inkelaar, *Conflict over Wisdom*, 12.

⁹⁴ Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric*, 20–111.

⁹⁵ Ben Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 30–2.

⁹⁶ See an introduction to social and cultural understanding of family metaphors, Halvor Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families*. Aasgaard offers an excellent overview of Pauline scholarship on family metaphor since the 1980s; *My Beloved Brothers and Sisters*, 10–31; "History of Research on Children," 13–38.. See kinship studies in the New Testament, Hellerman, *The Ancient Church*; Birge, *The Language of Belonging*; Trevor J. Burke, *Family Matters*.

Other earlier studies: Robert J. Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community*; Sandnes, *A New Family*; David M. Bossman, "Paul's Fictive Kinship Movement," *BTB* 26, no. 4 (1996): 163–71, <https://doi.org/10.1177/014610799602600404>; Osiek and Balch, *Families*; Scott S. Bartchy, "Undermining Ancient Patriarchy: The Apostle Paul's Vision of a Society of Siblings," *BTB*, no. 29 (1999): 68–78; "Who Should Be Called Father? Paul of Tarsus between the Jesus Tradition and Patria Potestas," *BTB* 33, no. 4 (2003): 135–47, <https://doi.org/10.1177/014610790303300403>.

⁹⁷ Aasgaard, *My Beloved Brothers and Sisters*, 306, 308–10, 311.

turn, this self-understanding in familial terms shaped and reshaped social and moral conduct toward God, Jesus Christ, one another, and otherworldly influences.⁹⁸ Moreover, as part of the social-scientific investigation, family metaphors provide a unique window for modern readers to peek into the early Christian way of thinking and behaving, contrasting with their contemporary social and familial roles in the first-century world.⁹⁹ Finally, these metaphors enable us to enter an intercultural dialogue with those who originally encountered the Christ-event and responded to God's call.¹⁰⁰

For instance, Mary K. Birge fixes attention on Paul's kinship language (e.g., siblings, parents, and children) in 1 Corinthians. She contends that Paul's kinship language is an interpretive key to understanding Paul's religious message of reproof, chastisement, and encouragement.¹⁰¹ Lim's *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation* (2017) further utilized the fruits of previous studies. He expands on the rhetorical functions of family metaphors with identity theory and dedicates two chapters to Paul's familial terminologies (i.e., siblingships, parents, and children). Paul employs familial language by tapping into the everyday reality of ancient Roman Corinth. He capitalizes on the familial bond of affection as Paul's rhetorical mode of *pathos* used to modulate the Corinthians' way of thinking about worldly values and behaving toward one another as a family in the newfound faith of Christ.¹⁰² Overall, these studies confirm that Paul indeed takes advantage of familial terms rhetorically and theologically to remodel Christ-followers' social and moral behaviors and their spiritual relationships among them and with God.

In summary, this necessarily brief survey brings into sharp focus how previous scholarship has attempted to determine the nature of the Corinthian conflicts and the ways in which Paul addresses the

⁹⁸ MacDonald, "Paul and Family Life," 253–4.

⁹⁹ Aasgaard, *My Beloved Brothers and Sisters*, 2–3.

¹⁰⁰ Philip F. Esler, *New Testament Theology: Communion and Community* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2005), 39, 208, 254.

¹⁰¹ Birge, *The Language of Belonging*, 71–2, 181–7.

¹⁰² Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 136.

issues with related cultural and rhetorical knowledge. Further, it informs us how each major approach contributes to understanding Paul's message and what relevant tools are available. Lastly, because Paul's writing uses elements of ancient rhetoric, we can suggest that he does exploit familial terms rhetorically and theologically. In the following, we will continue to illustrate how the above observations are utilized or, for our purpose, neglected when discussing parent-child relations in 1 Corinthians 4:14–21.

II. Paul's Father Imagery and Pauline Imitation in 1 Corinthians 4:14–21

Current social-historical and rhetorical studies on 1 Corinthians 4:14–21 concentrate on two related topics. The first topic concerns the make-up of family and household against the cultural backdrop of the notion of *paterfamilias* and Paul's religious and social functions as a founder or a patron (or broker) within the Graeco-Roman and Jewish cultural contexts.¹⁰³ The second focus addresses the notion of Pauline imitation, its significance in understanding the power dynamics between Paul and Pauline communities, and the styles of Pauline leadership in Paul's world. It will limit itself to sampling the recent literature concerning family in the Corinthian context for brevity.

Paul as a Paterfamilias/Children, Founder, and Patron/Broker

Eva M. Lassen, her article "The Use of the Father Image in Imperial Propaganda and 1 Corinthians 4:14–21," represents one of the earliest studies on the social and cultural connotations of Roman *paterfamilias* in relation to 1 Corinthians 4.¹⁰⁴ She places Paul's father imagery within the Roman family and its political and religious contexts in the late Republic and early *principate*. She observes that Paul's

¹⁰³ Paul applies the term "father" second in frequency to siblings among kinship terms, about 36 times. Paul's use of father includes reference to Abraham (e.g., Rom 4:11), Isaac (Rom 9:10), himself (1 Cor 4:15; cf. Phil 2:22), any father (e.g., Thess 2:11), and God as Father of Jesus (2 Cor 1:3; cf. Rom 15:6).

¹⁰⁴ Eva M. Lassen, "The Use of the Father Image in Imperial Propaganda and 1 Corinthians 4:14–21," *TynBul* 42, no. 1 (May 1991), 127–36; "The Roman Family: Ideal and Metaphor," in *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 104–20.

father language invokes his authority over the Corinthians with an image of justice and moderation but not of patriarchalism.¹⁰⁵

Similarly, in her *The Language of Belonging*, Birge notices that Paul's use of the familial kinship language of father and children has rhetorical functions.¹⁰⁶ The rhetorical intent of Paul's father imagery is to appeal to paternal authority for the admonition by the gentle censure of what was acceptable and unacceptable in their behaviors.¹⁰⁷ Thus, Paul intentionally uses father-children language to resort to his authority but does so through the pledge of amity.¹⁰⁸

In a like manner, Trevor J. Burke's "Paul's Role as 'Father' to His Corinthian 'Children'" concentrates on Paul's role as father and offers a more nuanced understanding of Paul's family language through an analogy of a dysfunctional family.¹⁰⁹ He explores the normal social expectations of parent-child relations in antiquity to understand *paterfamilias*, his power, and children's social norms and expectations at home. He maintains that Paul embodies an ideal *paterfamilias* who exercises his paternal power moderately during family conflict and shows unusual loving care toward his "children."¹¹⁰

By contrast, S. Scott Bartchy's article, "Who Should Be Called Father?" attempts to show how Jesus' and Paul's teaching posed a significant challenge to the conventional understanding of filial piety and the authority of *paterfamilias* within a patriarchal society.¹¹¹ His examination reminds modern readers of how God the Father has reconstructed the Christian community as His household. He

¹⁰⁵ Lassen, "The Use of the Father Image," 136. A similar approach by White, "Paul and *Pater Familias*," 171–203.

¹⁰⁶ Birge, *The Language of Belonging*, 37.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁰⁹ Trevor J. Burke, "Paul's Role as 'Father' to His Corinthian 'Children' in Socio-Historical Context (1 Corinthians 4:14–21)," in *Paul and the Corinthians: Studies on a Community in Conflict: Essays in Honour of Margaret Thrall*, ed. Trevor J. Burke and J. Keith Elliott, NovTSup 109 (Boston: Brill, 2003), 93–113.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 113.

¹¹¹ Bartchy, "Who Should Be Called Father," 135–47; "Undermining Ancient Patriarchy," 68–78.

rightfully criticizes the reductionist tendency in approaching religious texts. Regrettably, Bartchy does not offer any concrete ways to engage with the cultural aspects of Paul's family language.

James C. Hanges, in his study of *Paul, Founder of Churches*, touches upon Paul's self-understanding as a founding apostle (1 Cor 3:10; 4:14–5).¹¹² He confirms that Paul's use of parental expressions in describing one's founding activity was typical in Graeco-Roman cultures.¹¹³ Paul relies upon his religious experience as the ground for his fatherly responsibility to the Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians 4:14–21, Paul reminds the Corinthians of his foundational visit by writing and sending Timothy in his place. Paul exercises his divinely sanctioned authority as a founding father with great care and discretion. His expectations of their obedience and loyalty toward him further correspond to those of the ancient Graeco-Roman literary evidence.¹¹⁴

David M. Bossman's article "Paul's Fictive Kinship Movement" evaluates Paul's overall family language and argues that Paul and his fatherly role would be better understood as a broker, mediating family matters in the household of God as Patron.¹¹⁵ Thus, even though Paul refers to himself as a father (1 Cor 4:14–15), he places his fatherly role under the authority and patronage of God the Father.¹¹⁶ Moreover, Paul's use of grace and glory further demonstrates the patron-client relationships typical of social worlds in which honor is a core value.¹¹⁷

Likewise, Joubert argues that Paul's call to complete the Jerusalem collection (2 Cor 8–9) parallels the ancient practices of patronage and benefaction. Paul's self-designation as a father is

¹¹² Hanges, *Paul*, 1, 14, 18, 69, 117, 121, 199, 388–93.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 389.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 388–93.

¹¹⁵ Bossman, "Paul's Fictive Kinship," 163–71. Cf. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 51–89, 132–9. Neyrey, "God, Benefactor and Patron," 465–92.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 164–5.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 165, 170.

consistent with his social function as a patron.¹¹⁸ However, “[o]ver against Paul’s apostle role, which reflects his position as mediator or broker of the heavenly patrons, his patriarchal role is related to his position in terms of the believers under his supervision.”¹¹⁹ Thus, Paul’s careful use of patriarchal language motivates the Corinthians to fulfill their familial responsibilities toward him and one another.

Balla’s *Child-Parent Relationships* presents a different approach to parent-child relations by adopting the perspective of children.¹²⁰ He concentrates on children’s social and ideological environments in the New Testament. He insightfully identifies several moral sentiments—namely, fear (φοβέομαι), honor (τιμάω), reverence (σέβομαι), and debt of gratitude—that are intrinsic to children’s obligations toward parents and the divine.¹²¹ Accordingly, the ground for honoring parents consistently involves the principle of reciprocity or the *do-ut-des* mentality and moral sentiments to please (e.g., so to be rewarded) and fear (i.e., being punished) of the divine.¹²² Compared with other cultural ideals, he observes that early Christian religious expectations and moral educations of children toward their parents are not radically different from those of Graeco-Roman and Jewish literary traditions. However, Balla’s treatments of parent-child relations generally tend to be descriptive and prescriptive in literary evidence and lack concreteness in everyday life experiences.¹²³ While implying that moral sentiments

¹¹⁸ Joubert, *Paul as Benefactor*, 167–73.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 172–73.

¹²⁰ Balla, *The Child-Parent Relationships*, 2–3.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 36; cf. 76–7.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 36. “Do ut des” denotes “I give so that you may give.” It “refers to an ancient Latin formula used when sacrifices were made to the gods in the hope of fruitfulness and security.” Robert Segal and Kocku von Stuckrad, eds., “Do ut des,” in *Vocabulary for the Study of Religion*, 3 vols. (Brill, 2015). Also, according to the *Guide to Latin in International Law*, the expression conveys: “(1) In Roman law, an innominate contract in which one party’s performance satisfies the condition for the other party’s performance. (2) An adage conveying the sense of reciprocity inherent in early conceptions of international law.” Aaron Xavier Fellmeth and Maurice Horwitz, “Do ut des,” in *Guide to Latin in International Law*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2021).

¹²³ For example, Balla, *The Child-Parent Relationships*, 184.

were inherent to reciprocal parent-child relations, he fails to discuss why and how they are important to familial reciprocity.¹²⁴

Finally, drawing upon the conceptual and social identity theories, Lim holds that family metaphors played a crucial role in forming a new social identity in Christ.¹²⁵ His most significant contribution is his acknowledgment of the rhetorical function of familial bonds of affection. He demonstrates that familial metaphors are powerful in evoking responses from the addressees.¹²⁶ Lim adopts a more balanced approach concerning parent-child expressions that investigates the father/mother and child/childhood metaphors.¹²⁷ He argues that Paul's self-description, such as "untimely born" (1 Cor 15:8) or "slave administrator" (4:1–2), would not put Paul at any rhetorical advantage.¹²⁸ Why, then, does Paul use those familial imageries related to children and childhood? Lim suggests that Paul's recurrent use of familial terms shows that he speaks as an insider and part of the family, not as an outsider or stranger to the Corinthians. The constant reminder of familial ties creates stronger emotional ties with his addressees, which, in turn, reinforces Paul's claims and reshapes their ways of thinking and behaving.¹²⁹ Although Lim highlights the rhetorical force behind the frequent evocation of the familial bonds of affections, he stops short of deliberating about the origin or the nature of Paul's parent-child relationship, namely, that it was created by and sustained through Christ's χάρις. Moreover, without authenticating whether Paul's parent-child relations with the Corinthians

¹²⁴ Balla, *The Child-Parent Relationships*, 36, 76–7.

¹²⁵ Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 93–136.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 91–2, 134–6.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 127–32. Other children studies in the New Testament world: Yarbrough, "Parents and Children," 126–141; Balla, *The Child-Parent Relationships*; Reidar Aasgaard, Aasgaard, "History of Research on Children," 13–38; "Children in Antiquity and Early Christianity: Research History and Central Issues," *Familia (UPSA, Spain)*, no. 33 (2006): 23–46; *My Beloved Brothers and Sisters; Childhood in History*, 3–6; "Paul as a Child;" "Paul like a Child;" Gerber, *Paulus und seine Kinder*; Gaventa, *Our Mother*; Horn and Martens, *Let the Little Children Come to Me*; MacDonald, "Reading the New Testament," 376–387; *Power of Children*; "Paul and Family Life," 253–281; McNeel, *Paul as Infant*; Betsworth, *Children*.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 127–32.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 134–5, 136.

were genuine, his argument may give the impression that Paul was being rhetorically exploitative without sincerity, of which Paul was actually being accused by some (cf. 2 Cor 12:11–21).

These above investigations generally reflect socio-historical and rhetorical approaches to the Corinthian texts, focusing on cultural and religious parallels of the Corinthian Christians. Although the parallels have greatly enriched our understanding of Pauline Christianity as family groups, Paul's spiritual vision for the Corinthian children has not been fully captured through a thorough examination of Paul's parent-child and grace language (i.e., the social ethos of honor and reciprocity) within everyday family interactions. Fundamentally, Paul strives to distinguish himself and his Corinthian community from their social world by becoming a family of God established in Christ's χάρις. Appropriately, he acts as the spiritual father and admonishes his Corinthian children to become more like God's children rather than behaving like the children of their age (1 Cor 1:26–31; 2:1–16; 2 Cor 6:14–18).¹³⁰ In the following, we show similar issues concerning parent-child relations in recent Corinthian studies of Pauline imitation.

Pauline Imitation in 1 Corinthians

The second interest in 1 Corinthians 4:14–21 is the notion of imitation. Adam Koontz's study of "The Imitation of Paul in the Graeco-Roman World" competently identifies three central issues that underline the current discussions of Pauline imitation: (1). how is imitation related to power? (2). what was the content of imitation? And (3). why did Paul want people to imitate him?¹³¹

¹³⁰ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 175–286. Philip F. Esler, *2 Corinthians: A Social Identity Commentary*, T&T Clark Social Identity Commentaries on the New Testament (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2021), 193–202.

¹³¹ Adam Koontz, "The Imitation of Paul in the Graeco-Roman World" (Ph.D. diss., Philadelphia, PA, Temple University, 2020), 31. He provides an excellent summary on current scholarship of Pauline language of imitation. Other major contributors on this topic: (just name of a few), Willis Peter de Boer, *The Imitation of Paul: An Exegetical Study* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1962); Castelli, *Imitating Paul*; Dustin Watson Ellington, "'Imitate Me': Participation in Christ and Paul's Vocational Model for the Church in 1–2 Corinthians" (Ph.D. diss., Durham, NC, Duke University); Victor A. Copan, *Saint Paul as Spiritual Director: An Analysis of the Imitation of Paul with Implications and Applications to the Practice of Spiritual Direction*, Paternoster Biblical and Theological Monographs (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007); "Spiritual Formation and St. Paul as Spiritual Director:

Elizabeth A. Castelli, in her book *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power*, concentrates on power relations (1) and Paul's rhetorical intent (3). She insists that Paul's calling for children's imitation of the father (1 Cor 4:16; cf. 11:1) constitutes a rhetorical strategy that seeks to reassert his paternal authority to reassure the unity of the community.¹³² Moreover, building on Castelli's argument and utilizing an ideological critique, Charles A. Wanamaker goes further and contends that Paul taps into the ancient hierarchical ideology, like patriarchy, as his rhetorical strategy and his actual dominance over the Corinthian community.¹³³

However, Kathy Ehrensperger, Harrison, and others counterargue that Pauline imitation does not conform to the thought and value system of the dominant Graeco-Roman society but rather upends or implies a deconstruction of them.¹³⁴ For instance, Ehrensperger pays close attention to the content of Pauline imitation (2), such as humility (not being boastful), respectfulness of diversity among apostolic services, Christ's suffering, and Christ's example of accommodating others. She interprets that Pauline imitation language fundamentally differs from the notion of rigidly copying and symbolically reproducing hierarchical dominance. Although Paul appeals to hierarchical power relations (e.g., father and children), he sees that his apostolic authority functions as a guide for the believers, not as a permanent position

Determining the Primary Aims," *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 3, no. 2 (2010): 140–54. Edwin A. Judge, "The Teacher as Moral Exemplar in Paul and in the Inscriptions of Ephesus," in *Social Distinctives of the Christians in the First-Century: Pivotal Essays by E.A. Judge* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008), 175–188; Petitfils, *Mos Christianorum*, 1–16, 47–86.

¹³² E.g., Castelli, *Imitating Paul*, 98–117. Vernon K. Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society and Ideology* (New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 1996), 195–99; Sandra H. Polaski, *Paul and the Discourse of Power, Gender, Culture, Theory* 8 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 12–13, 14–15; Charles A. Wanamaker, "The Power of the Absent Father: A Socio-Rhetorical Analysis of 1 Corinthians 4:14–5:13," in *Paul and the Corinthians: Studies on a Community in Conflict: Essays in Honour of Margaret Thrall*, ed. Trevor J. Burke and J. Keith Elliott, NovTSup 109 (Boston: Brill, 2003), 115–37.

¹³³ Wanamaker, "A Rhetoric of Power," 115–37.

¹³⁴ Ehrensperger, "Be Imitators of Me," 257–8. James R. Harrison, "The Imitation of the 'Great Man' in Antiquity," in *Christian Origins and Graeco-Roman Culture: Social and Literary Contexts for the New Testament*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Andrew Pitts, TENTS 9 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 254. Cf. Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 144–6; Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 371–3; Benjamin Fiore and Thomas R. Blanton, "Paul, Exemplification and Imitation" in *PGRW* 1:169–95; Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 112–4. Aasgaard, "Paul as a Child," 130; "Paul like a Child," 277.

for power or an imposition of dominance.¹³⁵ She maintains that Paul's imitation language is intended to serve the members of Christ. Ultimately, considering the content of imitation, Paul actually critiques the thought and value system of the dominant Graeco-Roman society.¹³⁶

With a different approach, Harrison contends that the imitation of the "great man" is a critical dimension of civic ethics in the honor-driven cultures of antiquity. However, the previous studies of Pauline imitation have overlooked the civic context in Pauline letters. Since Paul is very much concerned with the crucified Christ, his imitation language sets itself over against the much fêted "great men" of the first-century world, each with his network of hierarchically based patronage.¹³⁷ He insists that: "Paul sponsors a model of imitation that [upends] Graeco-Roman conventions of patronal power, without thereby diminishing the social importance of traditional benefaction ethics and its rewards."¹³⁸

Lastly, Aasgaard's articles and Lim's recent research on the language of children and childhood offer a fresh reflection on Paul's portrayal of parent-child relations.¹³⁹ Unlike Ehrensperger and Harrison, Aasgaard fixes on Paul's language of children to refute the reading of Paul as an authoritarian *paterfamilias*.¹⁴⁰ Paul is quite versatile in using a variety of parent-child imageries. He is capable of viewing himself not only from the perspective of parents but also from the perspective of children.¹⁴¹ Especially, Paul's use of the child imagery as an "untimely born" (1 Cor 15:8) and an orphan (1 Thess 2:17) to portray himself and his ministry is entirely embellished, which would put him at a rhetorical disadvantage rather than an advantage.¹⁴² For these reasons, Aasgaard contends that the perspective of children offers a complementary way to understand Paul and challenge the readings of Paul in light of

¹³⁵ Ibid., 257–8. Harrison, "The Imitation," 251. Koontz, "The Imitation of Paul," 173–5.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 258; *Paul and the Dynamics of Power*, 154.

¹³⁷ Harrison, "The Imitation," 218.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 218–9.

¹³⁹ Aasgaard, "Paul as a Child," 129–59; "Like a Child," 249–77; Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 127–32.

¹⁴⁰ Aasgaard, "Paul as a Child," 130, 158. Cf. Castelli, *Imitating Paul*, 111.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 134–5.

¹⁴² Aasgaard, "Paul like a Child," 276

authoritarianism and patriarchalism. He urges that Pauline scholars must see a Paul who is not merely informed by his cultural conventions but who is characterised by a call to transform his culture by willingly renouncing his power for the service of others.¹⁴³ Paul acts not only as a child of his time but also as a beloved child of God who transforms his life through his understanding of Christ, a model of Christian service.¹⁴⁴ Therefore, Paul's counsel to the Corinthians to imitate him takes on a different meaning: instead of claiming authority, it becomes an appeal to give up the power to imitate Christ's humility on the cross.

Likewise, in his treatment of parent-child metaphors, Lim offers another way of reading Pauline imitation from the perspective of children.¹⁴⁵ He contends that Paul's language of children often places him in a vulnerable position so that he might easily identify himself with the crucified Christ and the marginalized Corinthians. In this way, Lim reinterprets Paul's call to imitation as a discourse of weakness rather than power (1 Cor 4:16; 11:1). Paul's children-language displays a new vision of the church unified with the crucified Christ and a model of care for the weak, which "goes against the prevailing social convention of his day where the strong and powerful were honored and glorified."¹⁴⁶ Overall, these rhetorical analyses from the perspective of children prompt us to look deeper into the perspective of children as recipients of favors (Paul's language of χάρις) for a fuller understanding of parent-child interactions.

As is apparent, current social-historical and rhetorical explorations of 1 Corinthians 4:14–21 heavily invest in the cultural and religious parallels and the role of *paterfamilias* with its public social and religious functions. Similarly, the studies of Pauline imitation prioritize the paternal authorities and their

¹⁴³ Aasgaard, "Paul as a Child," 159; "Paul like a Child," 277.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 127–32. So, too, Castelli.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 134.

social and religious power dynamics in the public sphere outside of family.¹⁴⁷ However, even though Balla, Aasgaard, and Lim’s metaphorical studies of children are some exceptions, most studies overlook that parent-child terms are as well familial interactions governed by the social ethos of honor and reciprocity. Therefore, the social aspects of parent-child relations call for properly investigating their first-century social ethos of honor and reciprocity, allowing us to consider Paul’s parent-child discourse in everyday family life.

Moreover, current Pauline social-scientific studies of grace (χάρις) as a gracious gift and return of gratitude have already demonstrated that Paul’s language of grace is rooted in the social ethos of reciprocity and the social quest for honor.¹⁴⁸ Paul’s understanding of grace (χάρις) and reciprocal relations play a central role in shaping and reshaping community life with one another and with God. More importantly, Paul regards the Christian community as family, created by the divine χάρις in Christ, especially in the Corinthian correspondence, replete with descriptions of family relations (e.g., between siblings and parents and children). Therefore, a further investigation of Paul’s expressions of family and Paul’s language of grace within the first-century social ethos of honor and gift-reciprocity become necessary for a deeper understanding of Paul’s parent-child expressions in 1 Corinthians 4:14–21 specifically and in the Corinthian correspondence in general.

¹⁴⁷ Christine Gerber offers a thorough analysis of parent-child as relational metaphors in 1 Corinthians 4:14–21. However, her study of Pauline imitation is still centered on Paul’s role as a “father” and founder; see *Paulus und seine Kinder*.

¹⁴⁸ Especially, Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace*, 1–2, 4–5, 12, 18, 21, 27–33, 36, 40, 50–53, 214–9, 223–4, 287, 345, 351. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 3, 36, 43, 45, 51, 67–8, 71, 97, 184, 226, 244, 250.

B. A Critical Review of Honor and Gift-Reciprocity

The social-scientific insights of honor and gift-reciprocity are highly regarded in discerning social and familial communications in the biblical world.¹⁴⁹ These insights guide social-scientific critics to engage in the multifaceted dialogue with history, philosophy, and Christian theology.¹⁵⁰ The main goal of this section is to illustrate how honor and gift-reciprocity, along with the language of grace, are indispensable for understanding reciprocal relations of everyday life in the Pauline language of family. We shall critically review the recent Pauline studies of grace centered on social-scientific insights of honor and gift-reciprocity.

I. Social-Scientific Studies of Honor and Shame Since the 1980s

Moxnes summarizes three identifiable moments in the studies of honor and shame in this critical context:¹⁵¹ (1) honor and shame emerge as pivotal values in Mediterranean cultures (1966),¹⁵² (2) honor and shame as one set of values dialoguing with other cultural values in the Mediterranean world (1982, 1987),¹⁵³ and (3) Pitt-Rivers's honor and grace as cultural values conversing with the divine.¹⁵⁴ Moxnes

¹⁴⁹ For the discussion about the honor-shame model application in the New Testament studies see, Malina, *The New Testament World*; Crook, "Honor"; Louise J. Lawrence, *An Ethnography of the Gospel of Matthew: A Critical Assessment of the Use of the Honour and Shame Model in New Testament Studies*, WUNT 165 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 591–611; Finney, *Honour and Conflict*; Wu, *Honor*. Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*. Barclay, *Paul*.

¹⁵⁰ E.g., Elliott, *What Is Social-Scientific Criticism*, 7.

¹⁵¹ Moxnes, "Honor," 24–6.

¹⁵² Jean G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers, eds., *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society*, Nature of Human Society Series (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).

¹⁵³ David G. Gilmore, ed., *Honor and Shame and the Unity of the Mediterranean* (Washington, D.C: American Anthropological Association, 1987).

¹⁵⁴ Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers, *Honor and Grace*. An excellent synopsis on honor studies by Robert L. Oprisko, *Honor: A Phenomenology* (New York: Routledge, 2012), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203110232>.

then briefly describes the relevance of social honor in studies of conflict, family and kinship, gender perspective, and divine grace concerning early Christian communities and texts.¹⁵⁵

Honor, an anthropological concept, emerged from Pitt-Rivers's ethnographic studies of Mediterranean cultures in the 1960s.¹⁵⁶ Later, Bruce J. Malina (1933–2017) identified honor as one of the pivotal values in the first-century Mediterranean world. He exhibited how honor could lead to a new appreciation of social scenarios in biblical texts.¹⁵⁷ According to Malina, the primary good in the Mediterranean world was honor. Honor relates to a person's value and how it was evaluated through and by a relevant group and in one's own eyes.¹⁵⁸

The sources of honor may either be ascribed to someone or acquired.¹⁵⁹ Honor can be ascribed to someone by birth (i.e., born into an aristocratic or illustrious family), adoption, laying on of hands, or commissioning.¹⁶⁰ Consistently, Paul mentions his Jewish origin and being commissioned by Jesus in 2 Corinthians 11:22–23 as having honor and recognition ascribed to him.¹⁶¹ Alternately, people could acquire honor by prowess (e.g., military, athletic, aesthetic) and benefaction (e.g., wealth and social or political influence). In the case of both ascribed and acquired honor, claims need to be acknowledged *publicly*:¹⁶² honorable deeds do not convey honor until others acknowledge them *in public*.¹⁶³ This acknowledgment may be verbal or more substantive.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁵ Moxnes, "Honor," 26–33. Carolyn Osiek, "Women, Honor, and Context in Mediterranean Antiquity," HTS 64, no. 1 (January 1, 2008): 323–37.

¹⁵⁶ Pitt-Rivers, "Honour and Shame," 3–34.

¹⁵⁷ Malina, *The New Testament World*.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 30.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 30–1.

¹⁶⁰ Neyrey, "Social-Scientific Criticism," 183.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ Jerome H. Neyrey, *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 22.

¹⁶⁴ Neyrey, "Social-Scientific Criticism," 183.

“Being in public” or “outside of family” is one of the essential features of social honor. Crook points out that Malina’s model assumes that “*the public sphere* belonged to men while women were limited to the private sphere.”¹⁶⁵ Colin Patterson summarizes this point nicely: “The key claim is that, within that world, these values were at the heart of social interactions *outside of family and close friendship circles*.”¹⁶⁶ Essential components in the public recognition of honor and shame include the anti-introspective self, agonistic interaction and challenge-riposte, limited good, a dyadic personality, and the sexual division of labor.¹⁶⁷

Jerome H. Neyrey’s work, *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew* (1995), contributes to the study of social honor by bridging it with ancient rhetorical norms that characterize the texts that provide a window on honor-shame in antiquity. He holds that honor and shame are conterminous with epideictic, one of three species of rhetoric and the one that is manifested in letters of praise and blame (e.g., 1 Cor. 11:2 and 17), as well as in doxologies and prayers.¹⁶⁸ For instance, we find this form of rhetoric in the *encomium*.

The *encomium*, a narrative of praise, draws on the criteria which the ancients considered basically honorable: origins (noble *polis* or bloodlines), birth (celebrated by prophecy or celestial phenomena=divine favor), nurture and training (education or discipline learned), deeds of the soul (virtue, especially prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance), and noble death with posthumous honors (Neyrey 1994a). Paul often appeals to the *encomium* as part of his apologetic argument (Gal. 1:12–2:14; 2 Cor. 11:2–33; Phil. 3:4–6); but all the gospels promote the honor of Jesus by attention to his (noble) birth, parents, nurture, and deeds according to the instructions found in the *encomium*.¹⁶⁹

Neyrey’s summary provides a clear profile of the respected figure in antiquity, including Paul’s claims to honor. Louise J. Lawrence praises Neyrey’s presentation of the model and his refinement of it for

¹⁶⁵ Crook, “Honor,” 609. Italics are mine.

¹⁶⁶ Patterson, “The World of Honor,” 5. Italics are mine.

¹⁶⁷ Malina, *The New Testament World*, 32–53. Lawrence, *An Ethnography*, 10–11. Wu, *Honor*, 9–10.

¹⁶⁸ Neyrey, “Social-Scientific Criticism,” 183.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.,

purposes of textual analysis: “Neyrey perhaps achieves the most impressive synthesis of cultural anthropology and a classical literary analysis among the scholars surveyed.”¹⁷⁰

While accepting the premise of the cultural differences between the interpreter and interpreted, Lawrence launched a threefold critique of Malina-Neyrey’s honor-shame model. She first exposes the model’s functional-structural tendencies inherited from the classical anthropologists’ formulation.¹⁷¹ She then reveals two further issues: the model-based research is potentially deterministic in results and often it leads to misrepresenting the data collected because of its rigid understanding of culture.¹⁷² In contrast, Lawrence adapts Mikhail M. Bakhtin’s understanding of culture as a fluid dialogue between diverse individuals and voices (dialogism and heteroglossia), providing an alternative approach to biblical texts.¹⁷³ Her critiques and utilization of Bakhtin’s dialogism provide a necessary corrective to the proclivity of abstracting and totalizing in Malina-Neyrey’s model.¹⁷⁴ Moreover, her undertaking counterbalances the model-based application that reinforces the dichotomy between socio-historical and literary analysis.¹⁷⁵ Finally, Lawrence anticipates future research: “Literature, as I argued in my *Ethnography*, provides a significant way *the marginal* or *weak* can exercise a form of agency, as is the case within Matthew’s specifically construed literary world.”¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁰ Lawrence, *An Ethnography*, 21. She further surveys five other scholars including Vernon K. Robbins and his social and cultural texture of texts, David deSilva’s honor discourse, Timothy S. Laniak’s socio-literary reading, and Barth Campbell and his classical rhetorical reading.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁷³ Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (University of Texas Press Slavic Series 1; Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1981).

¹⁷⁴ Lawrence, *An Ethnography*, 37–59. Barbara Green, review of *An Ethnography of the Gospel of Matthew: A Critical Assessment of the Use of the Honour and Shame Model in New Testament Studies*, by Louise Joy Lawrence, *BTB* 36, no. 4 (November 1, 2006): 189–90.

¹⁷⁵ Green, “review,” 189–90.

¹⁷⁶ Lawrence, “Structure, Agency and Ideology: A Response to Zeba Crook,” *JSNT* 29, no. 3 (March 2007), 277. Italics are mine.

Later on, Crook puts anthropological models under more vigorous scrutiny relating to structure and agency.¹⁷⁷ With Lawrence, he concedes that “the truth of culture lies somewhere between the entirely deterministic and the voluntaristic.”¹⁷⁸ Having acknowledged the ingenuity of Malina-Neyrey’s model, Crook proposes a refined model with a linear and binary aspect regarding the public court of reputation.¹⁷⁹ The linear aspect refers to a new set of terms: attributed honor and distributed honor. His binary aspects include gender (male vs. female), social (elite vs. non-elite), and other possible categories. Lastly, he identifies the remodel of honor and shame as a public court of reputation (PCR).¹⁸⁰

Daniel Y. Wu, in *Honor, Shame, and Guilt*, greatly appreciates Crook’s PRC remodel of honor and Lawrence’s complementary approach to honor and shame.¹⁸¹ Wu’s work engages with the honor-shame model in biblical studies on three fronts: Ezekiel studies in the Old Testament, an investigation of psychology and anthropology for a multifaceted approach based on J. W. Berry’s theory of the derived ethic,¹⁸² and an extension of the model to theological insights for atonement theology by an inversion of PCR remodel into a “Divine Court Reputation” (DCR) model. Notably, he attempts to bridge the overemphasized cultural difference between the ancient and modern. As a biblical theologian, he

¹⁷⁷ Zeba A. Crook, “Structure versus Agency in Studies of the Biblical Social World: Engaging with Louise Lawrence,” *JSNT* 29, no. 3 (March 2007): 251–75. Lawrence, “Structure, Agency and Ideology,” *JSNT* 29, no. 3 (March 2007): 277–86.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 260, 285.

¹⁷⁹ See Crook’s respond to some of the criticisms of the model; “Honor, Shame,” 611. Cf. Unni Wikan, F. Gerald Downing, and Louise J. Lawrence are three main critics of Malina’s model that Crook deals with extensively. Unni Wikan, “Shame and Honour: A Contestable Pair,” *Man* 19 (1984): 635–52. F. Gerald Downing, “‘Honor’ among Exegetes,” *CBQ* 61, no. 1 (1999): 53–73. Lawrence, *An Ethnography*.

¹⁸⁰ Crook, “Structure versus Agency,” 271.

¹⁸¹ Wu, *Honor*, 10–11, 15–16. Wu adapts Crook’s PCR remodeling of the honor-shame model as a foundation for his DCR model and atonement theology. He applauds Lawrence for noticing the missing component in Malina’s model, namely, “an omniscient divine figure.” Lawrence, *An Ethnography*, 30.

¹⁸² The approach integrates the experiences of one’s own culture and the results of analytical studies between two cultures. J. W. Berry, “Imposed Ethics—Emics—Derived Ethics: The Operationalization of a Compelling Idea,” *International Journal of Psychology* 24, no. 6 (1989): 721–35, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00207598908247841>. Wu, *Honor*, 21–30.

notices the model's limitations and adjusts it to include theological discussion of atonement by an inversion of the current (re)model of honor and shame (i.e., DCR).¹⁸³

The use of psychology to understand honor and shame is insightful and has led to further study. Patterson presents his appraisal concerning the exaggeration of cultural gaps between ancient and modern in the honor-shame model. He proposes that Malina's model can be implemented and better understood through the psychological theory of social dominance.¹⁸⁴

Yet, seeing the pursuit of honor and achievement as belonging to the same fundamental human drive lurking beneath the collectivist/individualist contrast, opens up possibilities for contemporary appropriation of the biblical text that might otherwise be closed off ... Just as social-scientific analysis has been able to uncover just how fundamental is the operation of an honor-shame code to the self-identity of players within the New Testament, so, too, we are able to affirm that the seeking after status through achievement or power works in the same—but perhaps more unconscious—way in the minds of members of modern societies.¹⁸⁵

His conclusions give some positive notes for future honor studies in bridging the cultural divide between the ancient and modern, as well as for theological actualization. They further encourage us to broaden our research to other human sciences with related notions like grace to improve our understanding of social honor.

Mark T. Finney's work *Honor and Conflict in the Ancient World* displays a more recent treatment of the cultural understanding of the honor-in-conflict situation in the social world of St. Paul. Of importance are his first two chapters, "Honor and Shame in Contemporary Mediterranean Ethnography and Biblical Studies" and "Honour and Conflict in the Ancient World."¹⁸⁶ Those two chapters critique the issues of generalization in the anthropological models. Relying on Michael Herzfeld's arguments, Finney identifies three persistent issues embedded in the anthropological models. First, theoretically, the

¹⁸³ Ibid., 179–92.

¹⁸⁴ Patterson, "The World of Honor," 4–14.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 12.

¹⁸⁶ Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 1–47.

formulation of models (e.g., honor and shame) quickly falls into the fallacy of apriorism. Secondly, the model application often results in a circular argument; the model is employed to understand social reality and becomes a means to reconfirm the model's validity. Lastly, even though the models are intended to avoid ethnocentrism, they often fail to deliver on such promises.¹⁸⁷

Finney emphasizes that the flaws of the honor-shame model further manifest themselves in the reification of ancient cultures. The generalizations arising from using the models' theoretical propositions tend to replace careful semantic analysis appropriate to particular historical and social situations (e.g., the conflicts in Corinth concerning social honor). Consequently, when the cultural value of honor is overly simplified and emphasized as the "master symbol," it hinders the meaningful studies of other cultural values like hospitality and honesty and causes an oversight of regional differences. Moreover, if anthropologists concentrate on convergence, they may fail to explain the tensions, inconsistency, and even contradictions when the cultural value of honor is among other cultural symbolisms such as religion, kinship, patronage, and benefaction.¹⁸⁸

Finney notes that anthropologists have now engaged Mediterranean honor and shame more judiciously and in a more nuanced way concerning biblical exegesis.¹⁸⁹ Still, the potential "danger of miscategorizing the role of honor in ancient life" is real when the model is applied to ancient societies and biblical exegesis.¹⁹⁰ Accordingly, Finney ferrets out two further drawbacks when critics apply the social scripts of honor and shame to biblical texts. The first is that the anthropological concepts often willfully resist and neglect the religious aspects of honor (e.g., glory and grace of God) in biblical social scenarios.¹⁹¹ Secondly, due to abstraction, the model tends to reduce other value systems to a particular

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 6ff.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 11.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 7.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 8–9.

hegemonic system (i.e., the hierarchy of values), which we can observe in Malina's enthronement of honor as the "pivotal value" in the first-century Mediterranean world.¹⁹² Such a process often favors cultural collectivity and hinders further explorations of individual differences or alternative situations and even marginalized groups.¹⁹³

Although Finney rightly points out the functional-structural problems in the model-based approaches, his socio-historical emphasis on particularism is not without weaknesses. He seems to overlook that those same issues (i.e., apriorism, circularity, and ethnocentrism) can occur in socio-historically oriented approaches. Philip F. Esler anticipates these problems, noting that

we all use models in our work; the only question is whether we acknowledge them and bring them out into the open for critical scrutiny. Whenever New Testament critics discuss textual features in terms such as "family," "class," "politics," "power," "religion," "personality," "conscience," or "boundary-makers" they are employing models, although usually implicit and unrecognized ones deriving from modern experience quite remote from biblical culture, with the inevitable risk of ethnocentric and anachronistic readings.¹⁹⁴

An interpretivist approach to history (i.e., ancient societies) with a concentration on particularity may destabilize the interpretive framework, leading to a radical relativism that falls prey to radical and uncritical postmodernism.¹⁹⁵

Nevertheless, Finney's review of the model application and his socio-historical exploration demonstrate a more refined approach toward early Christian family groups and texts. For our purposes, he re-anchors possible research on the concrete honor-in-conflict situation of the Corinthian community. He expands on the socio-historical contexts of honor and shame (including semantic fields) to recount the problems besetting the nascent Christian community.

¹⁹² See Malina, *The New Testament World*, 27–56.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁹⁴ Philip F. Esler, ed. *Modelling Early Christianity: Social-Scientific Studies of the New Testament in Its Context* (London: Routledge, 1995), 4.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

There are several strengths in Finney's approach. First, he puts the concepts of honor and shame within specific conflict situations (i.e., the break-down of relationships in the Corinthian communities), offering a fresh perspective on how the early Christian communities might have expressed social honor with other related terms. Second, he elucidates both honor and conflict within the cultural matrix of the Graeco-Roman and Jewish worlds of the time. Finally, he acknowledges that, within this matrix, Pauline Christian communities had quasi-family characteristics, an assertion that will have significance for our work.¹⁹⁶

Summarizing our overview of studies of honor and shame, we suggest the following. (1). Although Malina's honor-shame model and its remodeling in the work of various scholars who have used his model has been insightful in biblical studies, the model and subsequent studies should be complemented by socio-historical surveys (i.e., history) and by analysis of them drawn from other human sciences (e.g., psychology). (2). Social-scientific critics must be conscious of their philosophical preferences and biases, such as cultural individualism versus collectivism and agency versus structure (i.e., the debate between Crook and Lawrence).¹⁹⁷ (3). In studying the early Christian family groups and texts, scholars need to be attentive to religious messages and realize that the theological thrust we discern in texts may not always conform to the social scripts prescribed by the models (e.g., Wu's study). (4). As Moxnes has illustrated, cultural values of honor and shame are intertwined with the anthropological concept of grace; grace will be invaluable for theological discussions. However, current biblical studies of grace consistently fail to notice Pitt-Rivers's anthropological grace for a fuller understanding of familial and spiritual relations in Mediterranean cultures. (5). Finally, the above biblical studies concerning honor and shame have, for the most part, not moved beyond the confines of *public* social interactions and thus have not engaged with the roots of such social interactions in everyday

¹⁹⁶ Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 11.

¹⁹⁷ Crook, "Structure versus Agency," 270–1.

family life. How, for example, do the models and their applications account for the ways in which honor and shame are communicated and socialized among family members via mutual gift-giving and gift-returning? So far, a minimal range of studies has explored the cultural value of honor and grace in the family context, especially along the lines of parent-child interactions within family relations.¹⁹⁸ In part, this lacuna results from the conflation of familial exchanges with other non-kin-based reciprocity or familial interactions confused with power relations in public life. To elaborate on this point, we will turn to the recent studies of grace in Paul that have explicitly utilized the social-scientific insight of gift-reciprocity.

II. Limited Studies on the Interdependence of Paul's Language of Grace and Family

Recent studies of Paul's language of grace have substantiated that Paul and his contemporaries capitalized on the social ethos of reciprocity to contemplate human relations with each other and the divine.¹⁹⁹ For the most part, critics acknowledge the value of the social-scientific insight of gift-reciprocity for understanding social communications in the biblical world.²⁰⁰ Moreover, they reveal that Paul's language of grace is profoundly ingrained in the first-century social ethos of reciprocity and the quest for honor.

However, studies of grace have failed to show that Paul's understanding of grace is deep-seated in familial relatedness, especially in Paul's Corinthian correspondence. Plus, New Testament studies of

¹⁹⁸ Jerome H. Neyrey, "Loss of Wealth, Loss of Family and Loss of Honor: A Cultural Interpretation of the Original Four Makarisms," In *Modelling Early Christianity*, 6.

¹⁹⁹ Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*. Barclay, *Paul*. McFarland, *God and Grace in Philo and Paul*. Massinelli, *For Your Sake*. Satlow, *The Gift*. Milbank and Pickstock, *The Gift Exchanged*.

Earlier studies on grace and reciprocity, just name but a few, Conzelmann, *TDNT* 9:372–99, 406–14; Spicq, *TLNT* 3:500–6. Bruce J. Malina, "What is Prayer?" *TBT* 18 (1980): 214–20; "Patron and Client: The Analogy Behind Synoptic Theology," in Danker, *Benefactor*; John H. Elliott, "Patronage and Clientism in Early Christian Society: A Short Reading Guide," *Forum* 3 (1987): 39–48; DeSilva, "Patronage and Reciprocity," 32–84.

²⁰⁰ Sahlins, *Stone*. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 54–9. "Fictive Giftship," 61–8. Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 25–6.

reciprocal relations often confused familial reciprocity with other forms of extrafamilial (or public social) exchanges like patronage and benefaction. Subsequently, parent-child relations are not properly treated as a separate category of familial reciprocity but often through patronage and benefaction analogously. Finally, the theological distinctiveness of Paul's grace is unsatisfactorily explained with reference to anthropological gift and the social quest for honor.²⁰¹

To clarify these issues, we will begin with some of the most recent Pauline studies of grace that are representative of the employment of the Maussian gift-reciprocity. Each has demonstrated distinctive ways the anthropological gift has been useful in gaining new insights into Paul's language of grace and social and spiritual communications. But, first, considering how Mauss's gift-reciprocity is central to biblical investigations on grace and familial reciprocity, we will briefly recount the Maussian theory of gift-reciprocity.

A Summary of Mauss's The Gift

Mauss predicates that the ancient forms of gift exchanges are deeply rooted in total social facts.²⁰² As a social fact, reciprocal gift-giving encompasses all dimensions of social life and governs all aspects of family life and public interactions. It involves all people, individuals, and various social groups alike. Finally, it appears to be universal, occurring in every society, ancient and modern.²⁰³ Thus, for Mauss, premodern societies reproduce symbolically through reciprocal gift-giving, accepting, and returning.²⁰⁴

²⁰¹ E.g., Harrison treats the Pauline thanksgivings as part of the honorific inscriptions not as grace-reciprocity to express one's grateful heart; *Paul's Language of Grace*, 269–72. Crook insists that grace is a convention of the rhetoric of patronage and benefaction to persuade others of one's loyalty and conversion; *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 132–48.

²⁰² Mauss, *The Gift*, 101–2. See also Tarot, *Sociologie*, 64–5. Edgar and Sedgwick, *Key Concepts*, 64. Edgar, *Cultural Theory*, 157. Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, trans. Joseph Ward Swain (The Project Gutenberg EBook, 2012), <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/41360>, 74. Satlow, *The Gift*, 5, 8.

²⁰³ Adloff, *Gifts of Cooperation*, 7.

²⁰⁴ Mauss mainly compares Polynesia, Melanesia, the American Northwest, and a few great legal systems. See *The Gift*, 5. Da Col and Shryock, "A Perfect Host," xxi. Adloff, *Gifts of Cooperation*, 6–7.

He champions that the obligation to reciprocate in premodern communities is the moral foundation of a peaceful and harmonious co-existence among different communities and ethnic groups.²⁰⁵ He postulates that the principles of reciprocity in gift-giving provide an alternative to the Hobbesian vision of social order: Peace can be achieved and maintained by morally based reciprocity and cooperation, distinctive from an orderly society dominated by an authoritarian power or reached by struggle through conflicts and wars.²⁰⁶ In this regard, Mauss's *The Gift* is a moral critique of the political theories of his day entrenched in utilitarianism.²⁰⁷ Likewise, Mary Douglas coincides that "[t]he theory of the gift is a theory of human solidarity."²⁰⁸

In his essay, Mauss discerns an evolutionary process of human societies from the primordial "*prestations totales*" to the predominantly contractual transactions in modern commerce.²⁰⁹ He observes that presenting gifts reciprocally is very common in all premodern societies.²¹⁰ Those forms of exchange relied upon the voluntary and obligatory aspects of gift-giving, receiving, and returning concomitantly.²¹¹ The reciprocal nature of gift-giving defies the linear thinking in contractual exchanges as in a give-take mode. He believes that reciprocal interactions in premodern societies aim to create and

²⁰⁵ Mauss, *The Gift*, 83–107.

²⁰⁶ Ibid. Adloff, *Gifts of Cooperation*, 4–5. Sahlins, *Stone*, 153.

²⁰⁷ Mauss, *The Gift*, 60–61, and 98. Mary Douglas, forward to *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, Routledge Classics, trans. W. D. Halls (London: Routledge, [1990] 2002), x.

²⁰⁸ Douglas, forward, x. Komter, *Social Solidarity*. Grégoire Mallard recently argues a similar point that Mauss's treatment of gift aimed at the international solidarity. Grégoire Mallard, *Gift Exchange: The Transnational History of a Political Idea* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

²⁰⁹ Mauss, *The Gift*, 6–8. There are no equivalent words for "*prestations totales*" in English, which may be rendered as "total services and/or favors" that can cover any "useful goods" worthy of economical exchanges. Pitt-Rivers renders them as "prestation" or "total prestation"; see "The Place of Grace," 88, 93. See explanations by Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 24.

²¹⁰ Ibid., *The Gift*, 1, 6–8.

²¹¹ Adloff, *Gifts of Cooperation*, 7. Sahlins, *Stone*, 134.

uphold social interdependence.²¹² His study affirms the social significance of gifts and the moral obligation to reciprocate in everyday life.²¹³

Moreover, following the Durkheimian school of thought, Mauss claims that social gift-giving finds its religious root most clearly expressed in the Māori idea of *hau* (the spirit of gift), symbolically and collectively transmitted in the gift exchanges.²¹⁴ Concentrating on the Māori culture, he notices that people have always believed that *hau* is the mystic force that guarantees the circulation of giftship.²¹⁵ The binding force of *hau* over the receiver and giver, together with other social responsibilities, compels people to reciprocate through the work of time.²¹⁶ Therefore, by advocating a morally based reciprocal gift-giving, he was convinced that a balance could be accomplished between self-interest in economic terms and altruism in a moral sense.²¹⁷

Mauss analyzes two agonistic forms of exchanges to demonstrate his discovery: the Kula trade and potlatch.²¹⁸ The Kula ring (one of the Kula objects), a lesser competitive gift, engenders an occasion

²¹² Da Col and Shryock, "A Perfect Host," xxiv.

²¹³ Carl Olson, "Excess, Time, and the Pure Gift: Postmodern Transformations of Marcel Mauss' Theory," MTSG 14, no. 3/4 (2002): 350–74.

²¹⁴ Adloff, *Gifts of Cooperation*, 18–23. Mauss, *The Gift*, 4, 14–6. Mauss highlights two reasons why the *hau* has constraints on the donor and the receiver: (1) the spirit of gift desires to return to the giver; (2) the recipient fears that the misfortunes may befall them if the counter gifts are not offered. Sahlins, *Stone*, 134. For a useful study on the Durkheimian school of thought, see Alexander Gofman, "Tradition, Morality and Solidarity in Durkheim's Theory," *Iusd* 39.1 (2019): 25–39, <https://doi.org/10.26650/SJ.2019.39.1.0007>.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 18–23. Stephanie Frank, "The 'Force in the Thing': Mauss' Nonauthoritarian Sociality in *The Gift*," *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 6, no. 2 (September 2016): 255–77, <https://doi.org/10.14318/hau6.2.017>. Maurice Godelier, *The Enigma of the Gift* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999). Robbie Shilliam, "The Spirit of Exchange," in *Postcolonialism and International Relations*, ed. Sanjay Seth (London: Routledge, 2013).

²¹⁶ Mauss, *The Gift*, 15. G. MacCormack summarized the main criticisms of Mauss's *hau*. G. MacCormack, "Mauss and the 'Spirit' of the Gift," *Oceania* 52, no. 4 (1982): 286–93. Valerio Valeri, "Marcel Mauss and the New Anthropology," *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 3, no. 1 (2013): 262–86, <https://doi.org/10.14318/hau3.1.027>. Frank, "The Force in the Thing," 255–77. Georgina Stewart, "The 'Hau' of Research: Mauss Meets Kaupapa Māori," *Journal of World Philosophies* 2, no. 1 (2017), 1–11, <https://doi.org/10.2979/jourworlphil.2.1.01>.

²¹⁷ Mauss, 87–8 and 91. Adloff, *Gifts of Cooperation*, 6–7. Seung Cheol Lee, "The (Anti-)Social Gift? Mauss's Paradox and the Triad of the Gift," *European Journal of Social Theory* 23, no. 4 (2020): 631–48, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368431020901853>.

²¹⁸ Ibid., on the Kula trade, 27–40 and 95; on potlatch, 7–9, 15–17, 48–51. Adloff, *Gifts of Cooperation*, 7.

of mutual indebtedness and obligations.²¹⁹ The offering of gifts like rings between tribal leaders serves as an icebreaker and announces mutual trust for future self-interested exchanges of goods among the intertribal members.²²⁰ Moreover, the decorative objects on the gifts signify honor and increase the reputation of the recipients. On the other hand, the stronger agonistic gift of potlatch, described as a “struggle of wealth,” evidences a public competition for honor and reputation.²²¹ In either case, Mauss calls for restoring the morality of reciprocity and cooperation that undergirds the premodern forms of gift exchanges.²²² Therefore, he envisions successfully integrating morality with modern commerce to move utilitarian cultures toward “Friendly Societies.”²²³

Paul’s Language of Grace and Gift-Reciprocity

In recent New Testament studies, Harrison, Crook, Barclay, and McFarland have become leading scholars who advocate the anthropological gift and the principles of reciprocity to reappraise Paul’s prominent use of grace within its first-century social context. Notably, Harrison’s influential study reenvisages Paul’s grace socially and theologically. He situates Paul’s language of grace against the backdrop of patronage and benefaction within the social ethos of Hellenistic reciprocity.²²⁴ His effort underscores three issues crucial to gift-reciprocity principles and their applications in biblical texts. Firstly, it touches upon an anthropological, philosophical, and theological debate on the possibility of “non-circular” or “non-reciprocal” gift, also known as “free” or “pure” gift.²²⁵ Secondly, it critically

²¹⁹ According to Mauss, Kula means “circle.” The Kula ring conveys a double symbolic meaning of circle and reciprocity. Mauss explains the social significance of Kula, “Indeed it is as if all these tribes, these expeditions across the sea, these precious things and objects for use, these types of food and festivals, these services rendered of all kinds, ritual and sexual, these men and women, were caught up in a circle, following around this circle a regular movement in time and space”; Mauss, *The Gift*, 27–8.

²²⁰ Ibid., 28.

²²¹ Ibid., the definition of potlatch, 7–9; forms of, 48–51; and “the struggle of wealth,” 47.

²²² Ibid., 88–9 and 90.

²²³ Ibid., 90.

²²⁴ Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace*, 1–3.

²²⁵ The concept of “free” gift is also referred as “pure” or “true” gift by other scholars. Bronislaw Malinowski first mentions “pure” gift in his book, *Argonauts of The Western Pacific* (New York: George Routledge &

reviews what types of reciprocity are relevant for biblical studies (e.g., familial reciprocity or extrafamilial). Thirdly, it sets up a new paradigm to ask aptly whether Paul's grace fits into the first-century social ethos of reciprocity, how and why it is compatible or incompatible, and to what extent.

Harrison suggests that "χάρις provided Paul the opportunity to interact with the prevalent ethos of reciprocity and to formulate his radical theological and social alternative to the Graeco-Roman benefaction system."²²⁶ He then presents a thoroughgoing investigation of the first-century χάρις through honorific/non-honorific inscriptions, papyri, and texts as proofs. According to Harrison, Paul fully engages with social conventions of honor and dishonor, benefaction, and return of gratitude.

For example, Harrison finds that the Graeco-Roman quest for honor (φιλοτιμία) and the cultural background of Augustan patronage is beneficial to have a fresh reading of God as a dishonored Benefactor and Christ's eschatological work.²²⁷ Especially in Romans, God continues to grace the ungrateful through Christ despite his being universally dishonored as the cosmic and covenantal Benefactor. In a dramatic reversal, God replenishes Christ—who was previously impoverished and dishonored—with abundant grace and restores him to all honor so that the entire Christian community might be transformed into the body of Christ for the glory of God.²²⁸ Again, 2 Corinthians 8–9 shows that Paul's profuse use of grace confirms his cultural familiarity with the social conventions of reciprocity of

Sons, 1932), 101–2. Marcel Mauss in his essay rejects the notion of "pure" gift; see *The Gift*, 93. See the more recent debates concerning the notion of "free/pure/true" gift: Pitt-Rivers's "The Place of Grace," 71; David J. Cheal, *The Gift Economy* (London: Routledge, 1988), 52–3. James Laidlaw, "A Free Gift Makes No Friends," *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 6, no. 4 (2000): 617–34; Olson, "Excess, Time, and the Pure Gift," 350–74; Eleftherios Alexakis, "Benefaction and Benevolence: The Concept of the Pure Gift and Realization of the Community in Greece—An Anthropological Approach," *GEI* 54 (2006): 9–23, <https://doi.org/10.2298/GEI0654009A>; Michaela Benson and Denise Carter, "Nothing in Return? Distinctions between Gift and Commodity in Contemporary Societies," *Anthropology in Action* 15, no. 3 (2008): 1–7, <https://doi.org/10.3167/aia.2008.150301>.

In biblical studies, see for example, Barclay, *Paul*: on "pure" gift, 52–65; on non-circularity, 70, 75. Barclay, "Pure Grace?," *ST* 68, no. 1 (2014): 4–20, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0039338X.2014.906064>. Troels Engberg-Pedersen, "Gift-Giving and Friendship: Seneca and Paul in Romans 1–8 on the Logic of God's χάρις and Its Human Response," *HTR* 101, no. 1 (2008): 15–44. McFarland, *God and Grace*, 9–11, 17–9.

²²⁶ Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 285, 287,

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 214; on φιλοτιμία see 1, 30, 40.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 287–8.

his day.²²⁹ Equally important, he conforms to the leitmotiv of benefaction by exhorting the Corinthians to give more generously as a means to honor God and respect one another and grow together in the superabundant grace of Christ.²³⁰ Finally, Paul reiterates that Christians must choose to live worthily because of the divine beneficence toward us all.²³¹ Thus, Paul sees himself as an enslaved apostle bestowed with spiritual gifts to bring the ungrateful back to God with gratitude.²³²

On the other hand, Harrison notices that Paul's grace stands apart from the Hellenistic reciprocity convention at a theological and social level.²³³ Paul insists that God's overflowing grace operates outside the ethos of reciprocal obligation.²³⁴ God is not bound by the *do-ut-des* mentality²³⁵ (as expressed most recently in today's "prosperity theology").²³⁶ Instead, God is an impartial Benefactor not swayed by human ritualized gifts and flattering praises.²³⁷ Moreover, Paul demonstrates that the grace of Christ is "free" in nature, hence, unilateral and not reciprocal.²³⁸ For this reason, the grace of Christ empowers believers and urges them to go beyond their received cultural norms and expectations to become more gracious givers for the building up of the body of Christ.²³⁹ Finally, Jesus is the cosmic Benefactor who ushered in a "new age of grace" that upends the Hellenistic ethics of beneficence and the Augustan age of grace.²⁴⁰

²²⁹ Ibid., 287–344.

²³⁰ Ibid., 2, 130, 287–344, 350–1.

²³¹ Ibid., 247–9, 269–72.

²³² Ibid., 257–68, 297, 350–1.

²³³ Ibid., 348–52.

²³⁴ Ibid., 348–9.

²³⁵ Ibid., 17–18, 284, 288, 346, 350.

²³⁶ Ibid., 350–1. "Prosperity Theology" is also known as "prosperity gospel." The *do-ut-des* mentality is the tenet of this teaching. See the footnote on "*do ut des*" in this study [n.122]. For a fuller treatment, for example, Kate Bowler, *Blessed a History of the American Prosperity Gospel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

²³⁷ Ibid., 218–9.

²³⁸ Ibid., 35, 284, 286–7, 345, 348–9. Barclay, *Paul*, 181. McFarland, *God and Grace*, 17.

²³⁹ Ibid., 285 and 350–1.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 214, 224–242, 288, 352.

Nevertheless, Harrison unsatisfactorily explains two essential aspects of Mauss's gift-reciprocity, Paul's grace and its relations to familial language. (1). According to Harrison, Paul's grace is "radical" because Paul perceives that God's grace in Christ is "unilateral" or "non-reciprocal."²⁴¹ However, Harrison appears not to realize that Mauss's *The Gift* had excluded the possibility of non-circular or non-reciprocal gift exchanges from its inception. Although Pitt-Rivers noticed this deficiency in Mauss's gift-giving, it was inadvertently missing in Harrison's theological analysis of Paul's grace.²⁴² (2). Harrison's treatment of grace and reciprocity relies on asymmetrical reciprocity, namely, Greek benefaction and Roman patronage, for his comparison. However, he makes no apparent distinctions between familial and extrafamilial exchanges, which may have led him to misapply the evidence of family context to public practices of patronage and benefaction.²⁴³

Consequently, Harrison failed to acknowledge familial reciprocity as essential to the analysis of Paul's language of grace in the Corinthian context, where Paul regards the Corinthians as family, not as any other social group. Therefore, Harrison overlooked gratitude as genuine love and an integral part of grace-reciprocity. Explicitly, he has excluded the discussions on Paul's expressions of gratitude rooted in his grateful feelings for the divine favors toward him; as Harrison puts it, "[b]ut, overall, the Pauline thanksgivings fall within the ambit of the honorific inscriptions."²⁴⁴ However, I will contend in these instances that Paul's χάρις as gratitude is more than a conventional etiquette; it is, rather, an expression of the familial bond of affections mutually shared by Paul and his Christian family groups.²⁴⁵ Indeed, Paul's willingness to undertake the demanding mission to proclaim God's grace in Christ demonstrates his genuine gratitude toward divine favors despite hardships, which cannot be seen as mere honorific

²⁴¹ Ibid., on grace as a "unilateral" gift or favor; 35, 284, 286–7, 345, 348–9. Barclay, *Paul*: on "pure" gift, 52–65; on "non-circularity," 70, 75; McFarland, *God and Grace*, 17.

²⁴² Ibid., see relevant notes on Pitt-Rivers's grace, 14, 19.

²⁴³ Ibid., for example, 74–5, 80–4, 125–30, 143–4, 181, 340–2.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., 270.

²⁴⁵ See 1 Cor 1:4; 10:30; 15:57; 2 Cor 2:14; 8:16; 9:15; cf. Rom 6:17; 7:25.

conventions.²⁴⁶ Therefore, Paul's demonstration of gratitude is a vital part of grace-reciprocity and goes beyond a narrow understanding of conventional propriety.²⁴⁷

In general, Crook, too, finds that Paul's language of grace is typical of the ancient practices of patronage and benefaction.²⁴⁸ He asserts: "[A]s a foundation for understanding Paul, the term χάρις must be firmly set in a context of ancient patronage and benefaction. Whether it is used in reference to human or divine patronage or benefaction, the meaning of the word is not altered; neither will it be when it used by Paul."²⁴⁹ Different from Harrison, Crook concentrates on how the language of grace functions as part of the rhetoric of patronage and benefaction in reciprocal relations. Grace reflects a desire and intent to establish reciprocal relations like other rhetorical conventions. Overall, Paul's rhetoric of patronage and benefaction (including the language of grace) corresponds to the cultural expectations of conversion and loyalty to Christ as part of reciprocal responsibilities to God and one another.²⁵⁰

Crook distinguishes between familial and extrafamilial reciprocity, which is critical for discussing reciprocal relations in the family context. Crook adapts Ekkehard W. Stegemann and Wolfgang Stegemann's fourfold categorization of reciprocity based in Sahlin's generalized, balanced, and negative exchanges.²⁵¹ Importantly, Crook insists that familial reciprocity is fundamentally different from extrafamilial exchanges because family is ideally not the source of tensions and the arena of agonistic

²⁴⁶ For example, Kar Yong Lim, *"The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant in Us": A Narrative Dynamics Investigation of Paul's Sufferings in 2 Corinthians*, LNTS 399 (New York: T & T Clark International, 2009).

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 257–68, 350–1; McFarland finds Harrison inadequately explained Paul's apostleship in light of grace; see *God and Grace*, 156–183, 273–9.

²⁴⁸ Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 132–150, 151–86; "Grace as Benefaction," 25–38.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 150.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 150, 243–56.

²⁵¹ Sahlin, *Stone*, 195. Stegemann and Stegemann, *The Jesus Movement*, 34–6. Crook, "Fictive Giftship," 65–6; "Reciprocity," 81, 91; "Critical Notes," 515–20.

contests in the biblical world.²⁵² He basically divides different types of reciprocity into two groups, familial and extrafamilial.

(1). Familial Reciprocity describes the exchanges among family members and closely-knit groups.

Family exchanges could extend to families of the same clan or between clans within the same tribe. Thus, family or household forms a unit representing a relatively egalitarian and non-agonistic social interaction.

(2). The extrafamilial exchanges occur outside the family unity, and they occur in the following ways.

a). Generalized or asymmetrical reciprocity happens among social unequals. The exchanges are not measured by reciprocating equal values of goods in kind but rather by different forms of payment/repayment, including personal reverence, gratitude, and loyalty. Although generalized reciprocity is understood as an unequal or asymmetrical relation, it is still a reciprocal and mutual interaction essential for understanding human and divine patronage and benefaction.

b). Balanced or symmetrical reciprocity, in contrast with generalized or asymmetrical reciprocity, is usually characterized by the exchanges between social equals with means and the ability to reciprocate. Such exchanges involve mutual and balanced ways of dealing or trading with one another. They are often seen in gift exchanges, loan and loan repayments, and trading with things of equal value. Notably, the rule of gift-giving requires a gift to be of equal or greater value. The relationship runs at risk when the reciprocation is something of lesser value.

c). Negative reciprocity refers to exchanges in which one party tries to maximize one's interest and profits at the expense of others. Types of exchanges could manifest in bartering, haggling, and gambling. The exchanges are entirely motivated by self-interest and profits. Thus, they are

²⁵² Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 56–9; "Fictive Giftship," 65–6; "Reciprocity," 81.

the least interpersonal exchange because they are grounded in selfish reasons rather than establishing relationships.²⁵³

Among them, generalized or asymmetrical reciprocity has been the most studied form of exchange concerning patronage and benefaction in the New Testament world.²⁵⁴

Furthermore, Crook questions the reification of the Maussian gift-reciprocity in Graeco-Roman cultures.²⁵⁵ He observes that Mauss envisions his reciprocity for an egalitarian-oriented society.²⁵⁶ The problem is that the ancient Graeco-Roman world was more status-conscious and socially stratified.²⁵⁷ Crook is correct in alerting us to the structural shortcomings in the Maussian reciprocal model and its potential misapplications in classical and biblical cultures. A direct application of the Maussian gift-reciprocity may push the symmetrical or circular, egalitarian ideal unto asymmetrically or socially-stratified cultural contexts like the biblical world. Regrettably, Crook does not address the question further: are the structural misgivings in the Maussian gift-reciprocity simply a “misfit” to explore ancient cultures or something deeper, like an “incomplete” formulation in its inception? In either case, his observation is an insightful invitation to reconsider the structural issues in the Maussian notion of gift exchanges.

Although Crook makes a significant distinction between familial and extrafamilial exchanges, he falls short of examining how Paul’s language of grace sheds new light on familial reciprocity in Paul’s powerful family imageries and *vice versa*. True, his primary focus is on patronage and benefaction, their social and rhetorical elements; by nature, they are public social interactions, outside of family. Still, his familial reciprocity is very broad (it does not distinguish parent-child relations from spousal and sibling

²⁵³ Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 56–9; “Fictive Giftship,” 65–6. Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 25–6.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 65–6. David Briones, “Mutual Brokers of Grace: A Study in 2 Corinthians 1.3–11,” *NTS* 56, no. 4 (2010): 536–56.

²⁵⁵ Sahlins, *Stone*. Crook, “Fictive Giftship,” 73.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 73.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

relations). He identifies the importance of gratitude in reciprocal gift-giving but does not consider familial bonds of affection integral to creating and sustaining reciprocal relations. His treatment of gratitude remains on a rhetorical level, and its implications for parent-child relations and moral education need a different approach.

By contrast, Barclay's *Paul and the Gift* reflects a different way of approaching Paul's grace. For Barclay, Paul's grace provides a unique means to perfect God's incongruous gifts in the person of Jesus Christ (i.e., the Christ-gift).²⁵⁸ Thus, the anthropological gift-reciprocity relocates Paul's grace in the socio-religious context of Second Temple Judaism.²⁵⁹ In theologizing Paul's grace, Barclay relies upon the reciprocal nature of giftship and demonstrates how God's incongruous grace in the Christ-event calls the unworthy to respond with new modes of obedience of faith.²⁶⁰

For our interest, we will focus on two points: (1) Barclay's critique of the notion of "pure" or non-circular gift as a rejection of Harrison's "unilateral" grace in Christ and (2) his nuanced understanding of grace as the apostolic mission of proclaiming the gospel and living by the gift in the person of Jesus Christ.²⁶¹ Firstly, the notion of "pure" gift has its roots in the social and philosophical

²⁵⁸ Barclay, *Paul*.

²⁵⁹ Barclay, *Paul*, 5, 57, 64, 564–5. For the continuous theological debates, see Joel Marcus, "Barclay's Gift," *JSNT* 39, no. 3 (2017): 324–30, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0142064X17689990>. Margaret M. Mitchell, "Gift Histories," *JSNT* 39, no. 3 (2017): 304–23, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0142064X17689989>. John M. G. Barclay, "The Gift and Its Perfections: A Response to Joel Marcus and Margaret Mitchell," *JSNT* 39, no. 3 (2017): 331–44, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0142064X17689991>. John M. G. Barclay, "Continuing the Conversation about Grace: A Response to Paul Foster and Beverly Gaventa," *The Expository Times* 128, no. 11 (2017): 543–47, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0014524617702843>. Isaac A. Morales, "Paul of Sonship," *NV* 17, no. 1 (2019): 215–28, <https://doi.org/10.1353/nov.2019.0009>. Jonathan A. Linebaugh, "Incongruous and Creative Grace: Reading Paul and the Gift with Martin Luther," *IJST* 22, no. 1 (2020): 47–59, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijst.12388>. John M. G. Barclay, "Paul and Grace in Theological Perspective: A Grateful Response," *IJST* 22, no. 1 (2020): 113–26, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijst.12389>.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 567–8. Consult with Barclay, *Obedying the Truth*. Marcus, "Barclay's Gift," 326. Barclay, "The Gift and Its Perfections."

²⁶¹ Barclay's critique of "pure" gift and his understanding of grace as participation of Christ's mission, *Paul*, 52–64; Harrison's discussion about God's unilateral and covenantal grace; Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 35, 284, 286–7, 345, 348–9, 350.

debate that pertains to the (im)possibility of a “free” and non-circular or non-reciprocal gift.²⁶² Barclay acknowledges the unresolved tension between the giver’s freedom and the recipient’s obligation in the engagement with Harrison and others. He detects how Harrison’s Paul “struggles” to balance the freedom of grace and the obligation it imposes in the ensuing discourse on divine and human beneficence.²⁶³ The “struggle” lies within Harrison’s inclusion of non-circularity or non-reciprocity, “putting the recipient under no obligation or demand.”²⁶⁴

In addition, Barclay asserts that there was a shared consensus among authors of the Second Temple period. “*All of them* perfect the superabundance of divine “grace,” stressing the excess of gifts poured into the world, or the “abundance” of divine mercy and goodness, extended in manifold ways. On the other hand, in another point of agreement, *none of them* perfect the non-circularity of grace, the notion that God gives without expectation of return.”²⁶⁵ He argues that “[w]hat has seemed in the modern world a paradoxical phenomenon—that a “free” gift can also be obliging—is entirely comprehensible in ancient terms.”²⁶⁶ Therefore, he finds that the anthropological and philosophical inquiries concerning “pure” and non-reciprocal gift are modern inventions. They should not be imposed on Pauline texts.²⁶⁷

Secondly, Barclay elaborates that Paul’s grace is intrinsically connected to the missionary vision of Christ’s suffering, death, and resurrection as the gift (or the Christ-gift).²⁶⁸ For Paul, the divine grace—rooted in Christ’s death “for our sins” (1 Cor 15:3–4) as the gift to humanity—foregrounds his apostolic

²⁶² Barclay, *Paul*: on “pure” gift, 52–65; on non-circularity, 70, 75. Barclay, “Pure Grace,” 4–20. Engberg-Pedersen, “Gift-Giving,” 15–44. McFarland briefly treats the scholarship on anthropological gift. Affirming Barclay, he rejects Harrison’s arguments about “unilateral” gift; *God and Grace*, 9–11, 17–19.

²⁶³ Barclay, *Paul*, 181–2. Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace*, 331.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 181.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 314.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 563.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 60–2, 64, and 563. Engberg-Pedersen more emphatically asserts “The villain in all this is the modern, puristic conception of gift-giving.” Engberg-Pedersen, “Gift-Giving,” 43.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 566.

mission of preaching the gospel and his Spirit-gifted ministry for the services of others. Moreover, God's incongruous and unconditioned grace in Christ to the ungodly urges Christian followers who must show obedience of faith to embody the Christ-gift through their ongoing giftship in every aspect of their new life.²⁶⁹

Arguably, Barclay questions the applicability of an anthropological gift model to biblical studies. However, he has inadequately explained the reason(s) for the potential misapplication, which has not resulted from the inclusion of the "unilateral" or "non-circular" gift but originated from the miscalculation of Mauss's gift-reciprocity in the family context. On the one hand, Barclay justifiably criticizes the modern ideology of "pure" gift and the Kantian understanding of moral "duty" that creates an unrealistic condition for the social gift and the "irreconcilable" tension between the "freedom" of the giver and the demand of reciprocal "obligation" in biblical and theological discourse.²⁷⁰ On the other hand, he takes the Maussian reciprocal responsibilities for granted and never questions potential omissions in Mauss's gift-reciprocity. It is crucial to point out that the Maussian gift-reciprocity is part of the modern intellectual tradition. Therefore, Mauss's rejection of the modern ideology of "pure" gift should be under equal scrutiny.²⁷¹ However, Barclay only reluctantly entertained Pitt-Rivers's proposal of non-reciprocity as a correction to the Maussian gift-reciprocity and too readily rejected the idea of "unilateral" or "non-circular" or "non-reciprocal" gift²⁷² for the sake of stressing the obedience of faith as a reciprocal obligation and as a response to God abundant grace in Christ.²⁷³ Moreover, Barclay's lengthy treatment mainly focused on Paul's letters to the Romans and Galatians, while Paul's language

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 569–74.

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 51–65, 175–82.

²⁷¹ John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 49–143. Wendy James and N. J. Allen, eds., *Marcel Mauss: A Centenary Tribute, Methodology and History in Anthropology*, vol. 1 (New York: Berghahn Books, 1998).

²⁷² Ibid., concerning Pitt-Rivers, 32, 32; discussions on "pure/free" or "unilateral/non-circular/non-reciprocal" gift, 31, 52, 58, 60, 64, 74–8, 170–1, especially, 180–2, 186.

²⁷³ Barclay, *Paul*, 26, 28, 30, 106, 113, 148–9, 314, 446, 465, 558, 569.

of grace in the Corinthian context is insufficiently discussed. Subsequently, Barclay is unaware of the distinctions between familial and extrafamilial reciprocity that are key for understanding Paul's expressions of grace in family relations.²⁷⁴

Following the lead of Barclay, McFarland supports the notion that Paul's language of grace as gift is meant to be reciprocal.²⁷⁵ But, different from Barclay, McFarland concentrates on a near-contemporary of St. Paul, Philo of Alexandria. He then compares Philo's and Paul's religious nuances of divine and human beneficence. For McFarland, Paul's grace portrays how God's extreme graciousness overflows in the grace of Christ, who is the perfect gift to the unworthy and ungodly, so that they might participate in this divine gift-economy through their giftship with one another and with God.²⁷⁶

One of McFarland's objectives is to address Paul's theological distinctiveness of grace against Harrison's "radical" and Crook's "typical" Paul.²⁷⁷ McFarland holds that Paul's grace is inimitable in comparison to the cultural conventions of his day (i.e., Philo). However, Paul's uniqueness does not fundamentally lie within his rejection of the *do-ut-des* mentality in Greek benefaction and Roman patronage but in his insistence on God's counter-intuitive, counter-cultural, and incongruous graciousness toward the ungodly in the divine economy.²⁷⁸ Therefore, McFarland contends that Paul's grace is unique but not "radical" or "typical" because of the Christ-gift.

Specifically, he argues that Paul recognizes that Christ's self-giving is unparalleled to human beneficence.²⁷⁹ Yet, Paul is acutely aware that he and the rest of humanity are unworthy recipients of this divine beneficence.²⁸⁰ Nevertheless, God in the Christ-gift has bestowed the various gifts through

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 51.

²⁷⁵ McFarland, *God and Grace*, 17.

²⁷⁶ Ibid., 152–3, 191, 224.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 16–9.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., 191, 230–1.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 147–51, 152–3. Barclay, *Paul*, 562–3.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 152–3; 191.

apostolic preaching and made believers into gift-communities (1 Cor 3:10; 12:1ff.; 15:10–11); for the reason that God is the Father and Source of all grace (1 Cor 8:6; cf. Rom 11:36) and always a generous giver (2 Cor 8:1, 9:14–5; cf. Rom 5:15–20; 1 Cor 8:6).²⁸¹ For Paul, his apostolic proclaiming of the gospel is both God’s gift in the person of Jesus Christ to him and divine favors to the Corinthian family (1 Cor 15:1–11; cf. 2 Cor 6:1).²⁸² Therefore, the apostolic services and Christian practices of mutual gift-giving are imprinted in Christ’s gift-giving of himself to the ungodly. Moreover, as the result of divine giving, Christian giving in thanksgiving becomes a necessary means to be united with Christ to build the body of Christ in the eschatological age.²⁸³ Although McFarland accentuates Paul’s gift-theology that instantiates Paul’s language of grace as the apostolic mission and a gift-community, his treatment, again, inadequately explores the sentiment of gratitude within the context of the closely-knit groups like the Corinthian family.

Lastly, it is worth noting that Massinelli’s most recent work *For Your Sake* rejects the validity of the social-scientific framework of gift-reciprocity that puts Paul’s collection against the social ethos of Graeco-Roman patronage and benefaction.²⁸⁴ Instead, he suggests that intergroup support among Christian communities in the first three centuries would be a more appropriate cultural context for understanding Paul’s practice of charity. He highlights widespread phenomena evidencing economic and spiritual exchanges in Christian intergroup support systems (even to non-Christian groups).²⁸⁵ In light of such a context of Christian charity, Paul’s collection in 2 Corinthians (8–9) is consistent with early

²⁸¹ Ibid., 103–4, 147–8, 149–51, 190, 192–213.

²⁸² Ibid., 171–5, 175–83.

²⁸³ Ibid., 212–3.

²⁸⁴ Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, vii.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 280–333.

Christian belief in Christ's self-sacrifice on the Cross because of God's graciousness toward all Christian communities.²⁸⁶

Massinelli's contributions to Pauline discourse on reciprocal relations also include his critique of the Maussian notion of gift-giving and his appreciation of the cultural significance of gratitude in reciprocation.²⁸⁷ Methodologically, he challenges the theoretical assumptions of the Maussian gift in economic anthropology and its implementation in biblical studies. The Maussian gift-reciprocity operates on a double-layered system (i.e., vacillating between altruism and self-interest) that has been deeply suspicious of authentic generosity.²⁸⁸ Moreover, critics of patronage have a propensity to stress the exploitation and abuses occurring in patronal relations, sometimes even under the guise of boundless generosity.²⁸⁹ Subsequently, critics who employed the anthropological gift have been ignorant or indifferent to the possibility of a *bona fide* kindness in Christian giving that might have arisen from their conviction in Christ's self-giving on the cross, especially considering Paul's collection in its Corinthian context.

Furthermore, Massinelli finds that Joubert's benefactor approach does not adequately explain how Paul's relative social status had changed. According to Graeco-Roman patronage and benefaction, if it is a unilateral relationship, the gift partners' relative social status would not be affected, but it did not appear so in Paul's collection for the Jerusalem community.²⁹⁰ Finally, distinctive from the Maussian laws of giving, receiving, and giving in return in reciprocal relations, Massinelli presents some examples of non-reciprocal gift-giving in the Mediterranean world's social practices that expect no gifts in

²⁸⁶ Ibid., vii, 39–40, 41, 195–6, 219–23, 232–44, 272, 274.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 3–37, 113–9.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 27–8.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 43–111.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 9–11.

return.²⁹¹ In the Graeco-Roman context, he concentrates on Jewish almsgiving for poverty relief as non-reciprocal gift-giving motivated by biblical commands with divine promises.²⁹² Therefore, he contends that almsgiving, not Graeco-Roman benefaction and patronage, is the better possible comparison for the Pauline collection, against which the centrality of Christ's self-sacrifice on the cross is fully understood in Christian charity.²⁹³

Regarding the cultural significance of gratitude, Massinelli asserts that gratitude is not only a common denominator of all forms of exchanges but also a measure to evaluate and determine the prospect of ongoing giftship. Moreover, given that gifts are generally considered gratuitous in nature, and giftship cannot be enforced by law, the demonstration of gratitude or failure to reciprocate with grateful expressions becomes one of the central criteria in reciprocity. Hence, it has a profound repercussion on the ongoing relationship and the moral implications for both benefactors and beneficiaries. Thus, Massinelli insists that gratitude communicates emotionally and morally as a virtue indispensable to the principles of reciprocity and shapes all kinds of durable relations.²⁹⁴ Concerning the New Testament world, he concludes that "in the Graeco-Roman context, the emotional and the normative aspects of gratitude blended as the foundation and shaping factor of all reciprocal relations with a wide range of nuances."²⁹⁵

Moreover, Massinelli affirms that gratitude is reliant on emotions of indebtedness and joy as a virtue.²⁹⁶ Both emotions inspire the recipients of favors to be grateful and reciprocate appropriately. The emotion of indebtedness relates to the moral duty to reciprocate. He explains in the Graeco-Roman context: "Somewhat paradoxically, the language of gratitude held together the requirement to do favors

²⁹¹ Ibid., 135–72.

²⁹² Ibid., 6–7, 39–40, 41, 158–163, 171, 245–54, 335.

²⁹³ Ibid., vii, 39–40, 41, 195–6, 219–23, 232–44, 272, 274.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 114.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 117. Joubert, "Religious Reciprocity."

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 118.

only for the sake of others, with no expectation of a return, and the absolute necessity of being grateful and, if possible, reciprocating favors.”²⁹⁷ He nicely summarizes the joy in giving: “Joy is rather one the psychological signs that accompany virtuous behavior and, therefore, confirm its positive moral value. Seneca praises benefaction because it is good in itself, and the accompanying joy is further proof of this. Joy motivates generosity because it shows it intimately to be a virtue.”²⁹⁸ Therefore, Massinelli contends that current studies of anthropological gift and grace-reciprocity have neglected the cultural significance of gratitude (χάρης) as a virtue along with its emotional and moral aspects.

Massinelli correctly challenges the problematic presuppositions of the Maussian gift-reciprocity because it excludes authentic generosity, that is, non-reciprocity. However, he did not choose to revamp the paradigm of gift-reciprocity. Instead, he replaced it with other perspectives (e.g., almsgiving), which awkwardly suffer from the same controversy of “free” or non-reciprocal gift concerning the *do-ut-des* relationship with God (e.g., in the debates between Harrison and Barclay and McFarland). Moreover, although his appreciation of gratitude improves the moral dimension of reciprocal relations, his study mainly focuses on the Pauline collection as a public interaction among Christian intergroups. He does not consider Paul’s interactions with the Corinthians as a parent-child relationship. Therefore, Paul’s cultural understanding of gratitude within the first-century χάρης-reciprocity and its implication for familial interactions remain uninvestigated in the Corinthian correspondence.

The studies above call forth three acute issues concerning applying the Maussian gift-reciprocity paradigm to Paul’s language of grace. The first issue pertains to the controversy of “free” or “pure,” non-reciprocal or non-circular gifts vis-à-vis the (in)genuine generosity intrinsic to the Maussian notion of giftship. The second relates to the conflation of familial exchanges with other extrafamilial and public exchanges like patronage and benefaction. Finally, the third contends with the oversight of the cultural

²⁹⁷ Ibid., 116.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., 119.

significance of gratitude and its emotional and moral dimensions in reciprocal relations. These unresolved issues and the oversight have led some, including Pitt-Rivers, to question the completeness of Mauss's theory of reciprocity based on economic or material gift-giving.²⁹⁹

Indeed, Pitt-Rivers, in his "The Place of Grace in Anthropology," not only raised concerns but also addressed all three issues with his new theory of grace: (1) grace as "free" gift (i.e., non-reciprocity or non-circularity that presupposes the "freedom" of benefactor), (2) the distinctiveness of familial exchanges because of familial devotions like gratitude and enjoyment of generous giving and being favored, and (3) the problems of depreciating positive feelings like the sense of honor and gratitude (grace) in gift-reciprocity.

Pitt-Rivers detects multiple defects in Mauss's original proposal of gift-reciprocity because of the oversight of grace.³⁰⁰ Pitt-Rivers argues that the most obvious flaw is that Mauss failed to examine the common usage of *hau* within its cultural root, in which the people of culture are the bearers of the meaning.³⁰¹ Moreover, Mauss's understanding of reciprocity insisted on the exchanges institutionally but overlooked the possibility of non-reciprocity, i.e., gratuity, in everyday interactions.³⁰² The Maussian notion of gift-giving confuses individual self-interest and altruism with collective ones.³⁰³ Furthermore, the Maussian structural-functionalist view of gift-giving concentrates exclusively on visibly expressed

²⁹⁹ Ibid., "The Place of Grace"; "The Paradox of Friendship," 199–209. A helpful review of the Maussian notion of gift is provided by Blanton, *A Spiritual Economy*, 1–14. For example, Alain Testart, "Critique of the Gift," in *Marcel Mauss: A Centenary Tribute*, ed. Wendy James and N. J. Allen (New York: Berghahn Books, 1998), 97–110; "What Is a Gift?," *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 3, no. 1 (March 1, 2013): 249–61, <https://doi.org/10.14318/hau3.1.026>; *Critique du don: études sur la circulation non marchande*, Matériologiques (Paris: Syllepse, 2007). Henig and Makovsky, *Economies of Favour*.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., "The Place of Grace," 74. Henig and Makovsky, *Economies of Favour*, 57.

³⁰¹ Ibid., "The Place of Grace," 71. More recently, Georgina Stewart in her article draws a similar conclusion that Mauss did not adequately explore, namely, how people used the word *hau* in Māori culture; Stewart, "The Hau of Research," 1–11.

³⁰² Ibid., 71. Sahlins, *Stone*, 168–258. Per Hage and Frank Harary, "On Reciprocity in Kinship Relations," *Cambridge Anthropology* 7, no. 2 (1982): 39–43.

³⁰³ Adloff, *Gifts of Cooperation*, 5, 8, 14.

intentions in economic and material terms that can either be calculated or prescribed.³⁰⁴ Finally, Mauss's engagements exclusively with the agonistic forms of gift exchanges and the oversight of grace led Mauss to misinterpret Bronislaw Malinowski's "pure" gifts among family members.³⁰⁵

Pitt-Rivers maintains that social relations express more than contractual reciprocity with economic justifications. Instead, he believes that grace, reciprocity of hearts, will complement the exchange of "useful goods."³⁰⁶ Moreover, he insists that family members' mutual favors and services fundamentally differ from the Maussian gift exchanges, whether economic, moral, or legal.³⁰⁷ Therefore, Pitt-Rivers argues that to understand the principle of reciprocity fully, one needs to consider the possibility of non-reciprocal or nonlinear practices and the exchange of favors in people's everyday life. These observations invite us to sift through the understanding of grace-reciprocity to gain new insights into reciprocal responsibility in familial reciprocity.

C. A New Consideration for Pitt-Rivers's Grace in Familial Reciprocity

A survey of the recent scholarship on 1 Corinthians 4:14–21 reveals that studies on Paul's parent-child expressions have mainly concentrated on father language as metaphors with its social functions within the Graeco-Roman and Jewish cultures. However, most have failed to consider Paul's parent-child address in 4:14–21 as social interaction and examine it in everyday family life. To properly treat parent-child expressions as social and familial relations, this survey turns to social-scientific insights of honor and gift-reciprocity resonant with the language of grace in recent Pauline studies.

³⁰⁴ Pitt-Rivers, "The Place of Grace," 74–5. Henig and Makovicky, *Economies of Favour*, 2.

³⁰⁵ Ibid., 96–7; "From the Love of Food to the Love of God", 278. Marcel Mauss, *The Gift*, 93. Malinowski, *Argonauts*, 101–2. More recently, Douglas, forward, x. Laidlaw, "A Free Gift," 617–34. Osteen, *The Question of the Gift*. Barclay provides an interesting note about that Malinowski retracted his notion of "pure" gift. Barclay, *Paul*, 17.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ The calculated and prescribed exchange of services can be seen even in Mauss's interpretation of Malinowski's "pure" gift between husband and wife. Mauss, *The Gift*, 93.

The critical analysis discloses that the first-century χάρις and social practices of reciprocity are helpful for understanding social and familial relations and vital for elaborating spiritual relations expressed by Paul's parent-child imageries in the Corinthian context. It further illuminates how Paul's language of grace (χάρις) as gift, graciousness, and gratitude generally shares cultural connotations of his day but becomes distinctive in explaining the centrality of the Christ-gift that originates his apostolic mission of preaching and that empowers his apostolic service as an ongoing gift for others to transform themselves into gift-communities in the divine economy.

The survey also unpacks the theoretical issues inherited from the Maussian gift-reciprocity, namely, its exclusion of non-reciprocity and depreciation of the authentic generosity and gratitude in familial reciprocity, while applying it to the biblical world and texts. Specifically, current Pauline studies of honor and χάρις-reciprocity are preoccupied with *public* power relations manifested in forms of patronage and benefaction. Even more problematic is that critics of gift-reciprocity conflate familial with extrafamilial exchanges. This confusion has caused further misapplication and misinterpretation of Paul's parent-child expressions concerning the Corinthian family as extrafamilial relations interpreted through the social lens of patronage and benefaction and the social quest for honor. Moreover, scholars of patronage and benefaction tend to focus on the mechanisms of reciprocity in giving, receiving, and returning in biblical texts. Naturally, their endeavors fixated on agonistic and ritualized social reciprocity outside of family and overlooked heartfelt affections like gratitude and enjoyment in family relations, as will be shown, especially in the Corinthian correspondence.

The above reasons warrant an in-depth analysis of grace-reciprocity (as opposed to Malina-Neyrey's honor-shame) in order to provide a fresh look at familial and spiritual relations in the Mediterranean cultural contexts and biblical studies. It anticipates that Pitt-Rivers's anthropological view of grace will directly address the theoretical shortcomings in the Maussian gift-reciprocity,

specifically the possibility of non-reciprocity, and redress the oversight of the cultural significance of generosity and gratitude in familial reciprocity of Mediterranean cultures modern and ancient.

CHAPTER TWO

JULIAN A. PITT-RIVERS'S ANTHROPOLOGICAL GRACE AND CONTRIBUTIONS

This chapter concentrates on Julian A. Pitt-Rivers's essay, "The Place of Grace in Anthropology," and unfolds implications for understanding parent-child relations in biblical studies.³⁰⁸ Pitt-Rivers's anthropology of grace builds on the Mediterranean religious and cultural concepts of gift, kinship/family, and honor.³⁰⁹ He contends that grace embodies reciprocity of hearts and the spirit of gift, indispensable and yet absent in the mechanisms of reciprocity articulated by Mauss's influential essay *The Gift*.³¹⁰ Mauss famously rejects the idea of "free" or non-circular or non-reciprocal gift in his observation of the premodern gift-economy.³¹¹ According to Pitt-Rivers, this exclusion of grace as "free" gift has led Mauss to misread genuine feelings like gratitude and enjoyment expressed in familial exchanges (e.g., between family members and friends).

As reciprocity of hearts and the spirit of gift, grace provides an alternate way to discern vertical relations within closely-knit family groups, i.e., asymmetrical and non-reciprocal interchanges. The asymmetrical and non-reciprocal relationships include family members (e.g., between parents and children), social unequal (e.g., between patrons and clients or benefactors and beneficiaries), and

³⁰⁸ Pitt-Rivers, "The Place of Grace," 71, 72, 74.

³⁰⁹ All Pitt-Rivers's critical essays are collected by Da Col and Shryock, in *From Hospitality to Grace*; especially, Pitt-Rivers, "The Kith and the Kin," 121–39; "Ritual Kinship in the Mediterranean," 141–61; "The Paradox of Friendship," 199–209; "Lending a Hand: Neighborly Cooperation in Southwestern France," 211–25. See Schrift, *The Logic of the Gift*; and Mark Osteen, ed., *The Question of the Gift: Essays across Disciplines*, Routledge Studies in Anthropology 2 (London: Routledge, 2002). For the discussion about the honor-shame model application in the New Testament studies see, Malina, *The New Testament World*; Crook, "Honor"; Lawrence, *An Ethnography*; Finney, *Honour and Conflict*; Wu, *Honor*.

³¹⁰ Mauss, *The Gift*. The applications of the reciprocal principles in kinship by Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1969). The main types of reciprocity (generalized, balanced and negative) further identified by Sahlins, *Stone*, 174–8.

³¹¹ Mauss, *The Gift*, 91, 93; Douglas, "forward," ix-x. Pitt-Rivers, "The Place of Grace," 71, 93.

spiritual relations between the divine and humans. In this way, he demonstrates that the anthropological concept of grace can offer a new paradigm of honor and grace to explore both the ideal and real world, secular and sacred spheres. At the end of his essay, he summarizes the interpretive quality of honor and grace for understanding sociality:

Both honor and grace are mediative concepts; they interpret events in accordance with the prevailing values of society, putting the seal of legitimacy on to the established order. Together they constitute the frame of reference by which people and situations are to be judged. ... They supply the point of junction between the ideal and the real world, the sacred and the profane.³¹²

Moreover, he envisages that his understanding of grace in everyday life will facilitate the exploration of the same field where honor has begun and left off: “the destiny of a man and his relations with other people and with God.”³¹³ To fully apprehend Pitt-Rivers’s anthropological grace, this chapter will be divided into three sections: (1) analyzing Pitt-Rivers’s anthropological grace, (2) the reception of Pitt-Rivers’s grace in social and economic anthropology and its significance in philosophical and psychological studies of gratitude, (3) identifying useful features in Pitt-Rivers’s grace-reciprocity for studying parent-child relations in the social world of St. Paul and his Corinthian correspondence.

A. Pitt-Rivers’s Essay on Grace as a Re-Reading of the Spirit of Gift

Julian A. Pitt-Rivers was a renowned social anthropologist and specialist in Mediterranean studies. His rekindled appreciation of grace in its religious origins and cultural connotations inspires him to recast the anthropological gift and honor and to reformulate a different paradigm to discern social relatedness.³¹⁴ He believes that grace represents a family of gratuitous acts and a new kind of reciprocity: reciprocity of hearts with the spirit of gift. He explains:

³¹² Ibid., 102–3.

³¹³ Ibid., 98.

³¹⁴ Ibid., 76. Da Col and Shryock, “A Perfect Host,” xxiv–xxv.

There are, then, two parallel modes of conduct, ideally, even if they are not always easily distinguished, which correspond to the old opposition between the heart and the head: that which is felt and that which is known, the subjective and the objective vision of the world, the mysterious and the rational, the sacred and the profane. They are governed, respectively, by the principle of grace and by the principle of law, that is to say, predictable regularity, as well as justice and the law which impose order in human affairs—from which pardon (grace) authorizes a departure. Under the heading of “grace,” it is possible to group all the phenomena that evade the conscious reasoned control of conduct.³¹⁵

Therefore, he embraces grace as a requisite anthropological category to reimagine social spaces and relations intersecting secular and sacred domains.³¹⁶

Pitt-Rivers accredits his rethinking to Émile Benveniste’s (1902–76) anthropological description of grace and Marcel Mauss’s (1872–1950) gift.³¹⁷ He not only confirms the possibility of “free” gift and the non-reciprocal and nonlinear exchange but also substantiates that the exchange of favors among family members and friends is a different kind of reciprocity, based on reciprocated respect and loving care rather than the exchange of “useful goods” or prescribed exchanges in economic terms.³¹⁸

Benveniste delineates grace from a social and cultural perspective and states:

[W]e have services without return, offerings “by grace and favor,” pure acts of “grace,” which are the starting points of a new kind of reciprocity. Above the normal circuit of exchange—where one gives in order to obtain—there is a second circuit, that of beneficence and gratefulness, of what is given without thought of return, of what is offered in “thankfulness.”³¹⁹

For Pitt-Rivers, the distinction of two “circuits” of reciprocity has profound ramifications for understanding grace-reciprocity in the asymmetrical and non-reciprocal relations (or the socially and spiritually unequal relations). Pitt-Rivers notes that:

[Benveniste] distinguishes clearly between the two “circuits” of reciprocity, that which is properly called “exchange,” an interchange of interests, and that which is inspired by a

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ Ibid., 70 and 71.

³¹⁷ Ibid., 78–9 and 92–3. Keith Hart and Wendy James, “Marcel Mauss: A Living Inspiration,” *Journal of Classical Sociology* 14, no. 1 (2014): 3–10, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468795X13494725>.

³¹⁸ Ibid., 74.

³¹⁹ Benveniste, *Dictionary*, 158. Vidal, “The Three Graces,” 344.

generous impulse, [goodwill], gratuity, which demands only a reciprocity of sentiment. The former, subject to contract, can be simultaneous or protracted over a specified time. The latter, an exchange of grace, is simultaneous only in the handshake or the act of embracing, and normally requires an initiatory gesture, followed by a response, as in hospitality, or the return of favors.³²⁰

Upon this, he establishes two tenets for identifying this grace. The first tenet is that grace signifies “free” gift, one that possesses a non-agonistic quality and requires no counter-gifts; hence, it constitutes the reciprocity of hearts needing no material incentives (which is suitable for understanding closely-knit relationships like family and friendship).³²¹ The second is that grace as the spirit of gift belongs to the sacred sphere and operates independently of the typical economic, legal, and moral circuit of reciprocity.³²² Henceforth, he is enabled to recount all forms of grace—possessing an unaccountable and unchangeable value—that increase the value of any temporal aspects of sociality, and yet itself remains unaffected.³²³

For Pitt-Rivers, the religious assumption of grace—embedded in the common expression of “thanks”—presents a strong case for the possibility of non-reciprocity (i.e., gratuity).³²⁴ There is a convention in which people of various cultures habitually deny that they have offered gifts, favors, or services. Expressions like “it’s nothing,” “don’t mention it,” “it is a pleasure,” and so on show that there are gratuitous acts that impose no obligations to return gifts, favors, or services.³²⁵ This family of

³²⁰ Pitt-Rivers, “The Place of Grace,” 79.

³²¹ Ibid., 93. He argues that “I believe that gratuity of the gift is no delusion; however much it may have been abused, it is still the essence not only of sacrifice but of everyday gestures of favor.”

³²² Ibid., 79, and 83–4.

³²³ Da Col and Shryock, “A Perfect Host,” xxv.

³²⁴ Pitt-Rivers, “The Place of Grace,” 71–3.

³²⁵ Ibid., 72–3. Pitt-Rivers notes that the similar expressions may be found in French *de rien*; in Spanish *de nada*; and in Italian *di nulla*, *di niente*, or *non c’è di che*; in German *bitte*. The more elegant ways to convey the same sentiment are found in these phrases: *c’était un plaisir* or *je vous en prie*, in Italian *prego*, etc.

gratuitous acts departs from the well-established philosophical and anthropological statement: “There are no free gifts.”³²⁶

Although Mauss ingeniously identifies *hau* (the spirit of gift) as the ultimate force of reciprocation, Pitt-Rivers believes that Mauss has misinterpreted *hau* and the reasons behind gift-returning.³²⁷ He observes that grace, as conveyed via positive feelings like gratitude and enjoyment, in the sense of honor or a good name, and for pursuing familial contentment—not merely the fear of *hau* and the mechanism of reciprocity—perpetuates the process of circulation. Moreover, he insists that Mauss failed to explain the subtleties in the etiquette of returning gifts and favors.³²⁸

For Pitt-Rivers, Mauss’s *hau* was analogous to grace in Mediterranean cultures:³²⁹

Leaving aside the criticisms that have been leveled at the interpretations of *hau* by Mauss and by others—Sahlins (1974) examines them—I note that many of the senses of this [multifaceted] concept (though by no means all) are analogous with either grace, *baraka*, or *indarra*, all of which are highly varied, as we have seen. One finds in them the essence of the gift, its non-contractual nature and something like the soul of the donor contained in it. *Hau*, like grace and like *baraka*, is that which is in excess, left over or supplementary, transcending exact reciprocity. Like *indarra*, especially, it is good fortune, fruitfulness, the power of increase, the power of Nature that makes the plants

³²⁶ Ibid., 72–3. The gratuitous acts refer to a wide range of social practices. It includes every salutation, “thank you” uttered, saying “grace” before meals, leaving a tip for the waiter or the “golden handshake” to the loyal employees or giving alms to a beggar, and so on. The phrase of “the family of gratuitous acts” is accredited to Henig and Makovsky, see *Economies of Favour*, 2. Testart in his articles criticizes Mauss for having misunderstood the precise meaning of “gift” and for having drawn a false conclusion about the “obligation to reciprocate” in gift exchanges. See Testart, “Critique of the Gift,” 97–110; “What Is a Gift,” 249–61. The statement “there are no ‘free’ gifts” refers to Mary Douglas’s forward to *The Gift*, ix–x; cf. Mauss, *The Gift*, 91, 93. Pierre Bourdieu, Jacques Derrida, and Jean-Luc Marion have made lengthy debates concerning the possibility of “free” gift or gratuity; however, they have generally supported Mauss’s thesis. Henig and Makovsky, *Economies of Favour*, 1–2. Blanton, *A Spiritual Economy*, 1–14.

³²⁷ Pitt-Rivers, “The Place of Grace,” 88. Mauss’s *hau* has provoked a long debate in anthropology. For instance, Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908–2009) rejected Mauss’s *hau* in gift exchange. He criticizes that Mauss unwisely contributed the mystical power *hau* as the ultimate solution to the circular process. He argued that Mauss confused the giver and the receiver with the act of gift-giving as a whole and made a mistake of using the “part” to represent the “whole.” Lévi-Strauss, making use of the structural-linguistics, illustrated that the reciprocity can be explained in a binary opposition without the *hau*. See Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss*, trans. Felicity Baker (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), 58; *Structural Anthropology*, trans. Claire Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest Schoepf (New York: Basic Books, 1963), 159. Sahlins, *Stone*, 134.

³²⁸ Ibid., 72.

³²⁹ Ibid., 95.

grow. And like *indarra*, it is also the wind. Moreover, it should be recalled that the demands of the *hau* are reinforced only by the sanctions of witchcraft, which it has been suggested is supernatural malevolence, negative or inverted grace.³³⁰

Pitt-Rivers coincides that *hau*, or for him, grace is preeminent for the circulation of gifts and social exchanges. However, he clarifies that “[j]ust as I have pointed to the similarity between honor and *mana*, so I can see that *hau* can be, at least in many contexts, assimilated to grace. It stands as a guardian of the second circuit, the embodiment of the abstract principle of gratuity.”³³¹ Hence, he hopes to explain gift exchange through the concept of grace within its proper religious origins and cultural contexts.³³² Therefore, he situates grace in Mediterranean cultures and avoids an ethnocentric reading of *hau*, which has been one of the chief criticisms of Mauss’s *The Gift*.³³³

Pitt-Rivers presents his arguments in six subsections: Prologue; Etymology, its theological origins and extensions; grace, positive and negative in Grazelema;³³⁴ gratuity as insurance in rural southwestern France; grace in Kula,³³⁵ the paradox in friendship and gifts; honor and grace, their mediative function.

In the Prologue, Pitt-Rivers states that the notion of grace is set in the everyday expression of “thanks.” He contends:

Is not “thank you” in the “hundred-times-a-day” sense, simply the recognition and acceptance of a gratuitous gesture? The romance languages connect the notion rather more explicitly with grace: French, *merci*, Spanish, *gracias*; Italian, *grazie*. It may be that this notion is not evoked when saying thanks because the Old Teutonic root (thank), used in casual conversation is not recognized as having anything to do with it. The

³³⁰ Ibid. *Baraka*, an Islamic notion, and *Indarra*, a Basque concept, that are comparable to the notion of grace in the Mediterranean cultural context. See full treatments by Raymond Jamous, Sandra Ott, and Pitt-Rivers, in *Honor and Grace*, 1–18, 167–91, 192–214, 215–46 respectively.

³³¹ Ibid.

³³² Ibid., 88. Michel Panoff, “Marcel Mauss’s ‘The Gift’ Revisited,” *Man* 5, no. 1 (1970): 60–70, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2798804>.

³³³ Ibid., 94–5. Sahlins offers a synopsis of *hau* as the spirit of both the gift and the donor; Sahlins, *Stone*, 134–67. Stewart, “The Hau of Research,” 1–11.

³³⁴ Pitt-Rivers, *The People of the Sierra*; “Reflections on Fieldwork in Spain,” 449–464.

³³⁵ Mauss, *The Gift*, 27–8.

romance root (*gratus*), which recalls the word “grace,” is reserved for more formal occasions when gratitude may really be felt.³³⁶

Noticeably, he begins his inquiry with the recipients’ reactions rather than the benefactors. The beneficiaries of gifts, favors and services are indispensable in gift-reciprocity. The responses with gratefulness are critical for analyzing the eagerness to reciprocate. He concludes that gratitude—corresponding to the donor’s goodwill or generosity—permeates the cultural understanding of “thank” or “grace” in its more formal expression.³³⁷

Then, Pitt-Rivers examines the theological origins of grace and its cultural extensions within the Mediterranean world. First, grace is rooted in the religious understanding of “the pure gratuitous gift of God.”³³⁸ Here he perceives that gratuitous acts give rise to a new kind of exchange, the reciprocity of hearts.³³⁹ He then expounds on four ways that grace is meaningful to Mediterranean cultures in everyday life: compared with honor positively and negatively, as a mode of insurance, its new implication to familial relationships, and its interpretive quality of familial and social interactions.

Firstly, Pitt-Rivers analyzes grace against the patterns of honor that are well established in studies of the Andalusian town Grazalema.³⁴⁰ On the one hand, like honor, grace is often made known in the two senses: (1) things which can be offered like benefaction, gifts, favors, and services; (2) the manner by which good intentions can be offered, like demonstrations of respect and honor, generosity and graciousness, benevolence, concession, pardon, or indulgence.³⁴¹ On the other hand, grace differs from honor, and “it cannot be owed or won, specified in advance or merited.” When grace is reckoned

³³⁶ Ibid., 71.

³³⁷ Ibid. Consult Barclay, *Paul*, 575–84.

³³⁸ Ibid., 77.

³³⁹ Ibid., 75.

³⁴⁰ Pitt-Rivers, “Honor and social status,” 3–34; “The Kith and the Kin,” 121–39; “Ritual Kinship in the Mediterranean,” 141–61; “The Paradox of Friendship,” 199–209; “Lending a Hand: Neighborly Cooperation in Southwestern France,” 211–25.

³⁴¹ Ibid., “The Place of Grace,” 88.

as remission of a sin or debt, mercy, pardon, or forgiveness, it is even opposed to justice and the law (i.e., the established order).³⁴²

In Andalusia's religious context, people may obtain grace as divine favor through participation in the sacraments. For instance, the sacrament of baptism makes a person eligible to receive human and divine favors. The rite of baptism reassures a newborn child's entry into the human community and the divine realm.³⁴³ The ritual participation establishes the spiritual affinity between the godchild and godparents who affirm the child its name. The divine favor and blessings are granted by expunging the sin of Adam and in answer to prayers.³⁴⁴

Like honor, grace is also gender-specific. However, grace differs from honor in this regard; it reverses male honor and resembles female honor more closely.³⁴⁵ For instance, aesthetic grace is considered purely feminine. The healing by *curanderas* and witchcraft as a *habitus* of negative grace can instantiate this claim.³⁴⁶

Grace as divine favor can either be observed through signs or be alluded to as "to have grace." Grace is often associated with a specific number (e.g., number seven) or a certain time (like Christmas) or a particular name and place (like Mary or Fatima because of the Blessed Virgin Mother). Good luck and worldly prosperity are considered divine favors since they are God's blessings. Whereas "to have grace" signifies natural gifts like a charm (power to please) or charisma (an extraordinary power of personal leadership described by Max Weber).³⁴⁷ In both instances, "to have grace" implies one possesses gifts from above.³⁴⁸

³⁴² Ibid., 88.

³⁴³ Ibid., 82.

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

³⁴⁵ Ibid., 83.

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ Ibid., 86.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., 87.

Moreover, when expressed as gratitude, grace moves the recipients to return the gifts, favors, and services offered to preserve the nature of the initial gifts, favors, and services. Nevertheless, Pitt-Rivers explains the counter-gift in a more nuanced way. At the outset, he recognizes that the giver's generosity and kindness could generate a positive affection, like gratitude in the heart of recipients rather than fear. Then this type of grace can only be repaid against its kind at a later time. He elaborates:

As gratitude it [grace] is the only return-gift that conserves the nature of the initial prestation. You cannot pay for a favor in any way or it ceases to be one, you can only thank, though on a later occasion you can demonstrate gratitude by making an equally "free" gift in return. Like hospitality, which is a manifestation of it, or like violence, its contrary, a demonstration of malevolence, it can only be exchanged against its own kind (Jamous 1981). To attempt to reply to violence by invoking the sanctions of the law is behavior not approved by the code of honor (Pitt-Rivers 1977).³⁴⁹

As gratitude, grace resists any idea of payment, explanation, and justification because, by nature, a gift is gratuitous.³⁵⁰ He explains:

Grace, then, allows of no payment, no explanation, and requires no justification. It is not just illogical, but opposed to logic, a counter-principle, unpredictable as the hand of God, "an unfathomable mystery" which stretches far beyond the confines of theology. The opposition is clear and applies in every case: grace is opposed to calculation, as chance is to the control of destiny, as the free gift is to the contract, as the heart is to the head, as the total commitment is to the limited responsibility, as thanks are to the stipulated counterpart, as the notion of community is to that of alterity, as *Gemeinschaft* is to *Gesellschaft*, as kinship amity is to political alliance, as the open cheque is to the audited account.³⁵¹

He discovers that common expressions like "boon-ploughing" and "boonshearing" indicate that people in a farming village keep accounts about the boons granted or received in a vague tally of favors.³⁵² Nevertheless, exchanging mutual services signifies a non-reciprocal or nonlinear system distinct from the prescribed exchange in strictly economic terms.³⁵³

³⁴⁹ Ibid., 88. Note: "prestation" or "total prestation" is the closest English equivalent of Mauss's "*prestations totales*," which may be rendered as "total services and/or favors"; Mauss, *The Gift*, 6–8.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., 79.

³⁵¹ Ibid., 88.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ Ibid.

Secondly, Pitt-Rivers explains how a non-reciprocal or nonlinear system works in rural southwestern France.³⁵⁴ He demonstrates that grace as gratuity expressed in mutual services is deeply seated in people's consciousness as a mode of insurance. This mutual service system exemplifies the exchange of gratuitous favors in a small farm town like "Magnac."³⁵⁵ He observes that people always hope for the return of favors but in an unspecified or open-ended manner and timetable.

On the one hand, grace as gratuity demands no duties, time limits, or specific means to return favors. On the other hand, merely expressing gratitude or a grateful gesture will suffice to acknowledge such favors. For instance, small farmers frequently deny any payment or repayment necessary for favors granted. Neighbors often say *Je ne suis pas regardant* (it may be rendered as "I don't keep account"). The act of denial of any payment and repayment is to avoid the danger of reducing the favors or services into measurable or predetermined "goods." Besides, the farmers know in their hearts, "To admit to keeping accounts obliterates the virtue of this good-hearted gesture, just as recognizing that a gift intended to provoke a counter-gift destroys the grace conveyed by it."³⁵⁶

On the other hand, the moral imbalance exists and waits to be rebalanced. Neighbors depend on one another and each other's mutual favors and services. Legally, no one can compel others to return favors. However, the beneficiaries know they are expected to recompense, especially in times of need, even though they have no legal obligations to return favors and services. Indeed, these mutual services require "the sacrifice of immediate individual interests in favor of long-term collective ones."³⁵⁷ Failure to return the favor will damage one's reputation or a good name. Also, it is considered unwise

³⁵⁴ Ibid., 89.

³⁵⁵ Ibid., 90. The actual name of the town is unclear. "Magnac" is a name given by Pitt-Rivers to refer to the village in the Quercy in south-western France.

³⁵⁶ Ibid., 89.

³⁵⁷ Ibid., 90.

because it would jeopardize oneself to unforeseeable misfortunes.³⁵⁸ The ambivalence of favors further demonstrates a different kind of reciprocity in these rural areas. Therefore, Pitt-Rivers concludes that “[t]he open-endedness of the system is justified ultimately as a mode of insurance. A good name as a neighbor is the most precious form of guarantee against disaster. In times of urgent need the neighbors come to offer their services.”³⁵⁹

Thirdly, Pitt-Rivers contends that the reciprocity of hearts and the spirit of gift is better suited to explain the gift paradox. The paradox lies within the definition of the gift being “gratuitous” and Mauss’s insistence on an “obligation” to reciprocate.³⁶⁰ Since the Maussian notion of gift-giving conveys the intentions of establishing and maintaining familial alliances, Pitt-Rivers argues, “[i]t is the same paradox as that of friendship. It derives from the fact that a gift is not a gift unless it is a free gift, i.e., involving no obligation on the part of the receiver, and yet, as Mauss so well explained, it nevertheless requires to be returned.”³⁶¹ Like Mauss, Pitt-Rivers appeals to the religious concept of sacrifice as an ideal form of offering gifts.³⁶² He notices in French a gift is “offered” not “given” just like the offerings to God. He proposes:

It is an expression of esteem, an honoring gesture, and as such complete in itself, requiring only to be accepted in order to achieve its end, which is, as in sacrifice, to convert ‘having’ into ‘being,’ the dispossession of self in favor of another; the article or service which the donor sacrifices is transformed into becoming associated with the recipient, establishing or maintaining a particular tie with him.³⁶³

³⁵⁸ Here Pitt-Rivers agrees with Mauss about the “misfortunes,” which include both moral and supernatural aspects: one may suffer misfortunes, ranging from a social stigma to a curse caused by supernatural power or mystical forces.

³⁵⁹ Pitt-Rivers, “The Place of Grace,” 90.

³⁶⁰ The paradox of gift was highlighted by Jacques Derrida and others. Pitt-Rivers rightly points out that Mauss himself was unaware of this paradox. Pitt-Rivers, “The Place of Grace,” 92: “Mauss was aware of no paradox.” Cf. Pitt-Rivers, “The Paradox of Friendship,” 199–209.

³⁶¹ Ibid., 91.

³⁶² Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss, *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function*, trans. Wilfred D. Halls (London: Cohen & West, 1968), 2, 4, and 101–3.

³⁶³ Pitt-Rivers, “The Place of Grace,” 91.

Here, Pitt-Rivers goes further than Mauss' gift-returning and *hau* (the spirit of gift). He advocates that grace is indispensable to safeguard gift-reciprocity by insisting on the reciprocity of hearts with positive feelings like the joy of giving and being favored and grateful hearts (or gratitude). He believes that transforming gifts, favors, or services into an enduring familial affiliation resolves the paradox of being "free" and "obligatory" because grace inspires gratitude rather than fear (or a feeling of "debt"), and grace, like *hau*, operates in the second circuit belonging to the sacred sphere. Moreover, he expounds that grace cannot be manipulated by false charity; a maneuver abuses the notion of generosity and renders any "gifts" null and void because of the sacred. However, in the eyes of the recipients, "any gratuitous gesture can 'mean' one thing or its contrary according to the circumstances."³⁶⁴ Only through continuous reciprocation or discontinuance can genuine intentions or pretentiousness be revealed.

He identifies three levels on which the recipients could offer the appropriate counter-gifts: (1). The counter-gifts may be offered in the form of materially "useful goods" or certain calculated and prescribed forms of payment/repayment; (2). In asymmetrical or unequal relations, when one is not able to fully reciprocate, one must consider a lesser return-gift, favor, or service within one's means serving as "intermediate gifts" to show "a token of good faith" until one can repay the gifts, favors, and services with its kind fully;³⁶⁵ (3). One ought always to return grace for grace against its own kind (e.g., "The Law of Hospitality").³⁶⁶ According to Pitt-River, the only right thing is to return grace for grace (i.e., the demonstration of gratitude) in an authentic giftship and a lasting familial relationship. By distinguishing counter-gifts in this way, he creatively unifies the intentions (goodwill and gratitude), the

³⁶⁴ Ibid., 91–2.

³⁶⁵ Ibid., 96. Pitt-Rivers thinks that counter-gifts are also symbolic. He explains: "When unable to find a suitable return-gift to offer to a partner one may make an 'intermediate gift' in order to avoid the accusation of being 'slow' or 'hard' in Kula, but this is 'a token of good faith,' not, as Mauss thought, interest on an outstanding debt."

³⁶⁶ See the article by Pitt-Rivers, "The Law of Hospitality," 163–84.

anticipations (the hope for reciprocation over time) and continuing social relations (creating and maintaining familial bonds) in this interpretive framework.

Moreover, offering a counter-gift is a delicate affair. Gift exchanges involve the participants' relative status (in terms of honor, power, prestige, and morality), the nature of their relationship, and the customs of their milieu.³⁶⁷ Above all, one should learn to offer gifts prudently according to one's social status, the nature of the relationship, and the traditions. When a counter-gift is anticipated, the recipient must consider the appropriate timing; neither should it be too soon nor should one wait too long. Otherwise, it may be construed as the depreciation of the initial gift or favor.³⁶⁸

Additionally, if a gift or favor is not reciprocated, it will lead to displeasure about the temporal loss, or it may even be perceived as a rejection of the benefactors themselves. This resentment may result in hostility or even curses through black magic.³⁶⁹ Those intense feelings experienced in familial exchanges highlight the importance of the subjective aspect, which is felt in the heart and determines the will in the reciprocal favor, such as friendship. Pitt-Rivers believes that the uncertainty of grace relating to the sacred can overcome the Maussian gift paradox and the difficulties in the anthropological study of friendship.

The paradox is that, while friendship to be true should be inspired by sentiment only and disinterested, yet it must be reciprocal not only in sentiment but in material gifts and services, for sentiments must be expressed by deeds. Hence, it must be disinterested in motive, but profitable all the same, since the test of a friend is that he devotes himself to your interests. Actions speak louder than words.³⁷⁰

Pitt-Rivers demonstrates how grace opens a new space that unifies the secular and sacred spheres and sheds light on the transformation of hearts, the generosity of the giver and the gratitude of the recipient, and the familial connection. In turn, grace mitigates the tensions between self-interest in economic

³⁶⁷ Ibid., 92.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., 97.

³⁶⁹ Ibid., 94, 96, 97.

³⁷⁰ Ibid., 97.

terms and altruism in the moral sense because it leaves the judgment of hearts to the partners of ongoing reciprocation and ultimately to God.

Fourthly, Pitt-Rivers suggests new ways in which the concepts of honor and grace contribute to the investigations of social and familial relations. He believes that honor and grace deal with issues in the same field and share the same tendency to be evanescent and self-contradictory.³⁷¹ He asserts: “It would appear that there are in Western civilization two opposed—and ultimately complementary—registers: the first associated with honor, competition, triumph, the male sex, possession, and the profane world, and the other with peace, amity, grace, purity, renunciation, the female sex, dispossession in favor of others, and the sacred.”³⁷²

Three possible scenarios occur when these two concepts are studied together: (1). Sometimes they are *interchangeable* (e.g., the expressions of sentiment are freely willed: to be favored indicates an honor; the ritual of honor marks distinction corresponding to grace; like honor, grace is associated with power and loyalty); (2). Other times they are *complementary* but distinctive (as seen in the coronation ritual, honor and grace legitimize each other; however, in the case of a miracle, the divine favor brings prestige that could not be won in competition); (3). Sometimes they are even *opposite*, or divine grace is seen as the *inversion* of worldly honor (e.g., honor is won through combat rivalry and paraded in triumph, while grace is manifested through peace and shown in humility).³⁷³

These different scenarios expand the perceptions of social spaces and relations vertically. They challenge the readers to imagine how honor and grace are converted into cultural currency and prestige in view of the sacred. For example, in scenario one, only those with power and means can dispense favor or pardon in both the secular and the sacred spheres. In the second scenario, we can see a

³⁷¹ Ibid., 98.

³⁷² Ibid., 101.

³⁷³ Ibid., 98–9.

transition from agonistic honor into non-agonistic grace and favor into a good name. In the third case, one must renounce all pretensions to honor— violence and worldly ambitions—to obtain grace or pardon. In all cases, grace operates vertically and represents asymmetrical exchanges between the divine and human, among social unequals (e.g., patrons and clients) and family members (i.e., parents and children). These vertical and asymmetrical relations are consequential in discerning the social relations in ancient societies that were socially stratified and status conscious.³⁷⁴

Moreover, Pitt-Rivers addresses concerns about the affective and sentimental sides of grace and honor. The affective and sentimental aspects of grace and honor are intimately connected with the unverifiability of intentions (the state of the heart), the paradoxes, and the uncertainty of divine judgment. He elaborates:

The unverifiability of intentions and the state of the heart, which are necessary to both honor and grace, the paradoxes which assail both and the uncertainty of divine judgment which refuses to submit to mundane reasoning, have encouraged societies with writing to replace the reciprocity of the heart by the law of contract and provide sanctions for its enforcement. Taking reciprocity out the field of grace detaches it from the sentiments and objectifies it, making it abstract and depersonalized.³⁷⁵

Despite this, he insists that the variables should not discourage us from considering the reciprocity of hearts and the spirit of gift but rather should be the very reason we must examine them more closely lest we objectify or depersonalize any social and familial interactions.

In summary, Pitt-Rivers's "The Place of Grace" provides an alternative reading of Mauss's *hau*, the spirit of gift, in the Mediterranean cultural contexts. With this Mediterranean understanding of grace, he reinterprets *hau*—the spirit of gift—and believes that grace (like *hau*) also signifies genuine generosity, gratitude, and enjoyment. In doing so, his grace—gratuity, graciousness, and gratitude—presumes the possibility of "free" gift, the true generosity of givers, and the sincere gratitude of

³⁷⁴ Ibid., 100. Cf. Crook, "Fictive Giftship." Also, [n.252,253].

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 99.

recipients. This new presupposition counterargues the previous consensus—“no free gifts”— in the Maussian notion of gift-giving and anthropological discourses. As a result, he can explore the affective or subjective aspects of grace as reciprocity of hearts in everyday familial and spiritual interactions.

Moreover, Pitt-Rivers, with the help of social honor, clarifies that grace embodies the positive feelings of enjoyment, a sense of honor, and a grateful heart, quintessential for enduring familial and spiritual relationships and one’s moral character. Consequently, he suggests ways in which one might appropriately demonstrate one’s gratitude towards the gifts, favors, and services received so that the initial generosity and kindness might be preserved within closely-knit family and groups. Therefore, grace is a necessary anthropological concept for reimagining the social spaces, familial relations, and spiritual bonds in both the secular and sacred domains. Likewise, as I will show, grace is applicable to exploring modern and ancient societies within Mediterranean cultural contexts, within which classical and biblical texts came to be and (re)interpreted.

B. The Reception of grace-reciprocity in Social and Economic Anthropology and Its Significance to Studies of Gratitude in the Human Sciences

Pitt-Rivers’s anthropological grace has greatly impacted the fields of social and economic anthropology in recent years. His chief contributions are his methodological adjustment and the anthropological breakthrough concerning the possibility of “free” or non-circular or non-reciprocal gifts and subjective aspects like positive emotions and sentiments. I will argue that his anthropological grace can incorporate other gratitude studies to better understand familial expectations in ancient and modern cultures.³⁷⁶

³⁷⁶ Berger, “Gratitude,” 298–309. Claudia Card, “Gratitude and Obligation,” *American Philosophical Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (1988): 115–27; The main theories are summarized by Simon Keller, “Four Theories of Filial Duty,” *Philosophical Quarterly* 56, no. 223 (2006): 254–74, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9213.2006.00441.x>. David Carr and Tony Manela provide excellent overviews of the recent scholarship gratitude, see “Is Gratitude a Moral Virtue?,” *Philosophical Studies* 172, no. 6 (2015): 1475–84, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11098-014-0360-6>;

Two main reasons suggest the relevance of Pitt-Rivers's grace with other gratitude studies in philosophy and psychology. First, like Pitt-Rivers, Fred R. Berger and other proponents of gratitude theory appeal to the classical views of interpersonal relationships, particularly Aristotle's ethics of friendship.³⁷⁷ They contend that emotions and loving care are important in transforming people's moral character.³⁷⁸ A moral person is constituted by a (re)ordering of rational and affective (or objective and subjective) aspects of human nature to live a meaningful and good life.³⁷⁹

Second, Philip C. Watkins, in his recent synopsis of gratitude in positive psychology, urges that: "The history of gratitude suggests that experiences of grace may be important to gratitude, and this would seem to be a fruitful path for future research."³⁸⁰ Moreover, our short surveys of grace in Pauline

Tony Manela, "Gratitude," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2019), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2019/entries/gratitude/>. Watkins presents a most recent and comprehensive study of gratitude in psychology, see *Gratitude and the Good Life*. Anders Schinkel, "Filial Obligations: A Contextual, Pluralist Model," *The Journal of Ethics* 16, no. 4 (2012): 395–420; Diane Jeske, "Special Obligations," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2019), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2019/entries/special-obligations/>.

For other studies on gratitude and family ethics see, Jeffrey Blustein, *Parents and Children: The Ethics of the Family* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); Christina Hoff Sommers, "Filial Morality," *The Journal of Philosophy* 73, no.8 (1986): 439–56; Nancy S. Jecker, "Are Filial Duties Unfounded?," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 26, no. 1 (1989): 73–80; Mark Wicclair, "Caring for Frail Elderly Parents: Past Parental Sacrifices and the Obligations of Adult Children," *Social Theory and Practice* 16, no. 2 (1990): 163–89; Terrance C. McConnell, *Gratitude* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993); Philip Ivanhoe, "Filial Piety as Virtue," in *Working Virtue: Virtue Ethics and Contemporary Moral Problems*, ed. Rebecca L. Walker and Philip J. Ivanhoe, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) 298–312. Kerry Howells, *Gratitude in Education a Radical View* (Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers, 2012), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6091-814-8>. Sara B. Algoe and Ruixue Zhaoyang, "Positive Psychology in Context: Effects of Expressing Gratitude in Ongoing Relationships Depend on Perceptions of Enactor Responsiveness," *The Journal of Positive Psychology* 11, no. 4 (July 3, 2016): 399–415, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2015.1117131>. Tudge and Freitas, *Developing Gratitude*.

³⁷⁷ Van Berkel, *The Economics of Friendship*, 139–40. She points out that Aristotle's tripartite understanding of friendship—the good (τὸ ἀγαθόν), the pleasant (τὸ ἡδύ) and the useful (τὸ χρήσιμον)—lays the foundation of reciprocity.

³⁷⁸ There is no indication that Berger and Pitt-Rivers knew each other's works, which is more telling that the affective aspects of reciprocity might have been overlooked in anthropology and moral philosophy in this period. Berger, "Gratitude," 305. See Pitt-Rivers, "The Place of Grace," 98. Emmons and McCullough, *The Psychology of Gratitude*, vi–vii, 61, 73. Van Berkel, *The Economics of Friendship*, 139–40. Tudge and Freitas, *Developing Gratitude*, 27–8, 57, 183–4.

³⁷⁹ It must be noted that although Aristotle believes the importance of affects in cultivating one's moral character, he does not consider gratitude as such virtue that makes a person noble. Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.*, 9.6–11.

³⁸⁰ Watkins, *Gratitude and the Good Life*, 15. Van Berkel makes an insightful distinction, "Gratitude means acknowledging that the things bestowed upon you are not so much the result of merit as they are the fruit of

studies and Pitt-Rivers have determined that gratitude is one of three intertwined aspects of grace. Therefore, the studies of gratitude in virtue ethics and affective sciences will present more points of comparison to establish the usefulness of grace-reciprocity for a better understanding of mutual responsibilities, which is consequential for interpreting honoring parents and God.

I. Grace and Its Gratuity, Affection, and Transcendentality in Social Anthropology

Recently, Pitt-Rivers's legacy, particularly his treatment of grace, has gained a new appreciation in social anthropology. Andrew Shryock and Giovanni Da Col remark that: "His [Pitt-Rivers] disciplinary influence was at its peak in the 1970s—*The fate of Shechem* (1977) contains some of his most innovative essays—but he produced superb work into the 1990s. His last volume, edited with John Peristiany, *Honor and Grace in Anthropology* (1992a), was reissued in 2005."³⁸¹ They revisit Pitt-Rivers's contributions to methodological innovations in social sciences and the insights into human consciousness and social relatedness in a recent publication of *From Hospitality to Grace: A Julian Pitt -Rivers Omnibus*.³⁸²

Methodologically, Pitt-Rivers grapples with the trend that pre-empts the possibility of transcendence in anthropological discussions.³⁸³ He forewarns that if an anthropological inquiry is either confined by its theoretical discourse or determined by the worldviews of the people it studies, it will lose its creativity or else that it "becomes a kind of global 'technocentric' expertise, enlisted in institutional strategies to organize and control difference."³⁸⁴ Thus, he advocates an alternative anthropology that allows religious ideas to foreground cultural analysis rather than background noise.³⁸⁵

generosity." See *The Economics of Friendship*, vii. Emmons and McCullough describe that: "Grace and gratitude spring from the same Latin root, *gratus*. For God and for human beings, accepting gifts and giving thanks are to be among the most pleasing of human endeavors;" see *The Psychology of Gratitude*, 85; other places 19, 25, 38, 48, 66, 72, 76, 95, 263, 278, 287–8.

³⁸¹ Da Col and Shryock, "A Perfect Host," xv.

³⁸² *Ibid.*, xxi.

³⁸³ *Ibid.*, xxxv. Pitt-Rivers, "The Place of Grace," 91.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.* Pitt-Rivers, "The Contextual Analysis and the Locus of the Model," 396.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

He proposes that the cultural analyses of informal and everyday social interactions could enhance anthropology, which would otherwise become thoroughly historicized, text-based, and functionally structured. Therefore, his anthropological analysis of grace in its theological origins and cultural conventions demonstrates new paths for future generations to conduct anthropological investigations creatively and insightfully. His advocacy anticipates and echoes the ongoing dialogues between anthropology and Christian theology in hindsight.³⁸⁶

The study of grace has directly impacted the studies of anthropological gift and reciprocity in the following aspects. First, Pitt-Rivers's grace is one of the earliest philosophical and anthropological examinations that bears witness to the possibility of a "free" gift.³⁸⁷ Shryock and Da Cor explain:

Pitt-Rivers' thoughts on grace predate philosophical and anthropological inquiries about the possibility of the "free gift" (cf. Derrida 2000; Laidlaw 2000). For Pitt-Rivers, grace is a concept that explains all those forms of unaccountable and unexchangeable value that exist on both the social and theological planes, and that increase the value of things or transactions yet cannot be quantified, predicted, given, kept, or preserved without facing some sort of ontological limit, without risk or the prospect of loss.³⁸⁸

The philosophical possibility of "free" gift challenges the neat logic in the linearity of direct reciprocity or the circularity of generalized reciprocity. Practices like offering hospitality to a stranger, charity to beggars by saying "May God repay you," or the Neapolitan tradition of "suspended coffee" point to non-

³⁸⁶ J. Derrick Lemons, "Anthropology and Theology," in *Oxford Bibliographies in Anthropology*, 2018, [DOI: 10.1093/OBO/9780199766567-0185](https://doi.org/10.1093/OBO/9780199766567-0185); J. Derrick Lemons, *Theologically Engaged Anthropology* (Oxford: University Press, 2018). Three research centers have been leading the way to constructively dialogue between anthropology and theology: (1) the Center for Theologically Engaged Anthropology at the University of Georgia, (2) the On Knowing Humanity Research Center at Eastern University in Pennsylvania, and (3) the Center for Theology, Science and Human Flourishing at the University of Notre Dame. For example, see Timothy Larsen, *The Slain God: Anthropologists and the Christian Faith* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Eloise Hiebert Meneses and David Bronkema, eds., *On Knowing Humanity: Insights from Theology for Anthropology*, Routledge Studies in Anthropology 39 (New York: Routledge, 2017), as well as others like Khaled Furani, *Redeeming Anthropology: A Theological Critique of a Modern Science* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

³⁸⁷ Da Col and Shryock, "A Perfect Host". See also Laidlaw, "A Free Gift," 617–34.

³⁸⁸ Da Col and Shryock, "A Perfect Host," xxv.

reciprocal or nonlinear social interactions.³⁸⁹ Moreover, grace expands our understanding of social spaces and relations into nonlinear trajectories of “non-Euclidean and quantum anthropology.”³⁹⁰

Secondly, grace as the reciprocity of hearts revives interest in the theory of affect (e.g., Meyer Fortes’s “principle of amity” [1969]).³⁹¹ Pitt-Rivers’s study of grace explores an alternative perspective on social relatedness based on the noneconomic offerings of gratitude and pleasure, fundamentally different from the economic calculation of equivalences of loss and gain.³⁹² His grace prefers that sociality (i.e., kinship and family) be based on the “mutuality of being” or the “participation in one another’s existence.”³⁹³ Moreover, he stresses the role of volition—the intentional and chosen action—in the reciprocity of hearts. As seen in the willful action of repaying favors, grace moves people to respond to the initial gifts, favors, or services. In this regard, grace functions as a “floating signifier” that would resolve the structural flaws in the symmetrical and reciprocal system; if a motion in the reciprocal and symmetrical exchanges is uninterrupted, it will inevitably result in an ontological termination.³⁹⁴ In the same vein, the socially symmetrical and reciprocal exchanges would eventually reach equilibrium and cease to happen without voluntary actions.

Thirdly, grace expands the perspectives of the gift from its temporality to transcendentality. For example, Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002) has thoroughly explored the temporality of gift by underscoring three fundamental elements: *time* (i.e., the time lag between gift and counter-gift), *habitus* (i.e.,

³⁸⁹ Ibid., xxvi.

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

³⁹¹ Meyer Fortes, *Kinship and the Social Order; the Legacy of Lewis Henry Morgan* (Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures; Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1969). Da Col and Shryock, “A Perfect Host,” xxvii.

³⁹² Da Col and Shryock, “A Perfect Host,” xxvii.

³⁹³ Ibid. Marshall D. Sahlins, *What Kinship Is—and Is Not* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 2, 18.

³⁹⁴ Claude Lévi-Strauss suggests that there must be a “third element” or “zero institution.” Otherwise, a reciprocal or exchange symmetrical like Mauss’s will evolve toward an ultimate balance, ultimately reaching an ontological termination. See Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, 159. Concerning “floating signifier,” see Da Col and Shryock, “A Perfect Host,” xxviii.

conscious or intention), and the *rationale* of gift exchanges (i.e., specific logic and belief).³⁹⁵ Being mindful of the dual truth of the gift and social conditions, he concludes that even generous acts of giving are “nothing” but generalized or collective hypocrisy. His examinations reconfirm Henri Hubert and Mauss’s conviction: “Society always pays itself in the counterfeit coin of its dream.”³⁹⁶

Conversely, John Milbank argues for the transcendentalism of the gift after having explored the central contentious theses concerning the gift’s philosophical and anthropological interpretations. He contends that “[w]e could say, following Mauss, that the gift is the social transcendental; that the social process as such is gift-exchange, but add to this that it also includes an exchange with the divine.”³⁹⁷ He urges that since all temporal considerations of the gift are somewhat incomplete or unsatisfactory, it would be plausible to survey the transcendental aspects of the gift, such as love, the *bona fide* act of giving out of love, and giving-in-time.³⁹⁸

For Pitt-Rivers, an anthropological understanding of grace can incorporate both the temporality and the transcendentalism of the gift and giftship. He envisages that grace-reciprocity defies any conceived *raison d’être* and refuses to be reduced to any economic, legal, and moral justifications.³⁹⁹ Furthermore, it moves beyond the limits of any received social forms (i.e., social structures and traditions). Finally, it always stretches over the perceived horizon of time, even contemplating the

³⁹⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, “Marginalia—Some Additional Notes on the Gift,” in *The Logic of the Gift*, 231. Camil Ungureanu, “Bourdieu and Derrida on Gift: Beyond ‘Double Truth’ and Paradox,” *Human Studies* 36, no. 3 (2013): 393–409.

³⁹⁶ Bourdieu, “Marginalia,” 231. Giovanni da Col, “Anthropology Pays Itself with the Suspended Coffee of Its Dreams,” *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 6, no. 1 (June 2016): i–vii, <https://doi.org/10.14318/hau6.1.001>. Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss, “Esquisse d’une théorie générale de la magie,” *L’Année Sociologique* 7 (1904), 127.

³⁹⁷ John Milbank, “The Transcendentalism of the Gift A Summary in Answer to 12 Questions,” *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia* 65 (2009): 887–97; “Can a Gift Be Given? Prolegomena to a Future Trinitarian Metaphysic,” *Modern Theology* 11, no. 1 (1995): 119–61, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0025.1995.tb00055.x>.

³⁹⁸ Milbank, “Can a Gift Be Given,” 119–61.

³⁹⁹ Two other scholars are worthy of noting: Pierre Bourdieu’s treatment on the temporality of gift and John Milbank’s transcendentalism of gift. Bourdieu, “Marginalia”; *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology 16 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977). Milbank, “Can a Gift Be Given,” 119–61; “The Transcendentalism of the Gift,” 887–97.

possibility of eternity as the point of (no) return. Therefore, Pitt-Rivers satisfactorily unravels the controversy about “free” or “pure” or non-reciprocal or non-circular gifts.

II. Grace as Favor in Economic Anthropology

David Henig, Nicolette Makovicky, and others, in *Economies of Favour* (2013), recognize the significance of Pitt-Rivers’s grace as social favor in economic anthropology. Moreover, they praise Pitt-Rivers’s methodological revision.

This book focuses on favours, and the paradoxes of action, meaning, and signification they engender. As such, it forms the first engagement with a concept that has long been a taken-for-granted—and rather ill-defined—aspect of social theory. This relative neglect stands in contrast to continental philosophy, which has explored the idea of gratuity at length (Derrida 1992; Levinas 1996; Marion 2002). According to the anthropologist Julian Pitt-Rivers, this omission is grounded in the discipline’s epistemological roots in functional explanations. In one of the few articles on the subject, he notes that such explanations read ‘the significance of human actions on the basis of expressed intentions, without examining their mode of expression; reducing each institution to “what it amounts to” or “what it does” in terms of practical results, ignoring its cultural roots’ (2011, 424–5, emphasis added). Indeed, uncomfortable with the notion of gratuity, much anthropological and sociological work has previously retreated to the comfort zone of classical exchange theory (Mauss 1954), redescribing gratuitous behaviour as the fulfilment of social obligations, or as carrying a hidden element of calculated self-interest (see Widlok 2013).⁴⁰⁰

In her article “A New Look at Favours,” Caroline Humphrey concedes that Pitt-Rivers’s grace as social favor—containing the quality of gratuitousness—differs from transactional exchanges.⁴⁰¹ This favor distinguishes itself from “a variety of illicit practices such as bribery, kickbacks, and nepotism.”⁴⁰²

The gratuitous acts rule out any obligatory return. They conduct themselves as a cultural value that confers self-worth and self-identity within one’s social circles. These acts of generosity or goodwill create an indefinite and enduring familial membership that is further maintained by non-reciprocal or asymmetrical exchanges of beneficence and gratitude through the work of time. This “extra” worth “is

⁴⁰⁰ Henig and Makovicky, *Economies of Favour*, 2.

⁴⁰¹ Caroline Humphrey, “A New Look at Favours,” in *Economies of Favour*, 50.

⁴⁰² Ibid., 50 and 68.

graced not only the giver of favours, but also the receiver.”⁴⁰³ In exchanging favours, the sentimental value is always at work, which can only occur amid social groups. Both the giver and receiver of the favours enjoy the sentiment of their existence.⁴⁰⁴ Still, the recipient is more inclined to entertain the inner thrill of being favored.⁴⁰⁵

Alena Ledeneva, in “The Ambivalence of Favour,” depicts four typological approaches to favours. She highlights that the perception of favor “as a free gift” in family and friendship deserves its own category, indispensable for understanding social relations (see the following diagram).⁴⁰⁶

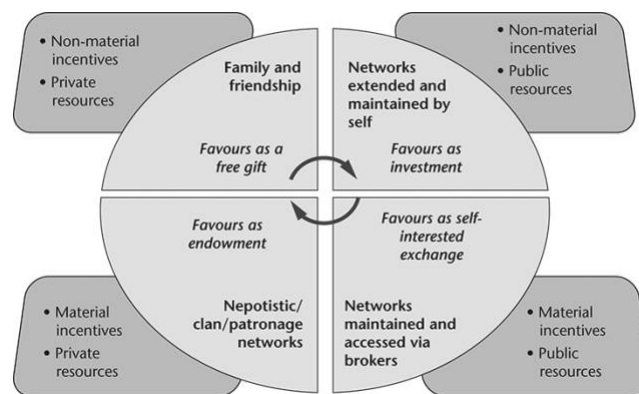


Figure 1. Alena Ledeneva, *Typology of favours, given and received*, p. 27.

She explains that:

The circle contains intermittently displayed features of favours, inseparable from social relationships/types of networks. The relationship or network will determine the predominant type of favour, yet also leaves room for ambivalence in its features, oscillating from free gift to self-interested exchange, from a transfer in the form of endowment to a transaction in the form of a self-driven investment. The twirl of substantive ambivalence of favour is indicated by the arrows ... The borderlines between the four quarters of the circle, depicting ideal types of networks, appear as a blurred line indicating that networks do not have clear boundaries or prescribed modes of functioning (...) and that favours rely on the ambivalent norms and boundaries (...).

⁴⁰³ Ibid., 69.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁶ Alena Ledeneva, “The Ambivalence of Favour,” in *Economies of Favour*, 27.

Afterward, she suggests:

If we look at any economy of favours through the lens of this typology of favours, we can envisage it as a circulation of favours, a system made up in real time of unreciprocated favours, given and received in different directions, inseparable from social networks, and often mediated by kin, friends, acquaintances or brokers. No one is motivated by clearly defined incentives, and no favour is rigidly determined by the type of network, incentive, or resource—the fluidity is an essential characteristic of the economy of favours that enables them to operate smoothly and dodge regulation.⁴⁰⁷

Ledeneva's diagram and explanations help us observe the importance of including "free" gift, non-circularity and non-reciprocity in economic anthropology. But, more importantly, Humphrey and Ledeneva affirm that Pitt-Rivers's grace not only complements the Maussian gift-reciprocity's theoretical deficiencies but also provides a new paradigm to reimagine familial relations that are part of and yet distinct from public social interactions in the economic anthropology.

To sum up, we have related a few recent social and economic anthropology studies and how they have profited from Pitt-Rivers's grace as "free" gift and favor. The social studies of favors have justified Pitt-Rivers's grace, understood as the reciprocity of hearts, to be an integral part of the social theory of reciprocity; it complements the Maussian gift-reciprocity, understood as the exchange of "useful" goods. Pitt-Rivers's philosophical and anthroposophical assumptions of the possibility of "free" gift broke through the theoretical confines of circular and reciprocal giftship. They led others to muse on the value of genuine sentiments and positive emotions like gratitude and enjoyment in familial exchanges.

Even so, gratitude as authentic loving care and respect from the recipients' perspective is treated casually as a by-product of grace-reciprocity in current economic and social anthropology and biblical studies (except Massinelli's). After all, Pitt-Rivers' grace begins with gratitude as a typical response toward the favors shown (e.g., in the expression "thank you"). His grace as gratitude has been

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid., 27–8.

the cornerstone of his essay to reimagine familial reciprocity, specially designed to discern asymmetrical and non-reciprocal relations. Not only are parent-child relations at the heart of asymmetrical and non-reciprocal relations but they are also considered the archetype of the benefactor-and-beneficiary interactions between the divine and humans. Parents bestow favors upon their children as initial and gracious benefactors in familial reciprocity. As recipients of favors, children must show their gratitude with grateful words and actions. So then, we must ask how Pitt-Rivers's grace as gratitude contributes to familial reciprocity and reciprocation expectations, especially concerning filial responsibilities. Since there have been very limited studies of gratitude concerning filial duties in social and economic anthropology, it will be beneficial to explore other studies of gratitude and filial obligations for further points of comparison.

III. Grace-reciprocity and Other Studies of Gratitude and Filial Obligation

The treatments of filial obligation to show gratitude in honoring parents have primarily appeared in the discussions of filial morality (e.g., the Confucian notion of *xiao* [孝]) and affective psychology in the family context.⁴⁰⁸ However, after Fred R. Berger's treatment of gratitude, gratitude theory occupied a prominent place in virtue ethics and gained popularity in explaining filial duties in ancient cultures.⁴⁰⁹ In a nutshell, Berger's gratitude theory is a model of relationships established by reciprocity of favors from

⁴⁰⁸ Tudge and Freitas, *Developing Gratitude*, 1–22; Mendonça and Palhares, "Gratitude," 89–110; O'Brien, "Relations between Parents," 177–98. Other studies: Chenyang Li, "Shifting Perspectives: Filial Morality Revised," *Philosophy East and West* 47, no. 2 (1997): 211–33. Hagop Sarkissian, "Recent Approaches to Confucian Filial Morality," *Philosophy Compass* 5, no. 9 (September 13, 2010): 725–34, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-9991.2010.00319.x>. Cecilia Wee, "Filial Obligations: A Comparative Study," *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* 13, no. 1 (2014): 83–97. Robert A. Emmons and Michael E. McCullough, "Counting Blessings versus Burdens: An Experimental Investigation of Gratitude and Subjective Well-Being in Daily Life.," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 84, no. 2 (2003): 377–89, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.84.2.377>, 337.

⁴⁰⁹ Gratitude, among three other theories such as debt, friendship, and special goods, is the leading paradigm to explain filial duties. A summary of these main theories is provided by Keller, "Four Theories," 254–74, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9213.2006.00441.x>. Carr and Manela, "Is Gratitude a Moral Virtue." Brynn F. Welch, "A Theory of Filial Obligations," *Social Theory & Practice* 38, no. 4 (2012): 717–37. Watkins presents a comprehensive study of gratitude in positive psychology, see *Gratitude and the Good Life*.

the recipients' perspective.⁴¹⁰ He intends to show that gratitude is central to one's moral character and how reciprocal and interpersonal relationships are important for shaping our daily life.⁴¹¹

As Berger describes it, the most significant feature of his gratitude is that it anchors the subjective aspects of human interactions. It focuses on how one feels toward others and what one believes and perceives about others.⁴¹² Like Pitt-Rivers, Berger senses that showing gratitude is a display of one's recognition of the value of the benefactor's act and one's demonstration of beliefs, feelings, and attitudes toward the benefactor, either verbally or practically, or both.⁴¹³

At the same time, Berger is conscious of the limitations of his gratitude theory. His gratitude can only partially explain the paradoxical nature of gift-giving practices.⁴¹⁴ He explicates that gratitude, when demonstrated as behavior in responding to favors, is indispensable for the ongoing mutual relationship. However, he recognizes that his gratitude theory cannot sometimes determine the appropriate responses. Especially the parent-child relationship represents one of the anomalies in social networking.⁴¹⁵ He can only tell what would be inappropriate but cannot determine the degree of "appropriateness" that children ought to show gratitude toward their parents. This setback leads him to realize that one's gratitude rests on the nature of an individual family and its specific relationship.⁴¹⁶ In

⁴¹⁰ Berger, "Gratitude," 298, Jane English, "What Do Grown Children Owe their Parents?" in *Having Children: Philosophical and Legal Reflections on Parenthood*, ed. by O. O'Neill and W. Ruddock (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 319–326. David Archard, "Filial Morality," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 77, no. 3 (1996): 179–92, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0114.1996.tb00165.x>, 184.

⁴¹¹ Berger, "Gratitude," 309.

⁴¹² Berger, "Gratitude," 305. Pitt-Rivers, "The Place of Grace," 98.

⁴¹³ *Ibid.*, 302.

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 302–3.

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 303–4. He acknowledges that his gratitude can only tell what the inappropriate response of children toward their parents is but is unable to determine what the "appropriateness" is. Two other recent studies are noteworthy: Brynn Welch, "Why You Should Be Nice"; Cameron Fenton, "A Complete Special Goods Theory of Filial Obligations" (Ph.D. diss.; Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository; The University of Western Ontario, 2017), <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/5002>.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 303.

other words, his theory of gratitude is insufficient to explain the “upper” limits of children’s appropriate responses ought to be, especially when parents make many sacrifices for their children.

Moreover, Berger notices that two other pathological forms of gratitude do not fit into his theory. The first pathology lies in those who offer favors to place others in their debt. The second form depicts recipients’ pathological responses, either overemphasizing or ritualizing them.⁴¹⁷ The pathological forms again expose the difficulties of people’s intentions and the state of hearts of benefactors or beneficiaries. In either case, Berger left those difficulties untreated in his gratitude theory.

Claudia Card later contends that a true friendship could exist in the asymmetrical and reciprocal relationship by clarifying the sense of obligations associated with gratitude, especially the expression of “debt of gratitude.”⁴¹⁸ She concentrates on asymmetrical relations and acknowledges the inevitabilities of certain socially abusive tendencies of the powerful and the misplaced gratitude of the relatively powerless. She distinguishes the recipients’ gratifying feelings of being discharged from duties from the desires of anticipating a new and ongoing friendship with benefactors. In the latter, she avers that a genuine relationship is possible even between the parties who are distinctively unequal in power.⁴¹⁹ Nevertheless, her development of the gratitude theory in friendship did not take on the parent-child relationship, nor did she account for the fact that the intentions of benefactors could also be truly gracious.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid., 304–5. “Ritualizing” primarily refers to social conventions of reciprocating; however, it could also mean religious activities. Pitt-Rivers concurs that these forms of reciprocity are pathological and even contrary to the divine grace, see Pitt-Rivers, “The Place of Grace,” 98–9; “The Malady of Honor,” 105–118.

⁴¹⁸ Claudia Card, “Gratitude and Obligation,” *American Philosophical Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (1988): 115–27.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid., 115.

These inabilities to fully explain parent-child reciprocity and the pathological forms have beset Berger's gratitude theory ever since it was formulated.⁴²⁰ In contrast, Pitt-Rivers's grace anticipates such issues by presupposing the immutableness of grace because of its divine quality to guarantee authentic graciousness and gratefulness on both sides of giftship and reciprocal familial relationships.⁴²¹ Therefore, Pitt-Rivers's grace could provide fuller discussions about (1) the possibility of benefactors' sincere generosity that derives from the implications of "free" gift and how to apply grace-reciprocity for interpreting the asymmetrical and non-reciprocal power relations between parents and children and God and humans, (2) the significance of subjective affections and emotions in human interactions, and (3) their ultimate connections to divine graciousness and love, as well as justice and mercy.

From a psychological vantage point, Robert A. Emmons and Michael E. McCullough reinvigorate gratitude research in affective sciences.⁴²² Their studies confirm that gratitude, loaded with theological and moral philosophical connotations, arises from the basic human desires for social and spiritual interactions with one another and the divine through various reciprocal and mutual exchanges.⁴²³ Gratitude as positive emotional and affective responses is vital to establishing meaningful interactions, which bring extra value to people's lives and foster healthy societies.⁴²⁴

⁴²⁰ Keller, "Four Theories," 257–62. Welch, "Why You Should Be Nice," 91–114. Cameron Fenton, "A Complete Special Goods Theory," 9–69. Watkins, *Gratitude and Good Life*, 31–7.

⁴²¹ Pitt-Rivers, "The Place of Grace," 72, 79–80, 88, 103. Da Col and Shryock, "A Perfect Host," xxiii–xxv, xxix.

⁴²² Emmons and McCullough, "Counting Blessings," 337. Tudge and Freitas clarify that the research of gratitude is not a recent development but rather a revival in positive psychology; see a detailed discussion in *Developing Gratitude*, 1–2.

⁴²³ Especially, the following chapters in *The Psychology of Gratitude*: Edward J. Harpham, "Gratitude in the History of Ideas," 18–36; Solomon Schimmel, "Gratitude in Judaism," 37–55; Robert C. Roberts, "The Blessings of Gratitude," 58–78; Komter, "Gratitude and Gift Exchange," 194–212; Kristin E. Bonnie and Frans B. M. de Waal, "Primate Social Reciprocity and the Origin of Gratitude," 213–29.

⁴²⁴ Rollin McCraty and Doc Childre, "The Grateful Heart: The Psychophysiology of Appreciation," in *The Psychology of Gratitude*, 230–255. Mendonça and Palhares, "Gratitude," 89; Tudge and Freitas, *Developing Gratitude*, 2.

Currently, gratitude studies have centered on positive emotions like the enjoyment of being favored and feelings of gratitude and their impact on moral development.⁴²⁵ In particular, Jonathan R. H. Tudge, Lia Beatriz de Lucca Freitas, and others advocate the importance of gratitude for children's moral development.⁴²⁶ In addition, in the family context, gratitude studies are preoccupied with questions concerning how gratitude as a positive emotional response relates to moral disposition and how it shapes children's moral character in family and broader cultures. For clarity, I will highlight the following points relevant to grace-reciprocity: the presupposition of gratitude, the importance of parental influence, and the influence of broader cultural values.

Gratitude studies in affective sciences noticeably presuppose the possibility of "free" gift and the goodwill of the benefactor as the genesis of holistic moral development. This presupposition is different from the anthropological gift-reciprocity of Mauss and Sahlins. Specifically, gratitude studies stipulate that giftship must begin with genuine generosity to have any positive impact on one's moral development:

Many scholars, from both philosophy and psychology, accept the same basic definition, one that consists of three parts (see, for example, Fagley, 2016; Gulliford et al., 2013; Kristjánsson, 2013; Roberts, 2004; Tudge, Freitas, & O'Brien, 2015). First, there should be a benefactor, one who freely and intentionally provides, or attempts to provide, some benefit to a beneficiary. Second, the beneficiary has to recognize and feel good about the benefactor's good intentions (but also notice when those intentions are not so good; when designed, for example, to humiliate rather than to help) and realize whether the benefit was provided freely rather than under duress (see also Morgan and Gulliford, Chapter 4). Third (although some definitions do not include this), the beneficiary has to freely wish to repay the benefactor, if possible and when appropriate, with something deemed to be of value to the benefactor.⁴²⁷

The presupposition of authentic gift-giving in gratitude studies supports Pitt-Rivers's "free" gift hypothesis in his anthropological grace. Consequently, this shared consensus urges us to accept Pitt-

⁴²⁵ For example, Emmons and McCullough, *The Psychology of Gratitude*; Tudge and Freitas, *Developing Gratitude*.

⁴²⁶ Tudge and Freitas, *Developing Gratitude*.

⁴²⁷ Ibid, 4.

Rivers's emphasis on the cultural significance of gratitude in familial reciprocity and his solutions to the problems resulting from excluding non-reciprocity in the Maussian gift-reciprocity in current social-scientific studies of family, honor and reciprocity.

Moreover, gratitude studies maintain that the recipient's ability to recognize and feel good about the benefactor's original act and benefits is fundamental for reciprocating gratitude. The goodwill of benefactors and their benefits captivate beneficiaries to respect other people's ways of seeing the world, behaving, and interpreting social symbolisms like gift-giving.⁴²⁸ Equally important is the positive emotion felt at receiving a benefit and being favored, which enhances one's desire to repay the benefactor appropriately at a later occasion.⁴²⁹

Only with the supposition of true generosity does gratitude become relevant to children's moral development in the family context. So, naturally, parents are the originators of children's early development of gratitude and continue to influence them into adulthood.⁴³⁰ Lia O'Brien and other collaborators convey that:

Gratitude does not appear spontaneously, nor does the development of gratitude occur in a vacuum. Rather, gratitude, as do all aspects of a person's character, develops within and among contexts. The family is the first important context for the socialization of morality and remains one of the most important sources of influence of moral development through adolescence (Zern, 1996). We know that parents in many cultures work diligently to get their young children to say "thank you" for gifts or help received (Visser, 2009). Moving beyond politeness, there is ample evidence for the impact of parental socialization on moral development in general (Berkowitz & Grych, 1998; Kuczynski & Navara, 2006; White & Matawie, 2004). Further, there are initial indications of a relation between parent and child gratitude specifically (Hoy, Suldo, & Mendez, 2013; Rothenberg et al., 2016). The examination of parents' influence on the development of gratitude in children is certainly a valuable means to attain greater

⁴²⁸ Ibid., 5.

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

⁴³⁰ Lia O'Brien et al., "Relations between Parents," 198. Andrea M. Hussong et al., "Parent Socialization of Children's Gratitude," in *Developing Gratitude*, 199–219.

understanding of the foundations for the development of gratitude, as other chapters in this volume attest.⁴³¹

Thus, they assert that the levels of parents' involvement in cultivating gratitude do impact children's levels of appreciating the importance of gratitude, even though the depth of their gratitude may not directly correspond to that of the children.⁴³²

At the same time, gratitude studies maintain that the local and broader cultural contexts play an important role in children's development of gratitude. They acknowledge that parental values often do not pass on to offspring entirely "because of the particular characteristics of the interacting individuals, the local context in which those interactions are taking place, and the broader cultural contexts."⁴³³ In cross-cultural studies, it is well-known that the immediate and broader cultural contexts where children observe and exchange gifts and favors affect children's development of gratitude.⁴³⁴ Without going further into details, it suffices to say that different cultural values have various bearings on one's sense of moral obligation toward parents and other family members.⁴³⁵

To sum up, current gratitude studies in virtue ethics and affective sciences concerning filial duties make plain the importance of gratitude in one's moral development and for the good of society. Berger's and subsequent studies of gratitude in filial morality highlight similar issues that confound the gift-reciprocity stemming from economic, moral, and legal exchanges. They, however, underscore that the concept of gratitude in the sense of moral obligation is relevant for investigating familial relations and filial duties. Finally, the growing appreciation of gratitude as a positive emotion and feeling

⁴³¹ Ibid., 178.

⁴³² Ibid., 193–4. Tudge and Freitas, *Developing Gratitude*, 16–7.

⁴³³ Tudge and Freitas, *Developing Gratitude*, 12.

⁴³⁴ Ayse Payir et al., "Cross-Cultural Variations in the Development of Gratitude," in *Developing Gratitude*, 117.

⁴³⁵ Tudge and Freitas, *Developing Gratitude*, 12. Cigdem Kagitcibasi and Bilge Ataca, "Value of Children and Family Change: A Three-Decade Portrait From Turkey," *Applied Psychology* 54, no. 3 (2005): 317–37, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2005.00213.x>; Heidi Keller, "Autonomy and Relatedness Revisited: Cultural Manifestations of Universal Human Needs," *Child Development Perspectives* 6, no. 1 (2012): 12–18, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1750-8606.2011.00208.x>.

concerning children in more recent studies again places it right at the heart of familial reciprocity and parent-child interactions, the most important relationships in our daily lives.⁴³⁶

The illustrated limitations of Berger's gratitude theory and new appreciations of gratitude in virtue ethics and affective sciences confirm Pitt-Rivers's thesis about familial exchanges and moral development. They actually lead us to realize that Pitt-Rivers's grace-reciprocity is more plausible for interpreting familial reciprocity and particularly parent-child interactions for the following reasons. First, the possibility of "free" or non-reciprocal or non-circular gift (especially in asymmetrical and non-reciprocal relations) is necessary for a fuller understanding of parent-child relationships and God and human. Second, gift-reciprocity mechanisms need to factor in subjective and positive emotions and affections like goodwill and the sense of honor and gratitude in familial reciprocity with a view to virtues. Finally, grace as "free" gift, graciousness, and gratitude possesses an immutable quality that is more appropriate for discerning familial relations (especially parent-child relations) by integrating the perspectives of benefactors and recipients, incorporating various aspects of giftship in both secular and sacred spheres.

C. Pitt-Rivers's Anthropological Grace for Understanding of Parent-Child

Relations in the Biblical World

Up to this point, this study has established that a lacuna persists in the current scholarship of 1 Corinthians 4:14–21, and several issues are found in the existing approaches to Paul's parent-child relations with social-scientific insights of family, honor, and gift-reciprocity. It has then examined Pitt-Rivers's grace-reciprocity in Mediterranean cultures to determine whether it can readdress the issues above and discover new ways to behold Paul's expressions of parents and children in the Corinthian

⁴³⁶ Sara B. Algoe, "Find, Remind, and Bind: The Functions of Gratitude in Everyday Relationships," *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* 6, no. 6 (2012): 455–69, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2012.00439.x>.

correspondence. In what follows, we will expand on the applicability of Pitt-Rivers's grace-reciprocity in biblical studies, summarizing concrete ways grace-reciprocity might be applied in the Corinthian texts, and shed new light on Paul's parent-child imageries in 1 Corinthians 4:14–21.⁴³⁷ These new insights, I believe, will have significant theological implications for understanding spiritual relations between parental figures and their family groups, and God and humans in the biblical world.

I. Rationale for Applying grace-reciprocity to Understand Parent-Child Relations

In historical-critical studies of the Bible, scholars wrestle with social sciences, history, and Christian theology.⁴³⁸ Among them, Malina was one of the chief architects who initiated the social-scientific readings of the Bible through his groundbreaking work, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*.⁴³⁹ Malina and the proponents maintain that social-scientific insights are indispensable for observing the cultural differences between the biblical world and ours.⁴⁴⁰ Specifically, they adapted Mediterranean cultural values like honor and reciprocity and explorations of social institutions like kinship, Greek benefaction, and Roman patronage.⁴⁴¹ In this way, Malina and others have led modern readers to traverse the New Testament world and engage in meaningful dialogues with biblical texts within their first-century Mediterranean cultural contexts.⁴⁴² Moreover, these studies have illustrated how social concepts in Mediterranean studies helped perceive the social undercurrents (e.g.,

⁴³⁷ Crook, "Critical Notes," 515–20.

⁴³⁸ Elliott, *What Is Social-Scientific Criticism*. A more recent reflection by Moxnes, "Social-Scientific Readings," 160–71.

⁴³⁹ Malina, *The New Testament World*, 19–25.

⁴⁴⁰ For example, Malina, "Rhetorical Criticism and Social-Scientific Criticism," 5–6. Crook, "Critical Notes," 515–20. Philip F. Esler, "Models, Context and Kerygma in Testament Interpretation," in *Modeling Early Christianity*, 1–20. Elliott, "From Social Description," 26–36; "Social-Scientific Criticism," 1–10.

⁴⁴¹ Concerning the cultural value of honor and shame, see Malina, *The New Testament World*, 27–57. Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers, *Honour and Shame*. Gilmore, *Honor and Shame*. On patronage in the Gospels, Bruce J. Malina, *The Social World of Jesus and The Gospels* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 143–75.

⁴⁴² Malina, *The New Testament World*, 27–57. Philip F. Esler, "Social-Scientific Approaches," *Dictionary of Biblical Criticism and Interpretation*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (New York: Routledge, 2007), 337–40. Moxnes, "Social-Scientific Readings," 163–5. Pitt-Rivers, "Honor and Social Status," 3–33.

exchanges of favors) of the first-century world and gave flesh and blood to impalpable theological ideas and unaccountable spiritual relations latent in biblical texts.⁴⁴³

Moxnes perceptibly explains that social-scientific readings of the Bible reflect the long traditions of those who tirelessly strive to present the world of the Bible afresh for readers today.⁴⁴⁴ Social-scientific critics have been *au courant* with social and anthropological developments and the studies of classics concerning Mediterranean cultures. They not only propose various approaches for (re)considering the cultural continuity and discontinuity of the premodern and modern Mediterranean world but have also found intelligible ways of bringing the world of the Bible *to* and *for* modern-day

⁴⁴³ Malina, *The Social World of Jesus*, 143–75. Malina, “Grace/Favor,” 75–8; “Patronage,” 131–4; *The New Testament World*, 221–2.

⁴⁴⁴ For a history of scholarship on social, historical, and theological studies of the Bible, see Esler, *New Testament Theology*, 1–28; Robert Morgan, “Can the Critical Study of Scripture Provide a Doctrinal Norm?,” *JR* 76, no. 2 (April 1996): 206–32.

The social-scientific study of the Bible matured over time. It has developed into three distinct ways of integrating social sciences and history, which is more or less identical to the three phases chronologically: (1). The early awareness of social contexts that developed as a social description necessary for the understanding of biblical texts; (2). A renewed movement and creative moment concerned with social history and social movements, and (3). Social-scientific criticism understood as a heuristic tool in biblical studies. See Moxnes’s most recent synopsis, “Social-Scientific Readings,” 160–71.

The influential scholars in the early stages are Wilhelm Witing, Friedrich Luckes, Ernst Troeltsch, Adolf Deissmann, and Hermann Gunkel. For example, Adolf Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East: The New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco-Roman World* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995). For a detailed discussion on the “Chicago School,” see Robert W. Funk, “The Watershed of the American Biblical Tradition: The Chicago School, First Phase, 1892–1920,” *JBL* 95, no. 1 (1976): 4–22.

The notable figures in the second stages are Edwin Judge, Gerd Theissen, and Wayne Meeks. Edwin. A. Judge, *Social Distinctives of the Christians in the First Century: Pivotal Essays* (ed. David M. Scholer; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008). Gerd Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth*, trans. John Howard Schütz (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1982). Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003).

The key scholars in the final stages are Mary Douglas, Bruce J. Malina, Jerome H. Neyrey, Richard Rohrbaugh, John Pilch, John H. Elliott, and Philip F. Esler. Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, repr. ed. (London: Routledge, 2001). Malina, *The New Testament World*. Jerome H. Neyrey, *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998). Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *The New Testament*. John H. Elliott, *Conflict, Community and Honor: 1 Peter in Social-Scientific Perspective* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2007). Philip F. Esler, ed., *The Early Christian World*, 2nd. ed., The Routledge Worlds (New York: Routledge; Taylor & Francis Group, 2017); *The First Christians in Their Social Worlds Social-Scientific Approaches to New Testament Interpretation* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 1–36; *Modelling Early Christianity*. Horrell, “Social Sciences Studying Formative Christian Phenomena,” 3–28; Elliott, “From Social Description,” 26–36.

Christians and non-Christians alike.⁴⁴⁵ Finally, they have developed criteria to test and verify the findings to improve the existing social-scientific models and insights for future research.⁴⁴⁶

Concerning social sciences, Pitt-Rivers and his Mediterranean studies have been a source of inspiration for articulating invaluable insights to navigate studies into the biblical world. His contributions are evidenced by his desire and ability to bridge the broader social sciences and Mediterranean anthropology, which has clarified and carved out suitable models to investigate the Bible social-scientifically. For example, Pitt-Rivers's early study of *People of the Sierra* launched Mediterranean anthropology and profoundly shaped biblical studies of patronage and benefaction.⁴⁴⁷ His comparative studies of honor and *mana* and *hau* and grace were excellent examples of how broader social and anthropological concepts could be linked to the Mediterranean world and vice versa.⁴⁴⁸ Moreover, his Mediterranean studies illustrate how the ancient Mediterranean (or biblical) world has been connected to the modern Mediterranean world via various social concepts and practices.⁴⁴⁹ Nicolas R. E. Fisher's *Hybris: A Study in the Values of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greece* and Malina's

⁴⁴⁵ Moxnes, "Social-Scientific Readings," 160–71. See a comprehensive study by Zeba A. Crook, ed., *The Ancient Mediterranean Social World: A Sourcebook* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2022).

⁴⁴⁶ For example, Philip F. Esler summarizes the main reasons for the model-application in biblical studies, "Models in New Testament Interpretation: A Reply to David Horrell," *JSNT* 22, no. 78 (2000): 107–13. Elliott, "From Social Description to Social-Scientific Criticism," 26–36; "Social-Scientific Criticism," 1–10. Esler, "Models, Context and Kerygma," 1–20; "Social-Scientific Models in Biblical Interpretation," in *Ancient Israel*, 3–14.

⁴⁴⁷ Pitt-Rivers, *The People of the Sierra*; "Reflections on Fieldwork in Spain," 449–464. See Crook, "Benefaction/Patronage."

In relation to biblical studies see the discussion by Gideon M. Kressel, "An Anthropologists Response to the Use of Social Science Models in Biblical Studies," in *Honor and Shame in the World of the Bible*, Semeia 68 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 1994), 153–60.

In Pauline studies, for example, Frederick W. Danker, "Bridging St. Paul and the Apostolic Fathers: A Study in Reciprocity," *CurTM* 15 (1988): 170–184; Chow, *Patronage and Power*; Joubert, *Paul as Benefactor*; Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*; Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*; Briones, "Mutual Brokers of Grace," 536–56.

⁴⁴⁸ Pitt-Rivers, "The Place of Grace," 70, 95; cf. "Honor and Social Status," "Mana," "The Malady of Honor," 3–34, 35–68, 105–18, respectively.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 70, 199–209, 211–25. For example, in "The Law of Hospitality," Pitt-Rivers carefully compares the Mediterranean ethnography and his anthropological fieldwork to articulate a long tradition of hospitality. Another good example is his "The Fate of Shechem," where he demonstrates a similar stroke of brilliance in bringing the research of enterology and the fieldwork of anthropology. Da Col and Shryock, "A Perfect Host," xviii, xxiv.

adaptation of social honor would be prime examples of Pitt-Rivers's contributions to the studies of the classical and biblical world.⁴⁵⁰

Similarly, Pitt-Rivers speculated that the concept of grace must be rooted in classical and biblical traditions of the Mediterranean world. For instance, grace represents femininity in opposition to masculine honor, which must not have resulted from the moral evolution of Christianity.⁴⁵¹ Thus, he claims that grace is another Mediterranean concept, like honor, that can be traced back to the classical and biblical world.⁴⁵² Moreover, Pauline studies of grace (χάρις) and the recent investigations of gratitude (χάρις) in the classical world indeed confirm Pitt-Rivers's suggestions about the cultural origins of grace in the classical and biblical worlds.⁴⁵³

As an illustration, we can note Tazuko van Berkel's most recent and independent study of *The Economics of Friendship: Conceptions of Reciprocity in Classical Greece*.⁴⁵⁴ Van Berkel's research strengthens Pitt-Rivers's assumption. Her work confirms that χάρις-reciprocity (favor and gratitude) is at

⁴⁵⁰ Nicolas R. E. Fisher, *Hybris: A Study in the Values of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greece* (Warminster, Wiltshire: Aris & Phillips, 1992). Malina, *The New Testament World*, 27–57.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid., 100.

⁴⁵² Ibid.

⁴⁵³ Pauline studies of grace: e.g., Pao, *Thanksgiving*; Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*; Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 108–12, 132–9; “Grace as Benefaction,” 25–38. Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 113–9, 225–44, 255–60.

On gratitude in classics, e.g., van Berkel, *The Economics of Friendship*; Rushdy, *Philosophies of Gratitude*, 19–47. See Hans van Wees, “The Law of Gratitude,” 13–49; Maehle, “The Economy of Gratitude,” 55–90. Natali, “Pietas,” ii. Natali in his unpublished dissertation presents the ample evidence concerning cultural debates of gratitude in relation to the Roman virtue *pietas* in the late Roman Republic and early *principate*. He demonstrates that the Latin writers like Cicero, Virgil, and Ovid believed that gratitude was at the center of the Roman virtue *pietas* sustaining reciprocal relations like friendship and parent-child relations. In particular, Cicero asserts that: “For this singular virtue is not only the greatest but also the mother of all other virtues. For what is *pietas* if not a goodwill in gratitude toward parents.” Cicero, *Pro Planc.* 80.3: *Haec enim est una virtus non solum maxima sed etiam mater virtutum omnium reliquarum. Quid est pietas nisi grata voluntas in parentes?*

⁴⁵⁴ Van Berkel, *The Economics of Friendship*. Vidal, “The Three Graces,” 339–68. Other relevant studies: e.g., Barbara M. Breitenberger, “Goddesses of Grace and Beauty: The Charites,” in *Aphrodite and Eros: The Development of Erotic Mythology in Early Greek Poetry and Cult*, Studies in Classics (New York: Routledge, 2007), 105–15; Saskia Peels, “Thwarted Expectations of Divine Reciprocity,” *Mnemosyne* 69.4 (2016): 551–71, <https://doi.org/10.1163/1568525X-12341900>; Vincent Azoulay, *Xenophon and the Graces of Power: A Greek Guide to Political Manipulation*, trans. Angela Krieger (Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2018).

the heart of all enduring relationships like friendship and parent-child bonds.⁴⁵⁵ This further shows that Pitt-Rivers's grace will be applicable to ancient cultures of the Mediterranean and useful for understanding parent-child relations in the social world of St. Paul and his Corinthian correspondence.

For van Berkel, the mutual commitment for the long haul and the willingness to give oneself over for others are sure signs of meaningful relations.⁴⁵⁶ Conversely, a long-lasting relationship cannot be “strictly business” economically because “money cannot buy it.”⁴⁵⁷ With this premise, she applies χάρις-reciprocity (favor and gratitude) to familial-like relations such as friendship (including filial duties and one's piety toward gods) in ancient Greek cultures.⁴⁵⁸ She discovers that the term χάρις (favor and gratitude)—typically associated with the subject of the long-term relationship—invokes the ideals of reciprocity.⁴⁵⁹ She learns that ancient authors like Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and others promoted the idea of χάρις and maintained that χάρις ought to govern enduring relationships. For example, Aristotle rationalizes the pivotal role of χάρις in all divine and human relations: “That is why cities erect the temple of the Graces in a conspicuous place, in order that there might be a return for what is given. For this is the special characteristic of gratitude [χάρις], since we should not only do a service in return for someone who has done us a favor but, on another occasion, start by doing a favor too.”⁴⁶⁰ Therefore, classical authors believe that χάρις possesses the divine quality that maintains and shapes long-term relations like friendship, the parent-child bond, and one's piety toward gods.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid., 124–200.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid., VII.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid., 5–9.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid., 124–200. Two other studies briefly touch up the filial obligations in ancient cultures: McConnell, *Gratitude*; Sarah Vaughan Brakman, “A Philosophical Analysis of Filial Obligations” (Ph.D. diss.; Texas, TX: Rice University, 1994).

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., 69.

⁴⁶⁰ Aristotle, *Eth. nic.*, 5.5.7. The Greek version: διὸ καὶ ἱερὸν ἐμποδῶν ποιῶνται, ἵν' ἀνταδόσις ᾗ τοῦτο γὰρ ἴδιον χάριτος; ἀνθυπηρετήσαι γὰρ δεῖ τῷ χαρισμένῳ, καὶ πάλιν αὐτὸν ἀρξαι χαριζόμενον. Van Berkel, *Economics of Friendship*, 406.

⁴⁶¹ Van Berkel, *The Economics of Friendship*, 406.

Concerning human relations, χάρις-reciprocity permeates every aspect of social and familial exchanges because “χαρίεις behavior or a χαρίεις gift calls for a response full of χάρις.”⁴⁶² Χάρις (gratitude)—when characterized as a subjective emotion, active participation, and internalized intentions—is at the heart of friendship, which is one of the most promising ways to achieve meaningful relations.⁴⁶³ More importantly, she points out that filial duties toward parents are the most ancient of obligations.⁴⁶⁴ Among ancient authors, they robustly debated whether children owed gratitude toward gods and parents, and if so, why, and *vice versa*.⁴⁶⁵

Van Berkel first identifies that there is a tension between the moral imperative to return χάρις and reducing χάρις to a mere obligatory return of favor in the ancient literature.⁴⁶⁶ This tension parallels the Maussian gift paradox between the “free” and non-reciprocal gifts and the moral obligation to reciprocate. She clarifies that:

χάρις-reciprocity resembles disembedded exchange, the *tit-for-tat* and *quid-pro-quo* that one finds outside a χάρις-relationship: at the market, at the banker’s table, in the harbor. χάρις-reciprocity resembles those exchanges without being completely reducible to them. The crucial difference lies in the nature of obligation. It is in this aspect, the paradoxical nature of obligation, that the concept of χάρις is challenged by the availability of alternative models of mutual obligation such as commercial or contractual exchange. But it is not only challenged: χάρις also finds its articulation in distinction from or in opposition to these alternative models.⁴⁶⁷

Evidently, van Berkel sees that χάρις-reciprocity is distinctive from other modes of exchanges.

Commercial and contractual exchanges cannot fully explain long-term loving relationships, which are the exact points that grace-reciprocity makes. For van Berkel, χάρις always finds ways to display a special

⁴⁶² Ibid., 80.

⁴⁶³ Ibid., 69–100.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid., 124–200.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid., 1, 8, 102, 134–5, 140–2, 173, 176–7, 406.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid., 101.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid., 102.

tie—especially the bond of fondness between parents and children—and to distinguish it from any commercial and contractual exchanges.⁴⁶⁸

Furthermore, van Berkel attests that: “In the 5th and 4th century, this notion of χάρις starts to serve as the ideological underpinning of filial duty: the idea that honoring one’s parents is never-ending, precisely because they began first.”⁴⁶⁹ In the discussion of filial duties, van Berkel notices that comparing obligation to “debt” has been one of the common ways how children’s obligations toward parents are understood. She summarizes:

Reciprocity between parents and children is not only long-lasting, but also unequal: a child can never do or give enough to balance out his parents’ favor; but he can reciprocate to the best of his ability. In other words, we have a case here of primordial debt, a debt we are born into, just by the grace of being born, a debt that cannot be redeemed.⁴⁷⁰

However, she maintains that the debt paradigm is inadequate to explain filial obligation and describe the unique bond of benevolence between parents and children.⁴⁷¹

At this point, van Berkel explores other models and vouches for the gratitude theory in which children ought to show gratitude in honoring their parents. She offers the following justifications. (1). The parent’s initial endowment without apparent hope makes the χάρις of the parents greater than the χάρις of the children’s reciprocation. “The primordial χάρις accounts for the unequal relation between parent and child, in which the child owes perpetual gratitude, obedience, respect, and care to the parent.”⁴⁷² (2). Children’s first task is to recognize the χάρις and continue to show their χάρις toward their parents. “A child’s ability to experience χάρις (i.e., to “know the χάρις” and to be grateful) is

⁴⁶⁸ Here, χάρις is considered as feminine, for example like Goddesses. See Vidal, “The Three Graces,” 339–68.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid., 122–3.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid., 138.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., 134–48.

⁴⁷² Ibid., 199.

considered a sign of proper upbringing and good socialization.”⁴⁷³ In conflict situations, ancient thinkers habitually remind their audiences of the original χάρις bestowed by gods, forefathers, and benefactors.⁴⁷⁴ (3). The emotions and subjective dispositions such as goodwill, gratitude, and appreciation predicate the mechanism of χάρις-reciprocity.⁴⁷⁵ Failing to reciprocate would bring shame to oneself and one’s family, whereas a grateful person is highly valued with honor, displays emotional maturity, and indicates a promising life. (4) As a result, the filial obligation is an all-encompassing virtue demonstrating one’s ability to carry out long-term social interactions with family members and others. Therefore, “filial duty has repercussions beyond the immediate bounds of the parent-child relationship.”⁴⁷⁶

Although van Berkel’s investigation of χάρις in ancient Greek cultures validates Pitt-Rivers’s principal characteristics of grace that govern human and divine relations, her investigation is confined to gratitude theory and classical studies. As discussed earlier, gratitude theory is inadequate in fully exploring the unique relationships between parents and children from the perspective of the giver or benefactor since it does not address theoretical issues of “free” gift or offer solutions to pathological forms of exchanges.⁴⁷⁷

Nevertheless, van Berkel’s exploration of χάρις-reciprocity confirms that the idea of grace plays a significant role in ancient Mediterranean cultures. Moreover, she underscores that χάρις-reciprocity as the social ideal is extremely important for defining and shaping one’s moral and spiritual character in all familial and social interactions.⁴⁷⁸ Finally, her classical study of χάρις prompts New Testament investigations in exploring the correlations between the first-century χάρις-reciprocity and parent-child

⁴⁷³ Ibid., 159.

⁴⁷⁴ Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.2.1–2. Van Berkel, *The Economics of Friendship*, 199.

⁴⁷⁵ Van Berkel, *The Economics of Friendship*, 199.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid., 200.

⁴⁷⁷ Berger, “Gratitude,” 302–5. Card, “Gratitude,” 127.

⁴⁷⁸ Da Col and Shryock, “A Perfect Host,” xxvii. Pitt-Rivers, “The Place of Grace,” 69–76.

dynamics. Especially the Corinthian correspondence provides fruitful ground for such investigations, given St. Paul's carefully chosen family terms and the language of χάρις. In particular, 1 Corinthians 4:14–21 provides an excellent case study with its clear allusions to the parent-child connection between him as a spiritual father and his beloved child Timothy and the Corinthian family.⁴⁷⁹

II. Honoring Parents in Showing Gratitude

At the outset, this study proposes that grace-reciprocity is vital for re-examining parent-child interactions in Pauline letters, taking 1 Corinthians 4:14–21 as an illustration. Now, we are at a new vantage point that allows us to summarize the ways in which grace-reciprocity will readdress the issues in human sciences concerning the controversy of “free” gift and the feelings of gratitude as an integral part of reciprocity. Necessarily, these standpoints will help answer difficulties in current social-scientific studies of family, honor, and gift-reciprocity in the social world of St. Paul.

Regarding social and economic anthropology, grace-reciprocity challenges the Maussian notion of gift-giving methodologically by insisting on the value of religious beliefs and ideas like grace in social-scientific discourses. For Pitt-Rivers, grace embodies the reciprocity of hearts and the spirit of gift that improve the Maussian giftship by including non-reciprocity, based on the theological idea of grace as a “free” gift of God (cf., Da Col, Shryock, Humphrey, and Ledeneva). In this way, grace enables familial interactions to be treated in a separate category on its own, distinct from other extrafamilial exchanges (cf., Humphrey and Ledeneva). His notion of grace-reciprocity affords new ways to reimagine vertical relations like those between parents and children in everyday family life and the religious belief concerning God and humans.

⁴⁷⁹ For example, Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 2–3, 280–2, 287–344, 346–52. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 132–9; Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 113–9, 225–44, 255–60. See Lim's discussions on family metaphors in *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 51–136.

Moreover, grace exemplifying the reciprocity of hearts revives the interest in familial bonds of affection. This recovery of subjective or affective aspects in reciprocal relations reconnects the modern concept of gift and grace to the ancient idea of χάρις and the various social and familial practices of reciprocity. It further uncovers the important roles of positive feelings of gratitude and the belief in the spirit of gift play in virtue ethics and long-term relationships like friendship and parent-child ties (e.g., van Berkel). Pitt-Rivers identifies how verbal expressions of gratefulness and practical demonstrations of gratitude are essential for grace-filled reciprocity. He holds that the basic etiquette of reciprocation requires both verbal and practical ways to show one's thankfulness, as in exchanging "useful goods," the "intermediate gifts" as a token of *bona fides*, and ultimately grace *sui generis*. The reciprocating "intermediate gifts" and grace *sui generis* are particularly important to vertical relations and spiritual dynamics, like parent-child and God-human narratives.

Furthermore, Pitt-Rivers compares social honor and the religious idea of grace in his essay. In the grace-honor comparison, he illuminates three patterns: interchangeable, complementary, and contradictory. As we will see, these patterns are critical for analyzing the cultural value of honor and social practices of reciprocity and theological ideas like χάρις within family reciprocity and the Corinthian correspondence. Therefore, grace-reciprocity can provide a platform for the meaningful dialogue between religious ideas and social practices in everyday family life, between temporality and transcendence (e.g., the spirit of gift) in view of symbolisms of the gift such like the logic of the gift, social norms of reciprocity, and the future (e.g., Dal Col, Shryock, Milbank, Mauss, and Bourdieu).

Compared to gratitude studies in virtue ethics and affective sciences, we find that grace-reciprocity is more comprehensible to integrate the perspective of both benefactors and the beneficiary mindful of religious beliefs. Moreover, recent gratitude studies inadvertently confirmed the cultural significance of recipients' subjective and affective aspects of reciprocity and "free" gift for one's moral development (e.g., Berger and Emmons and McCullough). Significantly, these recent developments

demonstrate how gratitude as an integral part of reciprocity brings merits to children's moral character for the wellbeing of oneself and the good of family (Tudge and Freitas). Moreover, as an emotion and a virtue, gratitude opens children's minds and hearts to recognize others and their values (i.e., generosity) and guides children to respect others (e.g., parents as benefactors) with a grateful heart. Finally, grace-reciprocity lends itself to discussing how religious beliefs (such as the Christ-gift as "free" gift and Christ's χάρις as the spirit of gift or the life-giving spirit) could influence one's moral development and strengthen the spiritual bonds in the biblical world.⁴⁸⁰

Having reviewed the strengths revolving around grace-reciprocity in human sciences, we now turn to the Pauline letters and unfold how we may reimagine Paul's parent-child expressions, building upon current social-scientific studies of family, honor, and reciprocity.

(1). Grace-reciprocity will enable us to avoid the conflation of familial and extrafamilial reciprocity by identifying the distinctive features proper to the exchanges among family members and groups. Specifically, we recognize that Paul's parent-child expressions should be studied with the merit of familial reciprocity. Moreover, by entertaining the idea of "free" gift, grace-reciprocity illustrates that only genuine generosity is necessary to generate enduring bonds of loving affections and return of gratitude. In doing so, we can place Paul's self-reference as a spiritual mother or father (e.g., 3:1–2; 4:15) and his perception of children (e.g., 4:14, 17; cf. 13:11) within the broader context of the apostolic preaching as God's χάρις (favor) shown in the gift of person Jesus Christ (or the Christ-gift) for the Corinthian family.⁴⁸¹

⁴⁸⁰ The expression of "the life-giving spirit" (πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν) is found in 1 Corinthians 15:45.

⁴⁸¹ See a detailed discussion on the expression of the Christ-gift by Barclay, *Paul*, especially 331–3. McFarland, *God and Grace*, 104.

We assume that the uses of a nursing mother (1 Cor 3:1–3) and a loving father (4:14, 15, 21; cf. 2 Cor 6:13; 7:13–16; 12:14) are authentic expressions of familial pledges of amity like generosity and gratitude; they should not be viewed merely as a rhetorical maneuver for paternal dominance or a tactic to instill fear with the cultural influence of patriarchy in the Graeco-Roman world. Lastly, with Pitt-Rivers's grace-honor comparison (i.e., interchangeable, complementary, and contradictory), we will reinterpret Paul's spiritual instructions concerning social honor in light of divine and human χάρις.

(2). Grace-reciprocity foregrounds the cultural significance of gratitude and sheds new light on how to show appropriate gratitude verbally and practically. Grateful persons should always say "thank you" to their benefactors who offer gifts, favors, or services. Practically, Pitt-Rivers insists that there are three ways that an honorable and grateful person may appropriately reciprocate gifts, favors, and services received. Secondly, an honorable person ought to follow gift-reciprocity principles and reciprocate useful goods with equal or more value. In the case of unequal power relations, one needs to reciprocate with "intermediate gifts" as *bona fides*. Lastly, one must always return grace *sui generis* in both human and divine beneficence. As a rule of thumb, grace inspires people to express gratitude verbally and demonstrate gratitude in action wherever and whenever necessary to preserve the initial grace as God ultimately stands as their witness. These will show Paul's χάρις not only as gifts, favors, and services but also as demonstrations of his χάρις (grateful hearts) in the Corinthian letters. Given our interest in familial reciprocity and a theological understanding of grace, we will concentrate on the "intermediate gifts" as the token of *bona fides* and always return grace in its own kind to clarify Paul's self-understanding as a child of God and expectations for his

Corinthian children. Moreover, Paul's appeal to the Corinthians to imitate him becomes an amiable invitation for a grace-filled reciprocation in honoring him (1 Cor 4:16).

Therefore, the explorations of χάρις-reciprocity will be beneficial for understanding Paul as a spiritual father and his expectations of filial imitation of the Corinthians, which recent studies of Pauline imitation have overlooked.

(3). The notion of anthropological grace leads us to a new awareness of the cultural value of grace that influences one's moral character and spiritual maturity. True, Pitt-Rivers did not develop how gratitude in grace-reciprocity would transform one's moral character; however, it is so understood when he anchored his essay on the religious idea of God's grace (χάρις) as "free" gift and the spirit of gift (or the life-giving spirit). Moreover, recent studies in virtue ethics concerning children fill the hiatus and contend that true generosity is the foundation for cultivating children's moral character, which is vital for understanding Paul's advice about gratitude. However, this study will take this idea further and explore whether and how Paul's parent-child language effectively communicates God's χάρις in the person of Christ but also how the expressions of reciprocal familial relationships might have reflected a larger vision of a grace-filled family of God in Christ.

CHAPTER THREE

HONORING PARENT IN ΧΑΡΙΣ-RECIPROCITY: TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF PARENT-CHILD RELATIONS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 4:14–21

The Apostle Paul spent significant time and energy at Roman Corinth and preached the gospel of Christ to the household assemblies and in writing.⁴⁸² In the Corinthian letters, he carefully employs various familial terms and the language of grace to relate to his fellow Christians and convey his religious message.⁴⁸³ As part of his written communications, these letters are not simply responding to but are also conditioned by the Corinthian community's specific and broader social and cultural issues.⁴⁸⁴ Specifically, the letters serve as a vehicle and instrument to convey Paul's values and beliefs to persuade his Corinthian audience to change their behaviors and spiritual visions and to conform to the new-found faith in Christ.⁴⁸⁵ To gain a favorable hearing, Paul does appear to adopt culturally-loaded terms like family, honor, and χάρις theologically, especially when he is conscious that his message is radical and even critical of certain social norms and lays strenuous demands upon the socially strong.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸² Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, xvii, 51–63. Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 30–2. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 29. For Pauline Christianity see Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*. Adams and Horrell, *Christianity at Corinth*. Daniel N. Schowalter and Steven J. Friesen, *Urban Religion in Roman Corinth: Interdisciplinary Approaches*, HTS 53 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Theological Studies, 2005). James R. Harrison and Lawrence L. Welborn, eds., *The First Urban Churches*, WGRWSup 1–2 vols. (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt175x2tg>.

⁴⁸³ Concerning the dates of Paul's apostolic preaching in Corinth and of the composition of 1 Corinthians, see Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 29–36.

Paul's language of family: Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 51–63, 93–9; Aasgaard, *My Brothers and Sister*, 7–8; counterarguments by Lone Fatum, "Brotherhood in Christ: A Gender Hermeneutical Reading of 1 Thessalonians," in *Constructing Early Christian Families*, 183–97.

⁴⁸⁴ John H. Elliott, *What Is Social-Scientific Criticism*, 7. Horrell, *The Social Ethos*, 131–98, 281–3. MacDonald, "Reading the New Testament," 376–387; *Power of Children*; "Paul and Family Life," 253–281.

⁴⁸⁵ Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric*, 20–111. Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 35–48.

⁴⁸⁶ Horrell, *The Social Ethos*, 195. On kinship and family: Birge, *The Language of Belonging*, 71–2. Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 196–9. On grace: McFarland, *God and Grace*, 103, 150, 156, 158, 171–5, 199–201.

Nevertheless, Paul's language of family, honor, and *χάρις* is not merely culturally convenient and rhetorically exploitative. On the contrary, one can sense that Paul's familial expressions convey genuine love and affection for the Corinthians (e.g., 1 Cor 4:14–21; 2 Cor 6:11–13). Moreover, his apostolic preaching, accompanied by hardships for the spiritual welfare of the Corinthian family, urges us to ponder familial and spiritual covenants that have been forged in Christ's *χάρις* that has been graciously given (e.g., 3:10; 4:15; 15:10). Furthermore, Paul sincerely hopes that the Corinthians become imitators of him, reflecting his yearning for a long-term relationship in the way of Christ (4:16–20).⁴⁸⁷

However, the above observations are not mere hunches but are plausible suggestions in light of the social-scientific insights into grace gained from the previous chapters. To pursue these suggestions, first, this chapter will contend that Paul's language of family and *χάρις* are interdependent in the Corinthian correspondence. Then it will prove that Paul's parent-child terms and the employment of *χάρις* are consistent with features of grace-reciprocity as a way of expressing his familial bond of affections. Furthermore, it will show that Paul hopes to build an enduring relationship with the Corinthian family that ought to be sustained by the *χάρις* of Christ through their sharing of *χάρις* (gratitude) toward Paul and Christian family members. Finally, it will conclude by showing how Paul's understanding of filial imitation is embedded in the *χάρις* of Christ's death and resurrection, which is an ultimate model of Christian giving in honoring spiritual parents in the Lord and God for the good of the Christian family.

A. Paul's Language of Family and Grace

Paul's language of family and *χάρις* are intertwined because they share an everyday social reality of familial exchanges. On the one hand, like other social relatednesses, familial relations are governed by the cultural value of honor and the social ethos of reciprocity. On the other hand, *χάρις* is versatile in

⁴⁸⁷ 2 Cor 6:11–13; 7:15; 8:19, 23–24; 9:11–15.

communicating all types of social and spiritual relations based on reciprocal and non-reciprocal interactions. Therefore, familial reciprocity can suitably serve as a new category to encompass Paul's employments of parent-child and χάρις-related expressions embedded in the first-century social ethos of reciprocity. By doing so, we will properly situate Paul's parent-child interactions that originated from Christ's χάρις and fully realize the responsibilities arising from reciprocal relationships in familial and spiritual bonds with the Corinthians. Additionally, this approach will avoid further confusion besetting the recent social-scientific studies that have tended to reduce familial relations to extrafamilial exchanges such as patronage and benefaction.

In Paul's writings, he deliberately alternates between sibling terms and parent-child narratives to insinuate his genuine and unique familial bonds with the Christian communities like family.⁴⁸⁸ The familial bonds of affections, in turn, influence the Corinthians' social and moral behaviors to build up the Corinthian spiritual family.⁴⁸⁹ For example, "my [dear] brother and sisters" (ἀδελφοί) is Paul's typical way of addressing fellow Christians.⁴⁹⁰ Paul uses this endearment in the Corinthian letters more frequently than in any other letters.⁴⁹¹ Winter comments: "The letter [1 Corinthians] is a highly personal one when compared with those that were 'masterpieces of rhetorical display, paeans to classicism.' What is striking is that Paul makes his appeals on numerous occasions to the Christian community in familial terms addressing the recipients as brothers and sisters."⁴⁹² Anthony Thiselton further suggests

⁴⁸⁸ Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 51–63, 93–9.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid., 133–6. Birge, *The Language of Belonging*, 181–7.

⁴⁹⁰ Lim identifies that 45 percent of a total of 113 occurrences of "brothers and sisters" are found in the Corinthian letters; see *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 52–3. Aasgaard, *My Beloved Brothers and Sisters*, 7–8. Also, "ἀδελφός," in BDAG, 18–19; Hans Freiherr von Soden, "ἀδελφός, ἀδελφή," *TDNT* 1:144–6.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid., 52–5.

⁴⁹² Bruce W. Winter, "The 'Underlays' of Conflict and Compromise," in *Paul and the Corinthians*, 154. The inside quotation is originally from Patricia A. Rosenmeyer, *Ancient Epistolary Fictions: The Letter in Greek Literature* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 343.

that the expression of “Christian family” would be an acceptable alternative for Paul’s everyday use of ἀδελφοί (“brothers [and sisters]”).⁴⁹³

Nevertheless, Paul’s language of family is not limited to sibling terms.⁴⁹⁴ Even more impressive is the number of times that parent-child descriptions appear in the Corinthian correspondence.⁴⁹⁵ In 1 Corinthians 4:14–17 (cf. 2 Cor 6:13; 12:14), Paul portrays himself as a father to the young Corinthian community, depicted as children troubled by multiple factions.⁴⁹⁶ He presents Timothy, his faithful child in Christ, as an exemplar to resolve conflicts.⁴⁹⁷ He hopes that Timothy will encourage the Corinthians to work out their issues in his place. Paul assumes that Timothy, his dear child in the Lord, the best representation and imitator of Christ and him, would become a living example to the rest of the Corinthians for the building up of the family (vv.16–17).⁴⁹⁸ He admonishes his Corinthian children to avoid self-inflated talks but centers on efficacious actions in the household of God (vv.18–20; cf. 4:6–7). He anticipates that the Corinthians would conduct themselves and become well-pleased children who await his return with fatherly affection (v.21).

Earlier in the letter, Paul even alludes to the nursing-mother imagery to describe how he has fed the teachings of God gently like a mother would nurse infants with milk (3:1–2; cf. 14:20).⁴⁹⁹ The rhetoric of feeding milk affirms Paul’s reliance upon familial bonds of affection established by Christ’s

⁴⁹³ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 114, 120. Aasgaard, *My Beloved Brothers and Sisters*, 7–8. Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 58–63.

⁴⁹⁴ Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 93–9.

⁴⁹⁵ Lim identifies 211 children and childhood-related terminologies; 33 percent of them in the Corinthian correspondence; see *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 96–7. Aasgaard, “Paul as a Child,” 134–5. Also “τέκνον,” in BDAG, 994–995; Otto Bauernfeind, “παῖς, παιδίον, παιδάριον, τέκνον, τεκνίον, βρέφος,” *TDNT* 5:636–727; Gerhard Schneider, “τέκνον,” *EDNT* 3:341–2.

⁴⁹⁶ Goulder, *Paul*. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 368–379. Stanley E. Porter, *Paul and His Opponents*, *Pauline Studies* 2 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2009). Kwon, *1 Corinthians 1–4*, 14–58. Mark T. Finney, *Honour and Conflict*. Rice, *Paul and Patronage*, 10–25. Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 193–6.

⁴⁹⁷ See the reference that Timothy is portrayed as a brother and servant of the Lord (e.g., 2 Cor 1:1; 1 Thess 3:2).

⁴⁹⁸ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 368–379. Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 94–5. Aasgaard, *My Beloved Brothers and Sisters*, 124.

⁴⁹⁹ Cf. 1 Thessalonians 2:6–8. McNeel, *Paul as Infant*. Birge, *The Language of Belonging*, 7–13.

χάρις (3:10–11). Paul intends to assist the Corinthian children in recognizing God’s χάρις in Christ and in striving to grow into spiritual maturity and build up the body of Christ (cf. 2:12; 14:1, 26).⁵⁰⁰ He further acts as a responsible father and instructs his household about social, moral, and spiritual issues that are harmful to their character: sexual immorality (5:1–13); the lawsuit against fellow Christians (6:1–20); proper marital relations and other problems (1 Cor 7:1–40); food offered to the idols (8:1–11:1); how to share the Lord’s meal at home worthily (11:2–16); how to cherish spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit in the household of God (12:1–14:40); a warning so that they might not be ignorant of the Christ-gift in death and resurrection as the foundation of their new life in the Holy Spirit (15:1–58).⁵⁰¹

The next canonical letter, 2 Corinthians, becomes even more personal and filled with emotions that can only be explained through the existing familial bonds of affection.⁵⁰² In 2:1–4, Paul recalls his painful visit and “a tearful letter” resulting from a rejection of his preaching.⁵⁰³ The emotional pains reveal that Paul is overwhelmed by the feelings of being alienated from his children, the Corinthian family.⁵⁰⁴ As a worried father, Paul wrestles with the uncertainty of his future with the Corinthians in 6:11–13. He earnestly asks that the Corinthians open their hearts toward him, as would loving children to their parents.⁵⁰⁵ Then, having learned that the Corinthian children responded gratefully and respectfully to Titus’s mission on his behalf, Paul bursts into joy; he rejoices over Titus’s return, the repentance of the offenders, and his renewed confidence in his Corinthian children (7:2–16). He but

⁵⁰⁰ Yarbrough, “Parents and Children,” 126–141. Aasgaard, “Like a Child,” 263–4. John David Penniman, *Raised on Christian Milk: Food and the Formation of the Soul in Early Christianity*, Synkrisis, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017), 204. Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 64–8. Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 120–7.

⁵⁰¹ Finney, *Honour and Conflict*. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 32–41. Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 94.

⁵⁰² Frank J. Matera, *II Corinthians: A Commentary*, New Testament Library (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 1.

⁵⁰³ 2 Cor 2: 9; 7:8, 12. For a discussion on “the severe letter” and “the painful visit,” see Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 3–8, 54–9.

⁵⁰⁴ Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 328.

⁵⁰⁵ Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 94.

counts all as God's χάρις flowing from the Father of mercies and God of all consolation (7:6–7, 9, 12–13; 12:9 cf. 1:3–5).⁵⁰⁶

He reassures the Corinthians that his unwavering fatherly love for them is not because he might gain worldly benefits from them (2 Cor 12:14–15).⁵⁰⁷ Instead, he declares that he is a caring father who lays no burdens on his children but willingly makes sacrifices for their spiritual benefit (12:15–18).⁵⁰⁸ His attitude towards the Corinthians stands apart from the usual social expectations of patron-client and benefactor-beneficiary relations, in which patrons and benefactors often seek extra honor and benefits from their clients and beneficiaries.⁵⁰⁹ The reminiscence of his hardships for the Corinthian children and the experiences of inner joy communicate Paul's deep familial bonds of affection with his spiritual children in Corinth.⁵¹⁰ In 2 Corinthians 6:18, Paul calls to mind that all Christ-followers are children of God. This designation reveals Paul's self-perception as a child of God.

Throughout the Corinthian correspondence, Paul sees both himself and his communities as children of God by acclaiming God as Father and Jesus Christ as Lord (1 Cor 1:3; 8:6; 15:24).⁵¹¹ In particular; many have declared that 1 Corinthians 8:6a (cf. 15:24) functions as a Christian Shema.⁵¹² It

⁵⁰⁶ 2 Cor 1:3–7; 7:5–7, 13. Scott J. Hafemann, "The Comfort and Power of the Gospel: The Argument of 2 Corinthians 1–3," *RevExp* 86, no. 3 (1989): 325–44. Jonathan Kaplan, "Comfort, O Comfort, Corinth: Grief and Comfort in 2 Corinthians 7:5–13a," *HTR* 104, no. 4 (2011): 433–45, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0017816011000393>.

⁵⁰⁷ Matera, *II Corinthians*, 294. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 881–8.

⁵⁰⁸ For a discussion of the sufferings that he had already endured in his apostolic ministry; see Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 887–8. Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ*.

⁵⁰⁹ Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 328. Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 341–2. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 63. Massinelli offers a length treatment about abusive behavior in patronal relations, *For Your Sake*, 43–111. Cynthia Damon, *The Mask of the Parasite: A Pathology of Roman Patronage* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1997).

⁵¹⁰ In 2 Cor 7:5, Paul alludes to the hardship that he had endured: "For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest but we were afflicted at every turn—fighting without and fear within." The catalogues of Paul's suffering in Corinthian Correspondence: 1 Cor 4:9–13; 2 Cor 4:7–12; 6:4–10; 11:23–29; 12:10. Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ*, 1.

⁵¹¹ Cf. 2 Cor 1–3; 11:30. Aasgaard, *My Beloved Brothers and Sisters*, 24–29, 306–12; Burke, *Family Matters*, 27–28, 250–56.

⁵¹² Erik Waaler, *The Shema and the First Commandment in First Corinthians: An Intertextual Approach to Paul's Re-Reading of Deuteronomy*, WUNT 2/253 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 27–48, 120–2, 440–6.

sums up Paul's beliefs about God, who is One, the Father of all, Creator of all things, and the goal of the Christian experience.⁵¹³ For Paul, everything the believers have received comes from God and is offered through Jesus Christ (1:4; 4:7).

First of all, Jesus Christ is the greatest gift of God's love to humanity and graciously given for humanity. In turn, Jesus offers himself on the cross and grants the life-giving spirit (πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν) because he was raised on the third day and secured victory over death (1:4–7; 12:1–11, 31; 15:1–58). In 1 Corinthians 15:24–28 (cf. 8:6b), Paul expounds that his apostolic preaching in itself is a gift of the Christ-gift because it is grounded in the reality of Jesus's death and resurrection. Therefore, he recognizes that his preaching of the gospel is a divine χάρις and empowered by Christ's χάρις ("the life-giving spirit [πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν]"; 15:45) for the mission of witnessing to the Risen Lord (15:1–11).

Paul even confesses that he had lived childishly in his former ways of life before fully acknowledging God's greatest gift of Christ's love in the eschatological age (1 Cor 13:11–12; cf. 12:1–31).⁵¹⁴ He describes it in this way: "[w]hen I was a child [νήπιος], I spoke like a child [ὡς νήπιος]; I thought like a child [ὡς νήπιος], I reasoned like a child [ὡς νήπιος]; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways [τὰ τοῦ νηπίου]" (13:11).

Now, however, Paul renounces his childish ways of life and fully embraces them because of the more lavish gifts, the Christ-gift in God's love (1 Cor 12–13).⁵¹⁵ He exhorts his Corinthian family to do likewise, "strive for the greater gifts" (τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ μείζονα; 12:31) and to perfect their gifts in love

⁵¹³ In Corinthians 8:1–13 Paul's main argument deals with the practical issue concerning meat offered to idols. D. A. Carson, *Commentary on The New Testament Use of The Old Testament*, G. K. Beale (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2007), 717–8; Cristian Cardozo Mindiola, "God the Father, Lord Jesus Christ and Their Interrelationship: 1 Corinthians 8:6 as a Test Case," *TheolXaver* 69, no. 188 (2019): 1–27. 4–9.

⁵¹⁴ See "νήπιος," in BDAG, 671; Georg Bertram, "νήπιος," *TDNT* 4:911–23. Although Aasgaard has a detailed discussion concerning Paul's use of child concerning love, he did not consider Paul's comparison between God's spiritual gifts and God's love in the Christ-gift; "Paul as a Child," 145–6.

⁵¹⁵ See the discussion of the χάρις of Christ as an enactment of God's love by Barclay, *Paul*, 449–52, 475, 477, 478–9. 515–6, 522–3, 565–6.

(13:1–7). Paul believes that to live in God’s love shown through Christ’s χάρις is the more excellent way to cherish all God’s spiritual gifts (τὰ χαρίσματα; cf. 1 Cor 12–14).⁵¹⁶

To show how to live a life for the building up the body of Christ (12:12), Paul asserts that he dies every day in Jesus’s death (cf. 4:9; 15:31; cf. 2 Cor 4:10–12; 6:9) so that he might offer a life-giving spirit in Christ’s resurrection for those under his care (15:30, 42–58).⁵¹⁷ In 2 Corinthians 4:10–12, he clarifies: “[We are] always carrying in the body the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. For while we live, we are always being given up to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you” (cf. Rom 8:35–37; Phil 3:10).

Because of this, throughout the Corinthian correspondence, Paul renounces worldly honors, powers, and even the rights of being an apostle (1 Cor 4:9–13; 9:1–15). Instead, he has chosen to preach the gospel like a “fool” (μωρός) and live in impoverishment for the sake of Christ (4:9–10). It is because God’s χάρις is sufficient for him and because in his weakness, the power of God has made him strong (2 Cor 12:9–10). He hopes that in sharing in Christ’s weakness, he will show the Corinthian children how to live a life by the power of God (2 Cor 13:4).

It is worthy of quoting Aasgaard’s reflection about Paul’s self-understanding of child and servant for the service of the gospel.

Paul was a child of his time, clearly reflecting current notions on children and childhood. But he was also an adult in his time, able to have his own say vis-à-vis traditional attitudes, capable of putting himself in the place of others, in this case particularly of children, and even willing to renounce his power in accordance with his understanding of Christ as a model for Christian service.⁵¹⁸

⁵¹⁶ David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, ECNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 606–28.

⁵¹⁷ Douglas Dales, *Living through Dying: the Spiritual Experience of St. Paul* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1994), 8–12.

⁵¹⁸ Aasgaard, “Paul like Child,” 249.

Paul's self-portrait as a child and servant indicates his versatility in employing the parent-child language to describe his apostolic ministry. More importantly, it reveals that parent-child language is not a standalone expression but rather a means to communicate apostolic service entrusted to him for the good of the Corinthian family according to the overflowing divine χάρις in Christ (1:4; 3:10; 15:10–11). It explains why Paul expects the Corinthian family to distinguish themselves from the outside world because they have a God the Father of all who demonstrates a new life in the Christ-gift and enriches them with various χαρίσματα (2 Cor 6:14–7:1; 1 Cor 12–14).⁵¹⁹ Lastly, he encourages the Corinthian children to recognize Christ's χάρις (generous act) and eagerly reciprocate with χάρις (gratitude; e.g., in 2 Cor 8–9).

Therefore, Paul not only employs parent-child imageries but also harnesses the Hellenistic notion of χάρις to share his message of God's graciousness and kindness in giving the Christ-gift to the Christian family. Χάρις often occurs in the phrases like "the χάρις of Christ" or a more extended version, "the χάρις of our Lord Jesus Christ," and "the χάρις of God" or simply "his χάρις."⁵²⁰ For Paul, χάρις speaks of God's gracious act and reflects the generous nature of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.⁵²¹ The person of Jesus is the fundamental χάρις (gift) of God (or the Christ-gift) given to unworthy humanity.⁵²² More significantly, "[t]he event of Christ's death and resurrection is unequivocally *the* divine gift by which the divine-human relationship is [re-established]."⁵²³

⁵¹⁹ Barclay, *Paul*, especially 331–3. McFarland, *God and Grace*, 104. Abera Mengestu, "God as Father in Paul: A Study of Kinship Language and Identity Formation in Early Christianity" (Ph.D. diss.; ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2011), 330.

⁵²⁰ Luter, "Grace," 373.

⁵²¹ Ibid. McFarland, *God and Grace*, 147–8.

⁵²² McFarland, *God and Grace*, 148.

⁵²³ Ibid.

Specifically, the Corinthian correspondence exhibits Paul's most prolific uses of χάρις, including all three fundamental meanings: gratuity, graciousness, and gratitude.⁵²⁴ Moreover, χάρις is a central Pauline concept that covers a variety of reciprocal and non-reciprocal relations in human and divine spheres.⁵²⁵ Massinelli describes: "God's χάρις is, therefore, God's goodwill, God's gift of salvation to humans, and human empowerment from God. These meanings, we need to add, in accordance with Greek usage, χάρις as the human expression of gratitude for God's gifts (e.g., Rom 6:17; 1 Cor 15:17; 2 Cor 2:14)."⁵²⁶

Furthermore, 2 Corinthians 7:13–16 conveys two accompanying features of χάρις-reciprocity, namely the sense of honor and the enjoyment of the long-term relationship between parents and children. In addition, God's χάρις shown in Christ has empowered Paul in his apostolic mission by comforting him in his hardships, for which he is even more thankful (χάρις; e.g., 15:1–11, 57).⁵²⁷ On account of Christ's χάρις, Paul is full of χάρις (gratitude) and dedicates himself more fervently to the apostolic service (e.g., 1 Cor 15:10–11, 57; cf. 4:8–13; 9:1ff.).⁵²⁸

Χάρις and Five Essential Features of Familial Reciprocity

Overall, we may characterize Paul's use of χάρις in the following five essential features concerning familial reciprocity and the Corinthian correspondence. First, Paul perceives that his apostolic preaching is a divine χάρις shown through the Christ-gift for the service of the Corinthian family (1:3–4; 3:10;

⁵²⁴ See a complete diagram illustrated by Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 143. Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 113–9, 224–32. DeSilva, "Patronage and Reciprocity," 32–84.

⁵²⁵ Conzelmann, *TDNT* 9:393; Spicq, *TLNT* 3:500–6. Crook, *Recapitalising Conversion*, 144–8. Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 113–4, 224–6.

⁵²⁶ Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 226.

⁵²⁷ 2 Cor 1:3–11; 2:14; 4:14–16; 8:16; 9:15; 12:9; 13:4. Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ*. Timothy B. Savage, *Power through Weakness: Paul's Understanding of the Christian Ministry in 2 Corinthians*, SNTSMS 86 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996). For a similar idea in the letter to the Philippians: e.g., L. Gregory Bloomquist, "Subverted by Joy: Suffering and Joy in Paul's Letter to the Philippians," *Int* 61, no. 3 (2007): 270–83.

⁵²⁸ 1 Cor 1:4; 10: 30–33; 15:57; 2 Cor 2:14; 8:16; 9:15; cf. Rom 6:17; 7:25.

15:10).⁵²⁹ Subsequently, his self-reference as a “father” (4:15), a nursing mother (3:1–3), and even an “untimely born” [child] (15:8), among other family-related terms (e.g., servant and steward in 4:1–2) are communicated through the notion of χάρις and the first-century social ethos of reciprocity. Before assigning himself to the role of a “father” (1 Cor 4:15), Paul acknowledges that he is merely a gifted servant and steward of Christ (1 Cor 3:10; 4:1–2). He is a helper who works in God’s field and is a skilled builder for God’s building project (cf. 3:5–17).⁵³⁰

In 1 Corinthians 4:1–2 (cf. 2 Cor 6:4), Paul gratefully calls himself a servant (ὕπηρέτης) and a steward (οἰκονόμος) of Christ.⁵³¹ Lim rightfully includes Paul’s self-designation of servant or slave in familial imagery since servants and slaves are part of the household/family in the Graeco-Roman societies.⁵³² Paul insists that his apostolic ministry is a vocation to preach the gospel by employing socially unappealing occupations. He maintains that his vocation as an apostle is for service to his Corinthian family (cf. 4:15), not a position competing for public social honors (3:21; 4:6–7).⁵³³ In reality, however, his apostolic service has brought him dishonor (4:10). He was regarded as a spectacle and a

⁵²⁹ Paul’s language of grace in Pauline letters: grace and its cognates occur 28 times in Corinthian letters, out of 100 times in Pauline letters. Luter, “Grace,” 372. Klaus Berger, “χάρις,” “χάρισμα,” “χαριτόω,” *EDNT* 3:45–7; Spicq, *TLNT* 3:500–6; and other related words, e.g., “δωρεά,” in BDAG, 266–7; Friedrich Büchsel, “δωρεά,” *TDNT* 2:166–73. Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace*, 2–3, 280–2. Crook, “Grace as Benefaction,” 25–38. Barclay, *Paul*, 183–88, 575–82.

⁵³⁰ Grace or gifts are given to Paul for the divine project; McFarland, *God and Grace*, 156.

⁵³¹ Paul’s self-designations as a slave of Christ in 1 Cor 9:16–23; cf. Rom 1:1; Phil 1:1; Gal 1:10. His refers himself as “a slave to all,” which functions as rhetorical *topos* of a public servant or enslaved leader; see 1 Cor 3:5; 9:19–23; 2 Cor 4:5.

⁵³² Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 130–2. Birge, *The Language of Belonging*, 23–7. See further discussions on Paul’s language of servant/slave see, Dale B. Martin, *Slavery as Salvation: The Metaphor of Slavery in Pauline Christianity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990). John Byron, “Slave of Christ or Willing Servant? Paul’s Self-Description in 1 Corinthians 4:1–2 and 9:16–18,” *Neot* 37, no. 2 (2003): 179–98; John K. Goodrich, *Paul as an Administrator of God in 1 Corinthians*, SNTSMS 152 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Murray J. Harris, *Slave of Christ: A New Testament Metaphor for Total Devotion to Christ*, NSBT 8 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 15–7; Andrew D. Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership*, LNTS 362 (New York: T & T Clark, 2008), 95–102; J. Albert Harrill, “Paul and Slavery,” in *PGRW* 2:301–45. Joseph C. Myung, “Servant Leadership in Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians” (Ph.D. diss., Dallas, TX: Dallas Baptist University, 2014), 39–40.

⁵³³ Dale B. Martin, “The Enslaved Leader as a Rhetorical *Topos*,” in *Slavery as Salvation: The Metaphor of Slavery in Pauline Christianity* (New Have, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 86–116. Horrell, *The Social Ethos*, 135. Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 15, 103, 105–6, 109.

fool in the eyes of the world (4:11–13).⁵³⁴ Therefore, he strives to be worthy in the eyes of the Lord Whom he serves (4:2; cf. 15:10) and to Whose judgment he surrenders (4:3–5).⁵³⁵

Moreover, Crook observes that the χάρις in 3:10 and elsewhere have been carelessly translated and lost their first-century cultural connotations of reciprocity.⁵³⁶ Nevertheless, the first-century χάρις conveys a strong sense of reciprocal relationships as graciously giving and gratefully reciprocating.⁵³⁷ Similarly, Harrison argues that Paul’s language of grace is grounded in the social ethos of reciprocity, like the Hellenistic benefaction.⁵³⁸ Both concur that Paul’s language of grace is embedded in various social practices of reciprocity.

Harrison concludes that the notion of “χάρις provided Paul the opportunity to interact with the prevalent ethos of reciprocity and to formulate his radical theological and social alternative to the Graeco-Roman benefaction system.”⁵³⁹ He believes that “[f]or Paul, then, God’s grace ushered His dependents into a servant community that continued to experience the loving kindness of its Benefactor. In this respect, Paul’s language of grace accumulates around three themes: thanksgiving, apostleship, and the χαρίσματα.”⁵⁴⁰ Fittingly, Paul believes that his calling to be an apostle is a gift of God in Christ (1 Cor 3:10; cf. 15:8–10). Moreover, the gift of his apostleship is bestowed by a gracious God who by nature is a generous giver and source of all χάρις.⁵⁴¹ For this reason, he is forever grateful for the blessings willed (1:4–9; 2 Cor 2–11; 4:15).⁵⁴²

⁵³⁴ Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 105–9.

⁵³⁵ McFarland, *God and Grace*, 103, 167.

⁵³⁶ Crook, “Grace as Benefaction,” 25–38.

⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁵³⁸ Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace*, 1–3.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid.*, 285, 287.

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 268.

⁵⁴¹ 1 Cor 8:6; cf. 10:30–33; 2 Cor 8:1–9, 19; 9:15.

⁵⁴² 1 Cor 1:4; 15:10–11; 15:57; 2 Cor 2:14; 8:16; 9:15. Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, SP 7 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 155, 538. Although McFarland like Barclay excludes the modern notion of “free” gift in biblical studies, he does confirm the incongruous generosity of God in bestowing the invaluable gift of

Moreover, Crook maintains that “[i]n Cor 3:10, Paul suggests the God gave him a χάρις, that this χάρις, acted as a foundation, and that ‘that foundation is Jesus Christ.’”⁵⁴³ In an exact manner, Paul emphasizes that Jesus Christ is the origin of his spiritual fatherhood to the Corinthians through the gospel of Jesus Christ (4:15b).⁵⁴⁴ Moreover, the χάρις that Paul received entails a salvific vision. A vision invites him to share in Christ’s mission to advance the experience of the divine χάρις in his life in the eschatological age.⁵⁴⁵

After all, Paul finds himself like an “untimely born” (ἐκτρωμα; 15:8; cf. 4:9). This unflattering self-description illuminates that his apostolic service as a gift has not resulted from his moral or spiritual worthiness. It is God He who gratuitously grants him the χάρις (favor) to share Christ’s mission regardless of his childish and unworthy ways of life in the former days (1 Cor 13:11; 15:10–11).⁵⁴⁶ It was the same χάρις (favor) shown to the original apostles (15:3–6). Although despicable and unimpressive in the eyes of the world (1 Cor 2:1–5; 4:8–13; cf. 2 Cor 11:6, 12:7),⁵⁴⁷ he has become a valued instrument in the eyes of God for the service of the gospel.⁵⁴⁸ He understands that his apostleship is not a means to power but a responsibility to provide fatherly care for his Corinthian family. Therefore, Paul’s calling of the Corinthians to imitate him—construed by some as Paul’s claim for dominance—must be re-

apostleship upon Paul, *God and Grace*, 147, 156–61, 171–6. Kathy Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power: Communication and Interaction in the Early Christ-Movement*, LNTS 325 (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2007), 90–1.

⁵⁴³ Crook, “Grace as Benefaction,” 37.

⁵⁴⁴ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 370.

⁵⁴⁵ Crook, “Grace as Benefaction,” 37.

⁵⁴⁶ Cf. Gal 1:13; Phil 3:6; Acts 9:1–5, 22:7–8; 26:14–15. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1066–7, 1210–1. McFarland, *God and Grace*, 172–5. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 623, 690–5.

⁵⁴⁷ A lot of ink has been spilled on the precise meaning of 1 Corinthians 2:3–5; meaningful discussions are offered by, Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 122–4; Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 213–23.

⁵⁴⁸ Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 127–30.

evaluated in light of Paul's self-identification as a gifted servant and the graced child of God the Father.⁵⁴⁹

Second, Paul carefully delineates God's various spiritual gifts (τὰ χαρίσματα) in the life of each Corinthian family member (1 Cor 12–14). The superabundant χαρίσματα remind them of God's χάρις so that they might be grateful, lest they act foolishly by boasting about their giftedness as personal achievements (3.21; 4:6–7, 18, 19; 12:1–3). Just as he enjoys that his apostolic preaching is a divine χάρις bestowed to witness the Risen Lord for the salvation of the Corinthian family (3:10; 15:3–10), so also the various χαρίσματα (12:1–31a) are the gifts of Holy Spirit conferred on all Corinthians to grow to maturity and become One Body in Christ (12:24b–14:5).⁵⁵⁰

Moreover, Paul recognizes that to love is a more excellent way to cherish God's χαρίσματα.⁵⁵¹ In the *encomium* on love in 1 Cor 13:1–13, he advocates that love is the greatest of all God's gifts (τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ μείζονα).⁵⁵² Thus, he instructs how various spiritual gifts ought to work together for building up the body of Christ (12:1–30).⁵⁵³ He then urges the Corinthian children to strive for the more excellent gifts of love and to integrate these gifts into a still more extraordinary way of love to relish

⁵⁴⁹ For "imitation" terminology in Pauline letters: (1). μιμητής γενέσθαι ("to become an imitator"), 1 Thes 1:6; 2:14; 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; Eph 5:1; (2). μιμεῖσθαι ("to imitate"), 2 Thes 3:7, 9; (3). συμμιμηταὶ γενέσθαι ("to become imitators together"), Phil 3:17. Koontz, "The Imitation of Paul," 1–33. Castelli, *Imitating Paul*, 98–111, 115–17. Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 144–6; Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 371–3; Fiore and Blanton, "Paul," 169–95; Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 112–4. Others: Andrew D. Clarke, "Be Imitators of Me': Paul's Model of Leadership," *TynBul* 49 (1998): 329–360; Ehrensperger, "Be Imitators of Me," 241–61; Aasgaard, "Paul as a Child," 130; Harrison, "The Imitation," 213–254.

⁵⁵⁰ Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 341–2. Max Turner, "Spiritual Gifts and Spiritual Formation in 1 Corinthians and Ephesians," *JPT* 22, no. 2 (2013): 187–205, <https://doi.org/10.1163/17455251-02202007>.

⁵⁵¹ Jeremy Corley, "The Pauline Authorship of 1 Corinthians 13," *CBQ* 66, no. 2 (April 2004): 256–74. Russell Morton, "Gifts in the Context of Love: Reflections on 1 Corinthians 13," *ATJ* 31 (1999): 11–24. Willem Cornelis van Unnik, "The Meaning of 1 Corinthians 12:31," *NovT* 35, no. 2 (1993): 142–59.

⁵⁵² Spicq, "ἀγάπη," *TLNT* 1:8–22; Ethelbert Stauffer, *TDNT* 1:21–55; Gerhard Schneider, *EDNT* 1:8–12. William Klassen, "Love," *ABD* 4:392–3. Roger Mohrlang, "Love," *DPL*, 575–8. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1024. Morton, "Gifts in the Context of Love," 11–24. Corley, "The Pauline Authorship," 256–74. Stephen J. Patterson, "A Rhetorical Gem in a Rhetorical Treasure: The Origin and Significance of 1 Corinthians 13:4–7," *BTB* 39, no. 2 (2009): 87–94, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146107909103882>.

⁵⁵³ Van Unnik, "The Meaning," 142–59.

God's gifts (12:31; cf. 14:1),⁵⁵⁴ for he knows well that there was a time when he was not fully grateful of God's χάρις in Christ. He even acted childishly and ungratefully toward the divine χάρις overflowing through Christ (13:11; 15:8–9). Therefore, he wants the Corinthian children to be informed about his previous naiveté and make every effort to perfect God's χαρίσματα in love with χάρις (gratitude; cf. 15:57–58).

Third, the introductory thanksgiving (εὐχαριστέω; sometimes χάρις) in 1 Corinthians 1:3–9 (cf. 2 Cor 1:2–11) functions as more than just an epistolary formula.⁵⁵⁵ David W. Pao contends that Pauline thanksgivings are God-centered prayers, even though they may resemble the formal structure of the ancient letters.⁵⁵⁶ Paul's thanksgiving (εὐχαριστέω) is grounded in God's χάρις bestowed through Christ.⁵⁵⁷ The prayer conveys the verbal articulation of Paul's χάρις (gratitude) toward God's χάρις (graciousness and favors) through the Christ-gift in the eschatological age. Moreover, Paul is thankful not only for himself but also for his Corinthian family; "I give thanks to my God *for you* [εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ μου πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν] ..." (v.4). From the perspective of familial reciprocity, he acts as a grateful father who utters his χάρις (gratitude) toward Christ's χάρις of bestowed upon the Corinthian family entrusted to him (3:10–23).

Furthermore, A. Boyd Luter Jr. discerns that χάρις appears in the opening thanksgiving and the concluding benediction in all Pauline letters without exception.⁵⁵⁸ The twenty-six occurrences tell us that χάρις should not be treated merely as a Pauline style but rather an intent of expressing his genuine

⁵⁵⁴ Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 605–27.

⁵⁵⁵ It is worthy of noting that both χάρις and εὐχομαι derive from the same stem and are closely related and often used interchangeably or together by Paul (e.g., 1 Cor 1:4; 15:57; 2 Cor 2:14; 8:16; 9:15; cf. Rom 6:17; 7:25; 1 Tim 1:12; Tim 1:3; 12:28; Lk 17:19). See Spicq, *TLNT* 3:500–6; Conzelmann, *TDNT* 9:372–99, 406–14; Hermann Patsch, "χάρις," *EDNT* 2:87–8; LSJ, 1978–9; Christian Wolff, "Thanksgiving," *ABD* 6:435–8. O'Brien, *Introductory Thanksgivings*, 107–40. Collins, *First Corinthians*, 143–4.

⁵⁵⁶ Pao, *Thanksgiving*, 33–8. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 84–7.

⁵⁵⁷ Robert J. Ledogar, *Acknowledgement: Praise-Verbs in the Early Greek Anaphora* (Roma: Herder, 1968), 91–2. William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, WBC 46 (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 10.

⁵⁵⁸ Luter, "Grace," 373.

χάρις (gratitude) toward God's bountiful χάρις in Christ throughout each letter.⁵⁵⁹ Therefore, as a thankful prayer, 1 Corinthians 1:3–9 and 2 Corinthians 1:2–11 set the tone for the Corinthian correspondence to be the verbal expressions of χάρις (gratitude) for all the bountiful χάρις that God has bestowed on them.⁵⁶⁰

Likewise, Paul expresses his χάρις (gratitude; 15:57) for God's unparalleled χάρις in Christ's death and resurrection (15:1–11). Jesus Christ is the first fruit[s] of resurrection (ἀπαρχή Χριστός) and the life-giving spirit (πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν) for all believers because his resurrection has conquered sin and death (15:20–56). Therefore, Paul urges the Corinthians to “be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord [their] labor is not in vain” (15:58).

Notwithstanding, Paul's exhortation is not based on his optimism but on his real experiences in his apostolic ministry.⁵⁶¹ He voices his χάρις (gratitude) for God's χάρις of consolation in distressful circumstances (2 Cor 2:12–13) and for keeping him authentic in his apostolic preaching (2 Cor 2:14–16).⁵⁶² Collins summarizes three main points of Paul's χάρις (gratitude): (1). Paul understands that he is an instrument of God's mission in Christ; (2). Christ's χάρις is the anchor of this divine operation; hence,

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid., 374. Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ*, 67–8. See an analysis of Pauline grace in opening thanksgiving and closing benediction in the letter of Galatians by Barclay, which is analogous to the Corinthian letters: *Paul*, 331–3.

⁵⁶⁰ Pao, *Thanksgiving*, 81–5. Cf. Barclay, *Paul*, 331–3.

⁵⁶¹ The publication on this topic is vast. Just name a few, esp., a gainful review of the history of scholarship and treatment of 2:14–16 by Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ*, 25; 64–96; Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 235–40; McFarland, *God and Grace*, 203. Further readings: Scott J. Hafemann, “The Comfort and Power of the Gospel: The Argument of 2 Corinthians 1–3,” *RevExp* 86, no. 3 (1989): 325–44; *Suffering and Ministry in the Spirit: Paul's Defense of His Ministry in II Corinthians 2:14–3:3* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990). A. E. Harvey, *Renewal through Suffering: A Study of 2 Corinthians*, SNTW (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996). Savage, *Power through Weakness*. Roger D. Aus, *Imagery of Triumph and Rebellion in 2 Corinthians 2: 4–17 and Elsewhere in the Epistle: An Example of the Combination Graeco-Roman and Judaic Traditions in the Apostle Paul*, Studies in Judaism (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005).

⁵⁶² Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ*, 96.

his consolations of joy; (3). God always empowers His apostles and apostolic ministries to overcome any obstacles without failing so that apostolic life is now modeled after Christ's death and resurrection.⁵⁶³

For these reasons, Paul recognizes that the Christ-gift has shaped his life in sharing Christ's death and resurrection.⁵⁶⁴ Therefore, his apostolic sufferings continue to embody and re-enact the patterns of the Christ-gift in his death on the cross and to be raised in Christ's resurrection by the power of God (cf. 2 Cor 4:7–12; 6:9–10; 13:4). In this way, as the message of Christ's death and resurrection spreads, the apostolic preaching “may increase thanksgiving [τὴν εὐχαριστίαν], to the glory of God [εἰς τὴν δόξαν τοῦ Θεοῦ]” (4:15). 2 Corinthians 4:15 is one of the clear instances where Paul points out the Corinthian children share the fruits of Christ's χάρις for God's honor and glory.⁵⁶⁵ Therefore, Paul gratefully gives thanks for God's χάρις empowering their apostolic mission and leading the apostolic preaching to the triumphant procession (2:14).

Fourth, in his collection discourse (2 Cor 8–9), Paul explains a Christ-centered χάρις-reciprocity in the divine gift-economy (esp., 8:1–9, 19–21; 9:8, 14–15).⁵⁶⁶ Paul's explications correspond to two tenets of Pitt-Rivers's grace-reciprocity. The first tenet of grace-reciprocity is that grace embodies a “free” gift that imposes no obligation to reciprocate but invites sincere exchanges of hearts.⁵⁶⁷ Next, grace relates to the sacred sphere and is independent of any form of gift-reciprocity.⁵⁶⁸ Consequently, grace enjoys an immutable value that increases all social interactions' value without diminishing its own

⁵⁶³ Collins, *First Corinthians*, 247–8. Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ*, 96.

⁵⁶⁴ Cf. 1 Cor 4:9–13; 2 Cor 4:7–12; 6:9–10; 12:9–10.

⁵⁶⁵ Paul's reference “for the glory of God” this is synonymous to honor: Rom 3:7; 15:7; 1 Cor 6: 10:31; 2 Cor 1:20; 4:15; 8:19; 9:15; Phil 1:11; 2:11. Ceslas Spicq, “δόξα, δοξάζω, συνδοξάζω,” *TLNT* 1:362–79; Gerhard Kittel, “δόξα,” *TDNT* 2:233–37, 242–55; in BDAG, 256–8. Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 14–15. “The Brothers as the ‘Glory of Christ’ (2 Cor 8:23) Paul's Doxa Terminology in Its Ancient Benefaction Context,” *NovT* 52, no. 2 (2010): 156–88.

⁵⁶⁶ Paul uses the χάρις refers to the collection (2 Cor 8:6–7, 19; cf. 1 Cor 16:3). Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 224–5, 232–44.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid., 93. He argues that “I believe that gratuity of the gift is no delusion; however much it may have been abused, it is still the essence not only of sacrifice but of everyday gestures of favor.”

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid., 79, and 83–4.

value.⁵⁶⁹ Therefore, grace-reciprocity is advantageous for unraveling the underlying principle of Paul's collection (the χάρις).

Looking at the discourse in detail, we can see that at the beginning, Paul invites the Corinthian children to demonstrate their χάρις (gratitude) by supporting the needy and Titus's ministry (8:13–23) on account that God's abundant χάρις in Christ has initiated a divine gift-economy (8:1–9, 19–24; 9:7–10, 11–15). In turn, their expressions of χάρις (gratitude) will be a proof of their love for others and increase the honor of the Lord and the glory of God (8:19, 23–24, 9:14–15). McFarland believes that the rationale of human beneficence is sufficient to communicate Paul's collection (the χάρις) in the divine economy: "grace is received to be given, and in the giving and receiving of gifts, relationships are created and sustained."⁵⁷⁰

However, Paul's logic of χάρις-reciprocity in the divine gift-economy is different from the *raison d'être* of human beneficence. Firstly, Christ's χάρις is independent of the Corinthians' generous undertaking (the χάρις). Rather, it is Christ's χάρις that originates the Corinthians' generous act (the χάρις) and guarantees their χάρις to be more generous with eagerness in the divine gift-economy (8:1–9). Secondly, the primary purpose of the Corinthians' generous undertaking (the χάρις) is to preserve the initial χάρις of Christ, a generous act of self-giving on the cross (1 Cor 1:17–18; 2:2; cf. Phil 2:8).⁵⁷¹ Meanwhile, their generous undertaking (the χάρις) brings forth a new relationship with the needy in the Jerusalem community (2 Cor 8:13–15; cf. 1 Cor 16:4). In return, this new relationship will increase the χάρις of both parties through giftship, that is, through their offering even more thanks to God (2 Cor 9:14–15).

⁵⁶⁹ Da Col and Shryock, in "A Perfect Host," xxv.

⁵⁷⁰ McFarland, *God and Grace*, 203. Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 228.

⁵⁷¹ 1 Cor 15:3; Gal 5:11; 6:12, 14; Phil 3:18; Heb 12:2. See "σταυρός," in BDAG, 941; Johannes Schneider, "σταυρός, σταυρώ, ἀνασταυρώ," *TDNT* 7:572–84; Heinz-Wolfgang Kuhn, "σταυρός," *EDNT* 3:267–71.

Thirdly, Paul insists that through sharing and imitating Christ's χάρις, the Corinthians are actual beneficiaries because they become more generous and grateful. He reminds the Corinthians that their generous undertaking (the χάρις) must be inspired by the generous spirit of Christ's χάρις, who gave himself entirely on the cross (1 Cor 1:17–18; 2:2; cf. Phil 2:8). It is why they must give cheerfully (τῇ καρδίᾳ; 9:7) and voluntarily (αὐθαίρετοι; 8:3, 17), with generosity (ἀπλότητος; 8:2; 9:11, 13) in the genuineness of love (ἀγάπης γνήσιον; 8:8) and eagerness (σπουδῇ; vv.7, 8, 16, 22).⁵⁷² Contrastingly, they ought to refrain from giving grudgingly or under compulsion (μὴ ἐκ λύπης ἢ ἐξ ἀνάγκης; 9:7), nor beyond their means (8:12). Moreover, their generous giving should not be agonistic or competing for worldly honors but rather a way to honor the Christ-gift and glorify God (8:19, 23–24; 9:13).⁵⁷³

Furthermore, their collection (the χάρις) is, indeed, only a demonstration of their χάρις (gratitude) since their χάρις will always be grounded in Christ's initial χάρις. From this perspective, when the Corinthians give more generously, their χάρις (gratitude) will increase accordingly. Additionally, the χάρις (the collection of gifts) of the Corinthians will inspire other believers to be grateful to God. Their χάρις is beneficial for others not only materially but also spiritually by multiplying the thanksgiving for the glory of the Lord and honor of God. In this logic of χάρις-reciprocity in the divine gift-economy, the Corinthian family, through their generous giving, is indeed enriched even more abundantly by their orientation toward God and partaking of Christ's χάρις (9:11–15).⁵⁷⁴ Therefore, it is natural that Paul exclaims: "Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!" to close his discourse. On top of that, we can assert that Paul's call to complete the collection (the χάρις) redefines the mechanisms of gift-reciprocity

⁵⁷² Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 554–5. Also, "αὐθαίρετος," in BDAG, 150; H. Leroy, "'αὐθαίρετος,'" *EDNT* 1:178; Otto Bauernfeind, "ἀπλότητος," *TDNT* 1:387; Friedrich Büchsel, *TDNT* "γνήσιος," 1:727; Günther Harder, "σπουδῇ," *TDNT* 7:559–67.

⁵⁷³ Joubert, "Religious Reciprocity," 57–68.

⁵⁷⁴ Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 343–4.

because the χάρις-reciprocity requires that the Christian family must orient toward the divine χάρις and preserve Christ's initial χάρις.⁵⁷⁵

Fifth, and finally, the divine χάρις manifested in the consolations in his apostolic suffering communicates the sense of honor and joy in a genuine parent-child relationship. In 2 Corinthians 7:13–16, Paul recaps that they rejoice more because Titus experienced a χαρά (joy) in his visit to Corinth to administer the collection (the χάρις; 2 Cor 8:19). Titus's χαρά (joy) and affection (σπλάγχνα) for the Corinthians have resulted from the Corinthians' gracious reception of him out of respect for Paul. In return, Paul is thankful for the Corinthian children who had acted gracefully. Paul reciprocates his χάρις (gratitude) joyfully (μετὰ χαρᾶς) and gives his stamp of approval of their χαρίεις conduct and expresses his good faith in them (ἐν παντί θαρρῶ; 2 Cor 7:16). Therefore, Paul, as the spiritual father, does value the χάρις-reciprocity with the highest regard, namely his reciprocity of hearts and the spirit of gift with his Corinthian children (2 Cor 7:2–16).

Therefore, Titus's delightful visit to Corinth has proven that the genuine parent-child bonds existed between them and are now strengthened by the joy and χάρις (gratitude) mutually experienced. Not only was Titus treated with respect, but it also reflected how Paul was acknowledged as their spiritual father and revered with the utmost honor (μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου). The χαρά (joy) that Paul and all his companions have felt is reciprocal and is a clear sign of familial bonds of affections. Moreover, the χαρά (joy) is one of the principal marks of χάρις-reciprocity. Hans Conzelmann notes that "χάρις is what delights."⁵⁷⁶ In ancient literature, the deity of Χάριτας is frequently equated with joy (χαρά).⁵⁷⁷ Pitt-Rivers notes that the sense of honor, the enjoyment of giving, and being in each other's presence are

⁵⁷⁵ Blanton, *A Spiritual Economy*, 131–3. McFarland, *God and Grace*, 224.

⁵⁷⁶ Conzelmann, *TDNT* 9:373; cf. Spicq, *TLNT* 3:500–6. Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 118–9.

⁵⁷⁷ See BDAG, 1079. Conzelmann, *TDNT* 9:373; Spicq, *TLNT* 3:500–6. Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 118–9. A detail discussion about the etymological connections and attributes of χάρις by van Berkel, *The Economics of Friendship*, 81–2.

often accompanied by generous gifts and gracious acts.⁵⁷⁸ These emotional aspects of familial bonds, namely the sense of honor and joy, are at the heart of χάρις-reciprocity and essential for long-term relationships.⁵⁷⁹

In summary, the attentive reading of Paul's Corinthian correspondence substantiates that Paul's parent-child language is inseparable from the standpoint of χάρις-reciprocity. Paul's language of parents/children and χάρις are crucial for understanding Paul's self-imagery as a father, nursing mother, child, and servant of God in connection to his apostolic preaching for the good of the Corinthian family. Moreover, these familial and reciprocal expressions brought forth the special bonds of affection that Paul and the Corinthian children enjoyed and shared, an extra sign of their longing for an enduring bond. Also, Paul makes use of parent-child terms and χάρις-reciprocity to resolve family conflicts, reshape their moral behaviors, and cherish their spiritual gifts with love in conformity with their newfound faith in Christ. Thirdly, Paul's descriptions of the Corinthian family bestowed with abundant χάρις are ideally reciprocal in human beneficence for the building up Christ's body. However, Christ's χάρις in the event of death and resurrection is unique and non-reciprocal because Jesus is the first fruit[s] of resurrection given for the salvation of all people in the eschatological age (1 Cor 15:20,23). Finally, bountiful, divine χάρις offered in Christ and through apostolic preaching challenge the Corinthian family to share in Christ's χάρις through an intensified χάρις (gratitude) and joyful giving.

This general survey of the Corinthian correspondence urges us to explore further the significance of χάρις-reciprocity for comprehending the parent-child bonds of affections and spiritual implications that we find explicitly expressed in 1 Corinthians 4:14–21.

I am not writing this to make you ashamed [ἐντρέπων], but to admonish [νουθετῶν] you as my beloved children [ὡς τέκνα μου ἀγαπητὰ]. For though you might have ten

⁵⁷⁸ Pitt-Rivers, "The Place of Grace," 91, 97–8. Da Col and Shryock, in "A Perfect Host," xxvi, xxix.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid., 90; van Berkel, *The Economics of Friendship*, passim.

thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers. Indeed, in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel [ἐν γὰρ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς ἐγέννησα]. I appeal [παρακαλῶ] to you, then, be imitators of me [μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε]. For this reason I sent you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind [ἀναμνήσει] you of my ways in Christ Jesus [τὰς ὁδούς μου τὰς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ], as I teach them [διδάσκω] everywhere in every church. But some of you, thinking that I am not coming to you, have become arrogant [ἐφυσιώθησάν]. But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk of these arrogant people [τὸν λόγον τῶν πεφυσιωμένων] but their power. For the kingdom of God depends not on talk but on power. What would you prefer? Am I to come to you with a stick, or with love in a spirit of gentleness? (NRSV)

B. “In Christ Jesus I Became Your Father through the Gospel” (1 Cor 4:15b)

This section will center on the roles of parents through familial reciprocity and apostolic preaching created and empowered by Christ’s χάρις relevant to 1 Corinthians 4:14–21. First, it will determine that Paul’s founding mission at Corinth and the loving care for his Corinthian children in their spiritual infancy authenticate that he is the first and generous giver who initiates the χάρις-reciprocity by the Christ-gift in the divine economy. He is a responsible father who acts honorably by offering moral and spiritual guidance in a time of family conflicts. Afterward, it will establish that Paul is an honorable father who provides evidence of his grateful heart in words and actions toward God’s χάρις (graciousness) with lavish gifts. Finally, it will conclude that as a participant of Christ’s χάρις, Paul has generously given of himself and demonstrated his χάρις (gratitude) honorably for the Corinthian family and in doing so has set a new example for the Corinthian children to imitate.

I. Paul is a Generous Giver, Loving Caregiver, and Responsible Father

In familial reciprocity, parents are their children’s initial and primary givers. Paul unequivocally declares his spiritual fatherhood (ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς ἐγέννησα) that has resulted from preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ (ἐν γὰρ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου; 4:15b). He believes that his apostolic ministry is to provide for the Corinthian family entrusted to him (1 Cor 1:12–4:21). Equally, his apostleship is, in itself, a divine χάρις in Christ that keeps on giving for the good of the Corinthian children (1 Cor 5–14). Therefore, Paul

gives himself unreservedly to the Corinthian family through his apostolic service of proclaiming and teaching the gospel and enduring hardships embodying Christ's death and resurrection (15:1–58).⁵⁸⁰

Paul is the First Giver and a Loving Caregiver to the Corinthian Children

Paul is a “father” to the Corinthians because he is the first one who presents the Christ-gift, that is, during his initial mission in Corinth. The insinuation of being the *first giver* becomes more perceptible when juxtaposing Paul's spiritual role with other ministers' roles: “For though you might have ten thousand guardians in Christ...” (ἐὰν γὰρ μυρίους παιδαγωγούς ἔχητε ἐν Χριστῷ, ἀλλ' οὐ πολλούς πατέρας; 4:15a). Therefore, Paul's founding activity at Corinth has made him a “father” *de facto* on account of his original “giving” of the Christ-gift to the Corinthians.⁵⁸¹

Garland notes that “[i]n Christ Jesus through the gospel” (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου; 4:15b) is a shorthand for the apostolic preaching of God's salvific acts in Christ's death and resurrection.⁵⁸² Paul alludes that he was the *first* one who preached the gospel of Christ in Corinth as the one laying a foundation “according to the gospel given me [κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι]” (3:10).⁵⁸³ So then, “someone else is building on it ... [f]or no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ [ὃς ἐστὶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός]” (3:10–11).⁵⁸⁴ Therefore, Paul's reference to “[i]n Christ Jesus through the gospel” (4:15b) directly connects his apostolic preaching to the χάρις of Christ, which makes him an apostle for proclaiming Christ's salvific act (3:10; cf. 1:4; 15:1–11).

⁵⁸⁰ 1 Cor 3:10; Gal 1:1; Rom 15:15; cf. Rom 1:5.

⁵⁸¹ McFarland, *God and Grace*, 158–9. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 309.

⁵⁸² Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 145. Thiselton contends that “The noun εὐαγγέλιον (see on 1:17) needs to be rendered in a verbal mode (through proclaiming the gospel) because in this context the reference to Paul's agency as one who brought life to the addressees means *through the gospel-as-proclaimed*, i.e., in the event of Paul's preaching and speaking”; *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 370.

⁵⁸³ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 308.

⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 309.

Moreover, McFarland contends that “according to the grace [τὴν χάριν] of God given to me” bespeaks the gift of apostleship to preach the gospel (1 Cor 3:10).⁵⁸⁵ Paul deems himself as a skilled master builder (ὡς σοφὸς ἀρχιτέκτων) who laid a foundation in Corinth as a gift for the Corinthian family (1 Cor 3:10–11; cf. 4:15b).⁵⁸⁶ Ehrensperger further clarifies the meaning of the unusual use of the hendiadys “grace and apostle” in Rom 1:5. She maintains that “[t]hus χάρις and ἀποστολή are intrinsically linked yet not because of the soteriological or christological content Paul attributes to χάρις but because this is how Paul perceives the service he is called to do—as a gift of God.”⁵⁸⁷

Paul later returns to the gift of his apostleship in preaching the gospel of Christ’s death and resurrection (15:1–11). This time he explicitly states that the Corinthians have become the recipients of this gift through the Christ-gift and his apostolic preaching (vv.1–2). Then, he carries on the discourse of Jesus’s death and resurrection to explicate that Jesus Christ is the first fruit of resurrection (ἀπαρχή Χριστός) that brings the life-giving spirit (πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν) to renew the world from sin and death (vv.3–58).

The discourse in 1 Corinthians 15 is considered the pinnacle of Paul’s exposition of God’s χάρις in the person of Jesus Christ and through the gift of apostolic service. Thiselton expounds: “This is because it brings to a climax the theme of *grace* as God’s sovereign free gift through the cross to which ‘the dead’ contribute no particular ‘knowledge’ or ‘experience,’ but do indeed undergo transformation of life and lifestyle through ‘God, who gives life to the dead’ (Rom 4:17) *on the basis of promise*.”⁵⁸⁸ His comment on χάρις as God’s sovereign free gift points to the non-reciprocal nature of the Christ-gift and God’s supreme generosity toward humanity. Although his remark does not attempt to address the

⁵⁸⁵ McFarland, *God and Grace*, 156, 158–9. Blanton, *A Spiritual Economy*, 136.

⁵⁸⁶ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 308–10.

⁵⁸⁷ Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power*, 91. McFarland, *God and Grace*, 157.

⁵⁸⁸ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1169.

anthropological and philosophical controversy of “free” gift, he is correct to state that Pauline χάρις is unique in describing the event of Christ’s death and resurrection.⁵⁸⁹

For Paul, Jesus Christ is the first fruit[s] (ἀπαρχή Χριστός) of the resurrection that is offered in thanksgiving to honor God (1 Cor 15:20–28).⁵⁹⁰ For this reason, Jesus has become the life-giving spirit (πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν) that triumphs over sin and death (15:29–56). As God’s χάρις, Christ is given to all people so that they might share in his life of resurrection.⁵⁹¹ Appropriately, Paul uses the typological parallel between Christ and Adam to accentuate how the Christ-gift brings life to the world while the sin in Adam leads humanity to death (v.22; cf. vv. 45–49). This χάρις of Christ—the first fruit from the dead—re-creates the world with a life-giving spirit and initiates all Christians into a divine gift-economy, which cannot be undone or done in reverse.⁵⁹² Hence, the Christ-gift as the first fruit of resurrection from death is, by nature, non-reciprocal because the resurrected Jesus, for Paul, has established the *first true* “free” gift for all and reached a point of no return. Comparably, Paul’s founding mission to Corinth is considered unique and non-reciprocal in this sense of being the *first* to offer the Christ-gift to the Corinthians for the honor of the Lord and the glory of God.

Moreover, Paul underscores the extraordinary manner in which God shows his χάρις (graciousness). God has remarkably chosen the person of Jesus Christ, his Son, to offer the life-giving spirit (πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν) (1 Cor 15:45; cf. 1:9; 2 Cor 1:19).⁵⁹³ In this respect, Jesus is the fundamental gift given and, at the same time, the *co-giver* of the gift who gives with God the Father.⁵⁹⁴ McFarland

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid., 1211.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid., 1223–4.

⁵⁹¹ Cf. Rom 8:23; 11:16. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1222–41.

⁵⁹² Jacob Cherian, “Toward a Commonwealth of Grace: A Plutocritical Reading of Grace and Equality in Second Corinthians 8:1–15” (Ph.D. diss., Princeton, NJ: Princeton Theological Seminary, 2007), 17, 80–81, 227–8, 251–2.

⁵⁹³ See other references see Larry W. Hurtado, “Son of God,” in *DPL*, 900–6.

⁵⁹⁴ 1 Cor 1:3; 15:20–28; 9:1–27; cf. 2 Cor 1:2–3. For a discussion on Jesus Christ is the co-giver of grace see, Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 56, 661–9. McFarland, *God and Grace*, 149–52. The italic is for emphasis.

forcefully argues this point: “God is not Giver apart from Christ, because God’s gift is Christ’s gift and Christ’s love is God’s love: the divine and human are united in the gift. As God’s being and act are inseparable, and God’s act is an act through and in Christ, God cannot be abstracted from Christ.”⁵⁹⁵ Therefore, God’s graciousness is absolutely unparalleled by sending his own Son to offer the gift of Himself (“the life-giving spirit”; 1 Cor 15:45) to save all people from sin and death.

Furthermore, it is very likely that the model of God the Father graciously sending his Son Jesus Christ lays the ground for Paul the spiritual father to send his beloved son Timothy to the Corinthians (4:16–17), which can be compared to Paul and Titus in 2 Corinthians 8:16–24. He says, “I appeal to you, then, be imitators of me. For this reason I sent you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ Jesus, as I teach them everywhere in every church.” In 1 Corinthians 11:1, Paul rephrases that his exhortation of imitation is taken after the pattern of Christ; “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.”

However, it must be noted that Paul states an overarching principle—“whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God” (1 Cor 10:31)—before encouraging the Corinthians to ponder his example.⁵⁹⁶ The most profound reality for Paul is how the divine χάρις shown in the Christ-gift creates the parent-child bonds not only between him and Timothy but also between him and the Corinthians. The exhortation to imitate his way of life in Christ is governed by God’s overall purpose of giving honor. The straightforward logic is this: the filial imitation of Paul is to honor their spiritual father for the glory of the Lord and God the Father, the source of all things (8:6). Combined with his exhortation in 1 Corinthians 11:1, it is not inconceivable that Paul has the model of God the Father graciously sending His Son in mind when he appeals to the Corinthian children to be imitators. Therefore, the divine Father-Son imagery of graciously giving Himself through His Son and the parent-child pattern between Paul and

⁵⁹⁵ McFarland, *God and Grace*, 151.

⁵⁹⁶ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 793–4.

Timothy (cf. Paul and Titus in 2 Cor 8:16–24) is the exemplar *par excellence* for the Corinthian children to imitate.

Remarkably, God is kind toward even Paul, who portrays himself as one who is “untimely born,” “the least of the apostles, and even “unfitting to be called an apostle” (vv.8–9). The premature birth imagery, in particular, to describe his apostleship suggests that the honor in God’s χάρις is a miracle in contrast to the idea that a worldly honor may be acquired by human prowess, which is an important grace-honor comparison.⁵⁹⁷ These derogatory modifiers show that he is acutely aware of his unworthiness to become an apostle and how much more remarkable God’s χάρις towards him. He names two specific reasons, both of which are related to the spiritual and moral degenerations from his past. First, he was dying spiritually because he shared in sin through Adam, “for as all die in Adam” (v.22). But second, he also miscarried God’s justice by persecuting the church of Christ, and in this way, acted disgracefully by opposing God’s χάρις shown in the person of Jesus.⁵⁹⁸ To satisfactorily resolve these two problems, Paul must be re-created and be re-established by the χάρις of God. McFarland clarifies: “For Paul to be an apostle, God must address the fundamental problem of Paul’s deadness, the sin that manifested itself in persecuting the church, by calling him as an act of creation ... Paul’s transformation from a miscarried persecutor of the church to its ἀτόστολος occurs through χάρις, Christ’s dying and rising κατὰ τὰς γραφάς.”⁵⁹⁹

Despite his unworthiness, God lavishes Paul with the gift of apostleship so that he might gratefully advance the life-giving gift (i.e., Christ-gift) to the Corinthians and others (15:10–11; 42–58). Paul acknowledges that the gift of his apostleship is sheer divine χάρις given regardless of his disgraceful

⁵⁹⁷ Pitt-Rivers, “The Place of Grace,” 98–9.

⁵⁹⁸ Gal 1:11–16; Phil 3:5–6; Acts 7:57–8:3; 9:1–2; 22:4–5; 26:9–11. For example, Arland J. Hultgren, “Paul’s Pre-Christian Persecutions of the Church: Their Purpose, Locale, and Nature,” *JBL* 95, no. 1 (1976): 97–111, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3265475>.

⁵⁹⁹ McFarland, *God and Grace*, 173.

past. Furthermore, he admits that “[b]ut by the grace of God [χάριτι δὲ θεοῦ] I am what I am” (15:10). All of these suggest that God’s χάρις, the Christ-gift, is unmerited and underserved by anyone and God’s χάρις (gracious giving) through His Son Jesus Christ is unparalleled.⁶⁰⁰ It further implies that the divine χάρις in Christ is not reciprocal, at least not in the mode of “*do ut des*.” Therefore, both the preciousness of the Christ-gift and the gracious manner of God has shown that any human efforts cannot fully reciprocate His χάρις (favor). Rather, as we will continue to argue, Christians can only choose to participate in Christ’s χάρις that has ushered in an age of grace, through their imitation of Christ’s χάρις, not through reciprocating it with the divine in the “strict” principles of the social ethos of reciprocity. Therefore, they will be preserved in the divine χάρις given and become more gracious and grateful to the honor and glory of God (cf. 2 Cor 8:1–9,19; 9:14–15).

Accordingly, Paul’s apostolic preaching of Christ’s death and resurrection is a life-giving gift that keeps giving for the good of the Corinthian children (2 Cor 2:14–16).⁶⁰¹ Paul reiterates that it is God’s χάρις in Christ that established Paul and the Corinthians in a divine gift-economy (e.g., 1:4; 3:10; 15:10–11). Paul is chosen as the *first giver* of the Christ-gift to the Corinthians. In turn, the Corinthians become the recipients of the Christ-gift through the gift of his apostolic endeavor (4:7; 15:1–2; cf. 2 Cor 8:1–9).

In contrast, Paul’s claim to authority to discipline as a *paterfamilias* or a patron/broker appeared to be peripheral in light of Christ’s χάρις given him (1 Cor 1:4; 3:10; 15:10).⁶⁰² That is to say, Paul

⁶⁰⁰ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1211. Cf. Barclay, *Paul*, s.v. McFarland, *God and Grace*, 171–5.

⁶⁰¹ See a detailed discussion concerning the grace of Christ in 1 Corinthians 3:10 by McFarland, *God and Grace*, 156, 158, 191. The χάρις of Christ: 3:10; cf. 1 Cor 15:9–10; Rom 1:5; 12:3; 15:15; Gal 1:1; Eph 3:2, 7, 8; preaching Christ crucified: 1:2, 23; 2:2. Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace*, 278. Crook, “Grace as Benefaction,” 25–38. On the topic of “Christ Crucified,” see Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1182–1215. Mark T. Finney, “Christ Crucified and the Inversion of Roman Imperial Ideology in 1 Corinthians,” *BTB* 35, no. 1 (February 2005): 20–33, <https://doi.org/10.1177/01461079050350010401>. Todd D. Still, “Why Did Paul Preach ‘Christ Crucified’ in Corinth? A New Answer to an Old Question from an Unexpected,” in *Texts and Contexts: Gospels and Pauline Studies* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017), 73–82.

⁶⁰² See the detailed discussions about social conventions concerning *paterfamilias* by Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity*, 99–106, 110–6. White, “Paul and *Pater Familias*,” 171–202.

recognizes that his apostolic authority to instruct the Corinthian family is “according to the grace of God given to [him]” (“κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι” 3:10), not directly derived from the cultural endorsement of paternal authorities or patronal privileges. Besides, Paul believes that the familial bond must be sustained and shaped by the χάρις of Christ in the divine gift-economy (1 Cor 12:4–31; 2 Cor 8–9).⁶⁰³ For him, the Christ-gift in death and resurrection creates a family of followers and brings solidarity by transforming it into a family of grace, not based on prior human ties and patronal power relations.⁶⁰⁴

In 2 Corinthians 8:1–9, Paul unfolds the logic of the new community generated by the Christ-gift. Christ’s χάρις gives life to the Christian family and inspires all members to take part in this divine χάρις with the return of χάρις (gratitude). In this exchange, the Christ-gift re-established the divine-human bond. This bond remains largely reciprocal in human terms and in what might be called secular sphere but ultimately is non-reciprocal in the divine gift-economy because of God’s incongruous generosity in the *sui generis* Christ-gift. Moreover, God is eternal and transcends time. In this sense, no human reciprocations can fully satisfy the divine χάρις because God the Father is the source of all things (1 Cor 8:6; cf. 1:4; 2 Cor 1:2).⁶⁰⁵ Furthermore, the Christ-gift has initiated a new age of the divine χάρις (the life-giving spirit), which is irreversible and non-reciprocal by human gifts, favors, and services, nor can it be disregarded (2 Cor 2:15–16). Therefore, Christian believers can only share the surpassing χάρις of God by their generous giving—not unwillingly or under coercion (2 Cor 9:7)—to the other Christian family-groups in need (8:13–15) and gratefully reciprocating honor and respect toward Paul as to the Lord (8:19, 23; 9:11–15).

⁶⁰³ Ibid., 192–224.

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid., 224.

⁶⁰⁵ McFarland, 103, 147, 151, 190.

Paul's generous act of giving is not limited to his original founding activity but also manifested in his continual care for the Corinthians while they are still in their formative spiritual years. In 1 Corinthians 3:1–2, Paul invokes imagery of a nursing mother (or a wet nurse) to underline that he has provided parental care for them from the beginning of their reception of the Christ-gift.⁶⁰⁶ Lim suggests that family and maternal care are at the heart of the imagery, not the two-tiered comparison between milk and solid food representing the levels of spiritual maturity.⁶⁰⁷ He argues that the emphasis on the two-tiered comparison misses the importance of family context and the ongoing nature of the parent-child relationship with intimacy and affection.⁶⁰⁸

Paul's extended stay in Corinth would have afforded him more than enough time to pass on the elementary instruction of faith.⁶⁰⁹ Moreover, his explicit mention of "I have fed you [ὕμᾱς ἐπότισα]" draws attention to parent-child interactions and the intimate moment of motherly affection and love.⁶¹⁰ Paul's maternal nurturing clearly describes his primary role in nursing the Corinthians from their spiritual infancy to maturity rather than feeding a particular kind of food.

Furthermore, Paul speaks of the spiritual gift of love (τὰ χαρίσματα) through children and body imageries, corroborating the motherly love with familial and reciprocal relationships (1 Cor 12–13; cf.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid., 120–3.

⁶⁰⁷ See two other references to "feeding milk" in the New Testament: Heb 5:12–14 and 1 Pet 2:2. Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 120–1. He argues that the two-tiered comparison between milk and solid food in 3:1–3 might have missed the main line of argument.

⁶⁰⁸ Beverly Roberts Gaventa, "Mother's Milk and Ministry in 1 Corinthians 3," in *Theology and Ethics in Paul and His Interpreters: Essays in Honor of Victor Paul Furnish*, ed. Eugene H. Lovering and Jerry L. Sumney (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 101–13. Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 122–3; Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 105–6.

⁶⁰⁹ Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 2. Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 121. Paul stayed in Corinth about eighteen months. Further readings: Robert Jewett, *A Chronology of Paul's Life* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 22, 55, 58, 97; Loveday C. A. Alexander, "Chronology of Paul," in *DPL*, 115–23; Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 29–32.

⁶¹⁰ Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 122–3. See a detailed discussion concerning "καὶ ἐγώ" by Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 287.

4:21).⁶¹¹ He insists that divine gift of love is meant to be reciprocal through showing respect toward one another as brothers and sisters and each other's gifts (13:5).⁶¹² More importantly, Paul, as the head of the household (4:15), calls for a familial way of life in the context of various spiritual gifts ("way [ὁδόν]" 1 Cor 12:31b; τὰ χαρίσματα, 1 Cor 12–14).⁶¹³ While describing the nature of love, he highlights that love, like other spiritual gifts, is bestowed for the good of the family (12:12–31 and 14:1–40).⁶¹⁴ Then, he stresses several important reciprocal qualities of love as gift (13:4–8; cf. v.13): (1) self-giving for others ("to be patient [μακροθυμέω]," "to be friendly" [χρηστεύομαι]," "to bear [στέγω]," and "to endure [ὑπομένω]");⁶¹⁵ (2) mutual affection and respect ("It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful [οὐ ζητεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς, οὐ παροξύνεται]");⁶¹⁶ (3) feelings of joy ("rejoice [χαίρω and συγχαίρω]");⁶¹⁷ (4) possessing a power that transcends worldly honors (e.g., "not vainglory [οὐ περπερεύεται]," "not puffed up [οὐ φυσιώω]," and "not behaving disgracefully [οὐκ ἀσχημονέω]").⁶¹⁸ Evidently, these attributes of love share the essentials of grace-reciprocity (see the discussion on "Five Essential Features").

For Paul, sharing the divine gift of love is "a still more excellent way [ἔτι καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ὁδόν]" that perfects human relations and transcends them for eternity in the eschatological age (12:31;

⁶¹¹ Ibid., 127–32, 159–87. Aasgaard, "Paul as a Child," 129–59; "Like a Child," 249–77. Esler, *New Testament Theology*, 160–2.

⁶¹² Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 265. Esler, *New Testament Theology*, 161–2.

⁶¹³ Van Unnik, "The Meaning," 142–59. Morton, "Gifts in the Context of Love," 11–24. Patterson, "A Rhetorical Gem in a Rhetorical Treasure," 87–94. Spicq, "ἀγάπη," *TLNT* 1:8–22; Stauffer, *TDNT* 1:21–55; Schneider, *EDNT* 1:8–12. Klassen, "Love," *ABD* 4:392–3. Mohrlang, "Love," *DPL*, 575–8.

⁶¹⁴ Ibid, 12–3, 15–19. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1046–60. Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 51–136, 159–87.

⁶¹⁵ See "μακροθυμέω," in BDAG, 612; Johannes Horst, *TDNT* 4:381–5; Spicq, "χρηστεύομαι," *TLNT* 3:51; Konrad Weiss, *TDNT* 9:491–2. Also "στέγω," in BDAG, 942; "ὑπομένω," in BDAG, 1039; and "πίπτω," in BDAG, 815.

⁶¹⁶ See "παροξύνω (to irritate)," in BDAG, 780.

⁶¹⁷ See "χαίρω, συγχαίρω (to rejoice [with])," in BDAG, 1074, 953. Conzelmann, *TDNT* 9:373; Spicq, *TLNT* 3:500–6. Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 118–9.

⁶¹⁸ Esler, *New Testament Theology*, 161. See "ζηλώω (to be jealous of)," in BDAG, 427; "περπερεύεται (to be vainglory)," in BDAG, 808; Herbert Braun, *TDNT* 6:93–5; "φυσιώω (to be puffed up)," in BDAG, 1069; "ἀσχημονέω (to behave disgracefully)," in BDAG, 147.

13:8,13).⁶¹⁹ Thus, showing love to the Corinthian children (ὁμῶς δείκνυμι; 12:31b) is not merely a talking point but substantiates his claims of being a loving mother with his deeper gratitude for the divine χάρις (3:1–2; cf. 4:15,21).⁶²⁰ Likewise, his confession of being childish and acting childishly in his former way of life (13:11) signifies his matured understanding of the spiritual gift of love. Now he undoubtedly strives to love his Corinthian family as intended by the divine χάρις in Christ (e.g., 1:3–9; 3:1–2,10; 4:15; 15:1–11). Therefore, Paul’s motherly caregiving complements the initial fatherly giving in the founding mission and presents how his apostolic ministry, according to the χάρις, keeps on giving to the Corinthian children in the earliest stage of their spiritual life.

Paul is a Responsible Father Who Acts Honorably

Similarly, Paul’s generous giving manifests in his fatherly instructions concerning moral conduct and spiritual guidance. He believes that he should be found trustworthy in the eyes of God for the ministry bestowed upon him, that is, caring for God’s household (1 Cor 3:1–4:5). For Paul, a good father should be attentive to his children’s moral development and spiritual wellbeing. Accordingly, he ought to offer moral and spiritual instructions when the Corinthian children are seemingly unsettled by factions and experiencing disharmony in the family (e.g., 1:10–12; 3:21–23; 4:6).

In 1 Corinthians 4:1–5, Paul affirms three basic truths of what proceeded. First, the apostles and their given talents are at the service of God and His family (3:10–15). Second, he must act honorably by taking charge of what is entrusted to him, namely, the Corinthian family as God’s holy temple (3:16–17; cf. 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16). Third, he should be evaluated by God, and his wisdom alone, for God the Father, is the author of his apostolic service (3:18–4:5; cf. 1:4; 8:6). Moreover, Paul is fully aware of human limitations in assessing others since human attitudes are easily manipulated (3:18–4:5,7). Ultimately, he

⁶¹⁹ Van Unnik, “The Meaning,” 142–59. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1060–74.

⁶²⁰ Thiselton rightly notes that the nature of love is expressed through a series of verbs, actions; see *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1046.

puts his trust in the Lord who will judge his heart (4:3–5), which is befitting of grace-reciprocity as mentioned earlier in relation to the reciprocity of hearts and the spirit of gift, for χάρις signifies one's ultimate worthiness before God.

Paul's employment of the word "to admonish" (νουθετέω) reveals that he intends to teach. The strategy of admonishing is usually showing approval and disapproval of a certain moral conduct and making clarifications should any misunderstanding occur regarding one's truthfulness.⁶²¹ J. Paul Sampley presents an insightful analysis of Paul's frankness valuable for understanding Paul's fatherly admonishment (νουθετέω; 1 Cor 4:6–21) and revealing his loving affections for the Corinthian children (2 Cor 12:14–15).⁶²² Sampley argues that Paul's frankness is comparable to the ancient letter form of frankness (παρρησία) or direct speech, found in 2 Corinthians 10–13, as well as Galatians and Philippians.⁶²³

A direct speech or frankness consists of a few rhetorical attributes.⁶²⁴ For example, to admonish (νουθετῶν; e.g., 1 Cor 4:14) is one of the indicators of frank criticism. Generally, "[p]arrēsia [frankness] occurs whenever anyone directly questions or calls for a re-examination of another's—or of a group's—behavior, practice, or contemplated action. Its range goes from appeal to rebuke, with multifarious variations in between."⁶²⁵ From this perspective, Paul's fatherly admonishing (e.g., 1 Cor 4:6–21) and questioning (e.g., 2 Cor 12:11–21) are part of frankness that aims to appeal to and rebuke the Corinthian children's moral-spiritual issues and to dispel doubts about his genuine fatherly love.⁶²⁶ Therefore, it will be beneficial to focus on three aspects of Paul's admonitions: (1). Paul's approval concerning the

⁶²¹ J. Paul Sampley, "Paul and Frankness," in *PGRW* 1:310. Cf. John T. Fitzgerald, *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech Studies on Friendship in the New Testament World*, NovTSup 82 (New York: Brill, 1996).

⁶²² *Ibid.*, 316–8.

⁶²³ *Ibid.*, 304.

⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*, 310.

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁶ Cf. the other use of admonish (νουθετέω) in Pauline letters: 1 Thess 5:12, 14; Rom 15:14; Col 1:28; 3:16; cf. BDAG, 679. Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 111. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 369.

character of Timothy (4:17), together with the outcome of Titus's mission (2 Cor 7:13–16); (2). Paul's disapproval of their self-inflated behaviors that were driven by φιλοτιμία (4:6–7, 19, 20); (3). Paul's declaration of his fatherly love for the Corinthian family, a declaration that aspires to dispel doubts about his integrity (2 Cor 12:11–21).

Regarding the first, Paul sends Timothy to teach the Corinthian children moral instructions and spiritual guidance, of which he approves (4:17). For Paul, sending Timothy is a very personal way to reassure his loving care for the Corinthians (“As my beloved children [ὡς τέκνα μου ἀγαπητὰ]”; v.14). As maintained by Paul, Timothy is a beloved and faithful son and beneficial for the Corinthians (v.17).⁶²⁷ Moreover, sending Timothy in person shows Paul's understanding of the social etiquette of commendation and being respectful and considerate (cf. 16:1–11) and likely tells his deliberate imitation of God the Father, sending His Son as the ultimate gift.⁶²⁸ Furthermore, Timothy, in place of Paul, will remind the Corinthians (ἀναμνήσει) in an intimate way how Paul had conducted himself according to the ways of Christ Jesus (τάς ὁδούς μου τὰς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ; v.17).⁶²⁹

Van Berkel illuminates that the phrase “to remind” (ἀναμνήσκω, μνησκόμαι) commonly occurs in familial exchanges, especially among unequal relations between parents and children.⁶³⁰ “To remind” is designed to recall the history of a relationship, especially for a father figure who initiated the

⁶²⁷ Phil 2:22; 1 Tim 1:2, 18; 2 Tim 1:2.

⁶²⁸ Efrain Agosto, “Paul and Commendation,” in *PGRW* 1:158. J. Paul Sampley, “Epilogue: Living in an Evil Aeon: Paul's Ambiguous Relation to Culture,” in *PGRW* 2:391–432.

⁶²⁹ See Ceslas Spicq, “μνησκόμαι, μνεία, μνήμη, μνημονεύω, μνημόσυνον,” *TLNT* 2:489–501. “ἀναμνήσκω,” in BDAG, 68. Otto Michel, “μνησκόμαι,” *TDNT* 4:675–83; Martin Völkel, “μνημεῖον” *EDNT* 2: 434–5.

⁶³⁰ For example, Xenophon, *Mem.* II.vii.9.5: ἐὰν δὲ προστατήρης ὅπως ἐνεργοὶ ᾖσι, σὺ μὲν ἐκεῖνας φιλήσεις, ὁρῶν ὠφελίμους σεαυτῷ οὕσας, ἐκεῖναι δὲ σὲ ἀγαπήσουσιν, αἰσθόμεναι χαίροντά σε αὐταῖς, τῶν δὲ προγεγονυῖων εὐεργεσιῶν ἥδιον *μεμνημένοι* τὴν ἀπ' ἐκείνων *χάριν* αὐξήσετε, καὶ ἐκ τούτων φιλικώτερόν τε καὶ οἰκειότερον ἀλλήλοις ἔξετε; italics are added for emphasis; also, I.vi.13–14.

Other examples concerning remembering in reciprocal relations: Homer, *Il.* 14.193,235; 23.647–650; Herodotus, *Hist.* 7.178; Sophocles, *AJ.* 520–524, 1267–1269; Theognis, *Elegiae* 1.101–102; Euripides, *Alc.* 299–302; Aristophanes, *Eq.* 268, *Lys.* 30.27; Pindar, *Ol.* 8., *Pyth.* 9, *Isthm.* 4; 7.16–24; Menander, *Sam.* 4–18; Seneca, *Ben.* 1.4.2–3, etc., stressing how crucial to keep the memory of χάρις alive is for both the living and the dead.

reciprocal relationship.⁶³¹ Therefore, the phrase is exceedingly important for understanding the ideal relationship represented by χάρις-reciprocity. Therefore, reminding of one's gifts and χάρις (favors) is crucial to renewing the existing parent-child bonds of affection and to urging that their ongoing relationship should be shared with χάρις because χάρις begets χάρις.⁶³²

For Paul, Timothy acts on his behalf to show affection for them. Reminding the Corinthians through Timothy is a double act: on the one hand, to renew parent-child bonds and, on the other hand, to create a new bond between Timothy and the Corinthian family. Moreover, Paul already perceives that his apostolic ministry shares Christ's χάρις. Hence, the ways in which he conducts himself in Christ (including sending Timothy his spiritual son) is also a generous gift and gracious act beneficial to the Corinthian family.

To an even greater extent, Paul joyfully expresses his grateful heart toward the Corinthian children in 2 Corinthians 7:13–16, where he recounts (ἀνάμνησις) their kindness (χάρις) in this case toward Titus, who visited Corinth on Paul's behalf. This reception has brought him extra joy (χαρά) and consolation.

In addition to our own consolation, we rejoiced [ἐχάρημεν] still more at the joy [τῇ χαρᾷ] of Titus, because his mind has been set at rest by all of you. For if I have been somewhat boastful about you to him, I was not disgraced; but just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting to Titus has proved true as well. And his heart [τὰ σπλάγχνα] goes out all the more to you, as he remembers [ἀναμιμνησκομένου] the obedience [ὑπακοήν] of all of you, and how you welcomed him with fear and trembling [μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου]. I rejoice [χαίρω], because I have complete confidence [ἐν παντὶ θαρρῶ] in you (2 Cor 7:13–16 NRSV).⁶³³

⁶³¹ Van Berkel, *The Economics of Friendship*. See the importance of remembering the favor in long-term loving relationships, 22, 25, 93–5, 116, 159–60, 166, 186, 189, 253. Algae, “Find, Remind, and Bind.”

⁶³² The idea is expressed in negative form by Sophocles, *Oed. col.* 779 (οὐδὲν ἢ χάρις χάριν φέροι); in positive form by Euripides, *Hel.* 1234 (χάρις ἀντὶ χάριτος ἐλθέτω). See also a discussion of χάρις by Aristotle, *Rhet.* 2.7.1–2. Van Berkel, *The Economics of Friendship*, 92.

⁶³³ Adopted from NRSV. Cf. ἀνάμνησιν in 1 Cor 11:24.

Titus's affection (σπλάγχνα) toward the Corinthians arises from his remembrance (ἀναμνησκομένου) of how the Corinthians welcomed him because they respectfully accepted Paul's involvement as a spiritual father.⁶³⁴ It is important to note that the phrase with fear and trembling (μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου) expresses one's reverence and respect toward parents and God (cf. 7:1).⁶³⁵ The obedience (ὕπακοήν) of the Corinthians with fear and trembling (μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου) re-affirms the existing parent-child bonds and corroborates that the Corinthian children have opened hearts (σπλάγχνα) wide toward the father Paul, for which he had hoped (6:11–13).⁶³⁶ The respectful way in which the Corinthian children have conducted themselves before Titus, in turn, brings more joy (χαρά) to Paul. The joy (χαρά) related to kindness (χάρις) and gratitude (χάρις) on both sides bolster Paul's more profound confidence in his Corinthian children (ἐν παντὶ θαρρῶ).

The remembrance (ἀνάμνησις) connects both the sending of Timothy and Titus and functions as a renewal of Paul's parent-child relationship with the Corinthians. One is reminiscent of Paul's initial χάρις by way of teaching and living of Christ's χάρις, whereas the other one is nostalgic for the joy mutually shared in the completion of the χάρις (the collection) in participation of Christ's χάρις, while during the times of their physical absence from each other.

In this way, the chain of the mutual familial bond of affections, which originated with Paul and extended through Timothy, is now extended to Titus. The entire chain affirms and thus returns to Paul's consolation and good faith in the Corinthian family. Therefore, Paul is deliberate in delegating Timothy

⁶³⁴ See "σπλάγχνα" in BDAG, 225; Ceslas Spicq, "σπλάγχνα, σπλαγχνίζομαι," 3:273–5.

⁶³⁵ See "φόβος," in BDAG, 1062; Horst Balz, "φοβέομαι, φόβος," 3:429–434. Balla, *The Child-Parent Relationship*, 24–5, 36–7, 63–4, 76. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 552.

⁶³⁶ Cf. Eph 6:5; Phil 2:12; however, the fear out of reverence and respect is different from 1 Cor 2:3. See Balla for detailed discussions on the normal expectations of children toward their parents in ancient Graeco-Roman and Jewish cultures, *The Child-Parent Relationship*, 10–21, 36–8, 62–70, 76–9, 86–97, 109–11. Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, IGNTC 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 551–2.

to renew their shared bonds and to inspire them to follow the examples of how Paul has lived a graceful life so that they may together share the same way of life in him as in Christ's χάρις.

In regard to the second of Paul's admonitions, Paul, who disapproves of those who have become self-inflated because of their unbridled φιλοτιμία (1 Cor 4:18–20),⁶³⁷ warns (νουθετέω) them not to be puffed up with self-importance and talk of self-honor (ἐφυσιώθησάν and τὸν λόγον τῶν πεφυσιωμένων; 4:18,19).⁶³⁸ Finney points out that the word “to inflate” (“φυσιόω”) conveys an overtone of claiming self-honor in public, which may have been the root cause of divisions.⁶³⁹ He explains: “The description of the Corinthians as φυσιοῖ, one which Paul will use again, is a caricature of the political ‘windbag’, the orator inflated at his success, or those filled with a sense of their own power and status. But it is frequently linked to φιλοτιμία, an action that may lead directly to antagonism, factionalism and conflict.”⁶⁴⁰

However, we will contend that Paul's frankness appears to be an admonishment (νουθετῶν) rather than sarcastic shame (οὐκ ἐντρέπων), as stated at the beginning of the pericope (4:14).⁶⁴¹ Moreover, Paul reveals that his overall purpose is to build the Corinthian children up by deploying a letter-form of direct speech in 2 Corinthians 12:11–21.⁶⁴² Therefore, he only warns against those who have become puffed up (ἐφυσιώθησάν) and preoccupied with worldly honor (τὸν λόγον τῶν πεφυσιωμένων; 4:18,19) because he loves his Corinthian children (ὡς τέκνα μου ἀγαπητὰ; 4:14,21).

⁶³⁷ Cf. “φυσιόω” in BDAG, 1069; Helmut Köster, “φύσις, φυσικός, φυσικῶς,” *TDNT* 9:271–5.

⁶³⁸ See “μμητής,” in BDAG, 652; “νουθετέω” in BDAG, 341; Johannes Behm and Ernst Würthwein, “νοέω, νοῦς, νουθετέω” *TDNT* 4:950–1, 958–9. Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 105.

⁶³⁹ Cf. 4:6; 5:2; 8:1; 13:4. Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 105. In Col. 2:18, it is the only other time occurred in Pauline letters.

⁶⁴⁰ Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 105–6.

⁶⁴¹ E.g., Thiselton argues that Paul's admonishment serves as sarcastic shame; see *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 368–9. Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 107–8.

⁶⁴² Sampley, “Paul and Frankness,” 310–30.

Fundamentally, Paul argues that worldly honor, such as self-importance, is opposed to the divine χάρις that they had received from Christ. I believe that Finney correctly asserts that “Paul’s point in 4:6–21 is that it is φιλοτιμία which has led to the community being puffed-up with their misplaced claims to honour over human leaders and that this in turn has fomented factionalism and hence conflict.”⁶⁴³ However, Finney’s summary does not take into account that God’s χάρις in Christ is what permeates Paul’s thought.

It is essential here, therefore, to recall Pitt-Rivers’s grace-honor comparison. The comparison illustrates how Paul’s χάρις is communicated through social honor. He identifies three ways that social honor is intimately associated with the theological notion of grace: first, honor and grace are identical; they are aligned together (what is honorable is also graceful and *vice versa*); second, honor and grace are different but complementary (honor brings grace; likewise grace honor; however, divine grace cannot be won or earned (like a miracle, bestowed not earned); third, worldly honor or pathological love for honor and divine grace are mutually opposing.⁶⁴⁴ Accordingly, whoever attempts to claim honor *for oneself* account of divine grace renders him or herself shameful and disgraceful because divine grace cannot be earned or won through worldly powers. Therefore, Paul’s reasoning falls into the third category: divine grace as opposed to worldly honor (4:20; cf. 4:6–7, 1:26–31).

In 1 Corinthians 4:20, Paul gives the fundamental reason for this admonition. The arrogant (φυσιοῖ) do not possess the power to claim honor for themselves on account of the divine χάρις; “[f]or the kingdom of God depends not on talk but on power [οὐ γὰρ ἐν λόγῳ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλ’ ἐν δυνάμει].” In 4:6, Paul already remonstrates the arrogant who are playing favors against one another (εἷς ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἑνὸς φυσιοῦσθε κατὰ τοῦ ἑτέρου).⁶⁴⁵ He then asks these rhetorical questions: “For who

⁶⁴³ Ibid., 106.

⁶⁴⁴ Pitt-Rivers, “The Place of Grace,” 98–9; “The Malady of Honor,” 105–118.

⁶⁴⁵ Ronald L. Tyler, “First Corinthians 4:6 and Hellenistic Pedagogy,” *CBQ*, no. 60 (1998): 97–103.

sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift [ὥς μὴ λαβών]?” (4:7). The rhetorical questions highlight the truth about the divine χάρις in Christ: what the Corinthians have is not earned or won through their powers but graciously conferred by God’s will so that it is unthinkable for them to make a claim of self-honor not rendering honor first to the Lord (contrasting with the Macedonians; 2 Cor 8:5).

McFarland clarifies that what is given to the Corinthians is the χάρις in the person of Christ, who has made them rich in every way (1:4–5; cf. 2:12, 3:10).⁶⁴⁶ He elaborates:

For Paul, God’s generosity is defined by the Christ-gift and is located in the person of Christ: God justifies the ungodly, elects without thought of worth, creates from nothing. The indelibly Christological shape of grace means that all of history is determined by this event, which becomes the pattern of God’s actions that can only be understood, for Paul, after the event and through faith. Divine unfitting grace in the Christ-event is thus the axiomatic foundation of Paul’s gift-economy.⁶⁴⁷

Paul asserts that he has offered the fundamental gift of the person of Christ by proclaiming it to the Corinthians. This Christ-gift now anchors all other gifts in the divine gift-economy.⁶⁴⁸ Therefore, the Corinthians are merely recipients of the Christ-gift and must stop making false claims of self-honor because the Christ-gift is given graciously by God the Father.

More pressingly, not only was the honor that Corinthians attempt to claim worldly and deceptive, but also the way in which they claimed it is contrary to the χάρις of Christ crucified (ἐσταυρωμένον; 1:23; 2:8; cf. 2:2). Paul insists that Christ has manifested God’s ultimate power and wisdom on the cross (1:17,23; 2:2). However, the rulers of this age (τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου) opposed the power of God in Christ and crucified the Lord of glory (τὸν κύριον τῆς δόξης ἐσταύρωσαν;

⁶⁴⁶ McFarland, *God and Grace*, 103. For a list of χάρις reference in the Corinthian correspondence by Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion*, 143. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 136–7.

⁶⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 152.

⁶⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 148.

2:8).⁶⁴⁹ For this reason, Paul is determined to preach the power of the cross only “so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power [ἵνα μὴ κενωθῇ ὁ σταυρὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ]” (1:17; cf. 1:23, 2:2). Finney distills Paul’s logic of the cross against that of worldly honor and states: “Essentially, Paul’s *theologia crucis* stood as a sharp polemic arising from the need to counter opposing ideologies framed within notions of φιλοτιμία.”⁶⁵⁰

Thus, Paul is troubled by the Corinthian obsession with worldly honor (φιλοτιμία) by playing favors one over against another (4:6). Their pathological pursuit of honor has blinded them to see that such worldly honor has caused the humiliation of the apostles (4:9–13). Paul puts it bluntly:

I think that God has exhibited us apostles as least of all, as though sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to mortals. We are fools for the sake of Christ, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honour, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we are hungry and thirsty, we are poorly clothed and beaten and homeless, and we grow weary from the work of our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we speak kindly. We have become like rubbish of the world, the dregs of all things, to this very day (1 Cor 4:9–13 NRSV).

Paul senses that the real danger of worldly honor (φιλοτιμία) is that it leads people to claim honor and self-honor at the cost of others’ pain, shame, and even life. Finney alerts us to the fact that Paul’s description in 4:9 evokes the practice of the Roman “triumph” that entails a public parade.⁶⁵¹

Such imagery is taken from the well-known practice of the Roman ‘triumph’ during which a victorious general would parade through the streets in a chariot, with the leaders of a defeated army trailing along in the rear of the procession, to be ‘exhibited’ and humiliated as a public spectacle (4:9). Those at the very end of the procession (‘last of all’) were on their way to imprisonment or, more likely, execution (cf. 2 Cor. 2:14).⁶⁵²

Paul then compares the shame and humiliation of the defeated in that honor game to the predicament of the apostles. In doing so, he shows that the Corinthians have been engaged in a similar honor game

⁶⁴⁹ Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 93–4. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1182–1215. Finney, “Christ Crucified,” 20–33. Still, “Why Did Paul Preach Christ Crucified,” 73–82.

⁶⁵⁰ Finney, *Honour and Conflict*, 71.

⁶⁵¹ Ibid., 107. Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, SP 7 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 188.

⁶⁵² Ibid. 107.

that entertains worldly honor at the expense of others' shame and humiliation—particularly the apostles'—when playing favors (4:6).

Combined with the humiliation of Christ on the cross (1:17,23; 2:2,8) and the catalogue of apostles' shame (4:10–13), Paul conjures up the imagery of a crude honor game in that world in which the Corinthians have allowed themselves to be participants. Worse yet, they claim a self-honor but do not possess the *χάρις* and its power to do so. Lastly, they parade their self-importance and self-honor like a Roman “triumph” by dragging Jesus and apostles like the defeated at the expense of their shame and humiliation.

The third and final point to be underscored concerns the grounds for Paul's admonitions. Duane F. Watson judiciously links the descriptions of hardship in 1 Corinthians 4:8–13 to 2 Corinthians 10–13 as part of Paul's honor defense.⁶⁵³ “Paul's boasting challenges the value system of the Corinthians—and of the Graeco-Roman world—through parody. Weakness in Christ is true strength: that is the main point of comparison (cf. 1 Cor 4:8–13).”⁶⁵⁴ From the perspective of honor defense, Paul's frankness in 2 Corinthians 12:11–21 functions as a riposte to declare his innocence. He endeavors to dispel any misconceptions about his integrity due to his inconsistency in accepting gifts and support.⁶⁵⁵

Apparently, some Corinthians saw the discrepancy in Paul as a tell of deceit and manipulation (cf. 2 Cor 12:16). Paul, through rhetorical questioning, defends himself and vouches for his associates. He maintains that he and his associates have taken no advantage of the Corinthian church (12:17–18). Instead, he claims that he laid no burdens on them because of his fatherly love for them and to build them up rather than to receive devious gains (12:14–19). Therefore, Paul lays bare his fatherly affections for the Corinthian family through his frankness and by a riposte of honor defense (2 Cor 12:11–21).

⁶⁵³ Duane F. Watson, “Paul and Boasting,” in *PGRW* 1:96.

⁶⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 102.

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 95–7.

In conclusion, it seems clear that Paul strives to show himself as a responsible father to the Corinthian family because he acts honorably according to Christ's χάρις given him (1 Cor 3:10) in the presence of God (4:1–5). During a time of need, he promptly offers his guidance through Timothy to remind them of Christ's χάρις and how he and Timothy have exemplified it in their lives (4:16–17). Next, Paul unhesitatingly warns some of the Corinthian children how worldly honors undermine the power of the cross and defy Christ's χάρις given by God through the gospel (4:19,20). He is apprehensive about the Corinthian children who were caught up in honor games of their cultural environments and played favors against one another (4:6). Paul then hopes that the Corinthian children will learn to recognize the divine χάρις granted to them in Christ's crucifixion to work against the moral corruptions of self-importance and talk of self-honor associated with the pathological pursuit for honors (4:6–7,19,20). Then, he defends his integrity by speaking candidly to the Corinthian children of his love for them (4:8–13; cf. 2 Cor 12:11–21). His honorable character will become more transparent when viewing his grateful prayers and willingness to sacrifice himself for the Corinthian family to honor the Lord and glorify God.

II. Paul is an Honorable Father Who Demonstrates His Gratitude in Words and Actions

The purpose of this section is to provide further evidence for the claim that Paul is an honorable father who demonstrates his χάρις (gratitude) in words and concrete actions as a model for his Corinthian children. According to grace-reciprocity, an honorable person ought to always express one's gratitude with thanksgiving and find appropriate ways to demonstrate one's gratitude by reciprocating gifts, favors, and services received. This feature of grace-reciprocity is useful for exploring Paul's use of χάρις as gratitude in concrete experiences of daily family life.

Demonstrating Gratitude with Grateful Verbal Expressions

Robert. P. Meye attests that χάρις (gratitude) is the heartbeat of Pauline theology.⁶⁵⁶ Paul expresses his χάρις (gratitude) via a multitude of thankful prayers, personal testimonies, and benedictions throughout his letters.⁶⁵⁷ Notably, in the Corinthian correspondence, he frequently employs thankful expressions (e.g., 15:57), especially introductory thanksgivings (1 Cor 1:3–9; cf. 16:23 and 2 Cor 1:2–11; cf. 13:13).⁶⁵⁸

In his thanksgiving (1 Cor 1:3–9), for instance, he always indicates the reasons why his χάρις (gratitude) resulted in the χάρις of Christ being evident in the lives of the Corinthian family (1:4–5). Moreover, Paul, acting as the head of the household, gives thanks for God’s abundant χάρις conferred on his Corinthian family and children (1 Cor 1:3–9). The divine χάρις includes that the Corinthians are being skillful in speech, gifted in learning, and favored to know the gospel of Christ.⁶⁵⁹ As a grateful father, Paul anticipates the future χάρις to be granted to his Corinthian family so that they might be preserved in God’s χάρις until the coming of the Lord (1 Cor 1:7).

In 1 Corinthians 10:23–33, Paul gives his own testimony concerning how to exercise one’s freedom (ἐλευθερία) with regard to χάρις (gratitude). In light of grace-reciprocity and gratitude studies, Paul’s argument is quite intriguing for two reasons. First, Paul propounds that a grateful person is observant of others and concedes for the benefit of others, not insisting on one’s independence and rights (10:23–30). Second, a grateful person would be ready to renounce his or her right and always conduct oneself honorably for higher values, such as respecting others and seeking God’s honor (10:31–

⁶⁵⁶ Robert P. Meye, “Spirituality,” in *DPL*, 915.

⁶⁵⁷ 1 Cor 1:4; 10:30; 15:57; 2 Cor 1:2:14; 8:16; 9:15. Wolff, “Thanksgiving,” *ABD* 6:435–8.

⁶⁵⁸ Peter T. O’Brien, “Benediction, Blessing, Doxology, Thanksgiving,” in *DPL*, 551.

⁶⁵⁹ O’Brien, *Introductory Thanksgiving*, 107–40. Meye, “Gratitude: The Heartbeat of Pauline Spirituality,” in *DPL*, 915. Bradley J. Bitner, “1 Corinthians 1:4–9 and the Politics of Thanksgiving,” in *Paul’s Political Strategy in 1 Corinthians 1–4: Constitution and Covenant* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 137–96, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316104910>.

33). These two reasons are critical discoveries in current human sciences: a grateful person is more likely to respect others and seek honorable conduct for the sacred.

Indeed, Paul advises the Corinthians to respect “the other’s conscience” and honor God. Specifically, he recommends: “out of consideration for the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience—I mean the other’s conscience, not your own [δι’ ἐκεῖνον τὸν μηνύσαντα καὶ τὴν συνείδησιν. συνείδησιν δὲ λέγω οὐχὶ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀλλὰ τὴν τοῦ ἑτέρου]” (10:28–29). Again, “whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God [πάντα εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ ποιεῖτε]” (10:31). Paul’s rationalite signifies the importance of χάρις (gratitude) in maintaining harmonious relationships with one another for God. In addition, the type of advice reflects that Paul is a person respectful of others and grateful for all generosity, especially the divine χάρις.⁶⁶⁰

Paul gives thanks to God (τῷ δὲ θεῷ χάρις) as a testimony of the divine empowerment of his apostolic ministry during the time of distress (2 Cor 2:14–17). Lim astutely detects that Paul often deploys the expressions of χάρις (gratitude) or thanksgiving at the critical junctures of his arguments (e.g., 1 Cor 1:3–9; 15:57; 2 Cor 8:16; possibly 9:15).⁶⁶¹ This rhetorical tactic leads us to see that Paul’s argument depends on concrete experiences of God’s χάρις and the χάρις (gratitude) that arises from it. His experience of divine deliverance encourages his apostolic preaching and a sure commendation of his service. Moreover, 2:14–16 could be understood as an invitation for the Corinthian children to be sharers of God’s saving act in the Christ-gift manifested in the lives of apostles like Paul.⁶⁶²

Furthermore, Paul closes his thanksgiving with an apologetic note (v.17). His concluding remark emphasizes two points: the sincerity of his heart and his ultimate reliance on Christ’s saving χάρις. First, he declares that he is not a “peddler of God’s word” seeking personal gains but a person of sincerity

⁶⁶⁰ 1:4; 15:57; cf. 2 Cor 2:14; 8:16; 9:15.

⁶⁶¹ Cf. Rom 6:17–18; 7:25; 1 Tim 1:12. Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ*, 66. Possibly, 1 Cor 10:29b–30; Consult Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 497–500; “χάρις,” as gratitude, cf. BDAG, 1080.

⁶⁶² Ibid., 96.

(εἰλικρινείας). Then, to buttress his claim, he adds a phrase: “as persons sent from God and standing in his presence [ἀλλ’ ὡς ἐκ θεοῦ κατέναντι θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ λαλοῦμεν]” (v.17b). Subsequently, with two consecutive uses of “ἀλλά [but],” Paul puts the weight of the argument on that God and Jesus Christ is the witness of his sincere heart. This rationale resembles the statement of 1 Corinthians 4:1–5, where Paul trusts God’s wisdom and judgment of his heart.

Second, Paul’s use of “we speak in Christ [ἐν Χριστῷ]” is an alternative way of saying that he relies upon Christ and his saving χάρις. Calling God as his witness is to seal the truthfulness of his heart and his reliance upon Christ’s χάρις with honor from above. Therefore, Paul intentionally chooses the moment of his χάρις (gratitude) as a result of his encounters with the divine χάρις to speak for it how God has empowered his apostolic ministry in his time of need.

Finally, in 1 Corinthians 15:57, Paul utters his χάρις (gratitude) toward the Christ-gift who victoriously removed the sting of sin and death. Paul reiterates that as the recipients of divine favors (χάρις), they must not let the χάρις of Christ be received in vain (κενὸς or κενόω; 15:10, 14, 58; 2 Cor 6:1).⁶⁶³ For instance, he urges: “we entreat you not to accept the grace of God in vain [μὴ εἰς κενὸν τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ δέξασθαι ὑμᾶς]” (2 Cor 6:1). Paul’s uses of κενὸς and its cognates are mostly connected to the χάρις of Christ and the apostolic preaching in the Corinthian correspondence.⁶⁶⁴ Paul’s persistent reminding underscores the importance of the return with χάρις (gratitude). The reminding functions as a warning against the danger of ingratitude (ἀχαριστοί). According to Harrison, in the ancient cultures around the time of Paul, the expressions of χάρις (gratitude) from the beneficiaries were generally

⁶⁶³ 1 Cor 1:17 in verbal form of κενόω; 15:2 as a synonym for εἰκῆ. Other Pauline references relating to apostolic preaching: 1 Thess 2:1; 3:1–5; Gal 2:2; 3:1–5; 4:8–11; Phil 4:14–18. Cf. “κενός, κενόω,” in BDAG, 539; Albrecht Oepke, “κενός, κενόω,” *TDNT* 3:659–62.

⁶⁶⁴ Except in 1 Cor 9:15 and 2 Cor 9:3, both are in verbal forms related to boasting or boast (καύχημα or χράομαι).

expected while “[t]he ἀχαριστοί were universally despised.”⁶⁶⁵ Therefore, Paul anticipates the return of χάρις (gratitude) from the Corinthian family lest they become ἀχαριστοί (the ungrateful).

In conclusion, Paul is grateful, and his thankful heart reverberates from the beginning to the end of the Corinthian correspondence. Second, his χάρις (gratitude) prompts him to give thoughtful advice about respecting another’s conscience, carefully guarding one’s freedom and honoring one another and God (1 Cor 10:23–33). Third, χάρις understood as gratitude permeates his writing as he corroborates how God’s χάρις has overflowed in his apostolic preaching and afflictions (e.g., 2 Cor 2:14–16). Above all, he is most grateful for Christ’s χάρις in defeating sin and death and bringing the life-giving spirit to renew the world (1 Cor 15:45,57). For this reason, he works more eagerly than others, including enduring various hardships (e.g., 4:8–13), to demonstrate his χάρις (gratitude) so that Christ’s χάρις on the cross and in the resurrection may not be received in vain and ungratefully (e.g., 15:11, 58).

Showing Gratitude in Concrete Actions for the Honor of God as a Sign of Good Faith

Paul’s grateful heart naturally leads him to respond with appropriate actions as a demonstration of his gratitude (χάρις). According to grace-reciprocity, the return of gratitude (χάρις) must be demonstrated on three different levels according to specific situations: (1) material or prescribed gifts, favors, and services in economic terms, (2) “intermediate gifts” which indicate a share of *bona fides* in asymmetrical or unequal power relations like the parent-child and God-human, and (3) a requirement that grace always be returned in kind. Against these categories, we will have a clearer understanding of Paul’s χάρις as gratitude in the Corinthian correspondence. I hope to show, as I have indicated earlier, that Paul and his Corinthian family must eagerly participate in Christ’s χάρις with their “intermediate gifts” as a token of good faith and through their χάρις (gratitude) verbally and practically toward one another, precisely because they cannot fully reciprocate divine χάρις *sui generis*.

⁶⁶⁵ Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace*, 348; 75–7, 80.

For the sake of clarity, we will concentrate on two passages: Paul’s unreserved self-giving to the Corinthian family through enduring suffering, described in 1 Cor 4:9–13 as the first of four catalogues of hardships in the Corinthian correspondence,⁶⁶⁶ and Paul’s counsel regarding the Jerusalem collection (the χάρις) in 2 Corinthians 8–9. The catalogue of hardships in 1 Corinthians 4:9–13 shows Paul’s most generous giving for the Corinthian family through making sacrifices as a loving father would for his children, while the advice to the Corinthian children concerning his generous undertaking (the χάρις; the collection) represents another case of fatherly counsel about how to gratefully interact with other Christian ministers of the Lord and family groups. These two sections from the sequential Corinthian correspondence will offer us a better picture of Paul’s own actions and the expectations of his spiritual children in responding to Christ’s χάρις in the divine gift-economy throughout his engagement with the Corinthians. Moreover, they will illustrate that the appropriate reciprocation of χάρις (gratitude) is aligned with honoring parents for the glory of God, one of the crucial patterns of the grace-honor comparison.⁶⁶⁷

In 1 Corinthians 4:9–13, Paul declares, as he does elsewhere, that he works more diligently than other apostles because of his deeper χάρις (gratitude) for God’s extreme χάρις shown through Christ in him and for him. For example, in 1 Cor 15:10, he states explicitly: “But by the grace of God [χάρτι δὲ θεοῦ] I am what I am, and his grace [ἡ χάρις αὐτοῦ] toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them [περισσότερον αὐτῶν πάντων ἐκοπίασα]—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me” (v.10). The word ἐκοπίασα connotes exhausting oneself physically, mentally, and spiritually.⁶⁶⁸ Although Paul does not specify the type of toils in 15:10, given multiple

⁶⁶⁶ 1 Corinthians 4:10–13 is the first of several hardship or peristatic catalogues in his letters; cf. 2 Cor 4:7–12; 6:4–10; 11:23–12:10; Rom 8:18, 35–9; Phil 3:7–11). Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ*, 1. Collins, *First Corinthians*, 183.

⁶⁶⁷ Pitt-Rivers, “The Place of Grace,” 98–9.

⁶⁶⁸ Cf. 1 Cor 4:12; 16:16; Rom 16:6, 12; Gal 4:11; Phil 2:16; 1 Thess 5:12. See “κοπιᾶω,” in BDAG, 558; Friedrich Hauck, *TDNT* 3: 827–30; Herbert Fendrich, *EDNT* 2:307.

catalogues of hardships on record it is fair to say that he has made many sacrifices in his apostolic ministry, including the Corinthian mission.⁶⁶⁹ Above all, the central point of the statement is to emphasize that he exerts himself *more extensively* for the Corinthian community, regarded as his family and children in the gospel of Christ.⁶⁷⁰ Nevertheless, he understands that his apostolic suffering is a participation of Christ's death and resurrection and is constantly empowered by Christ's χάρις working within him, for which he can but demonstrate his gratitude (χάρης), a willingness to give himself as a sacrifice for his Corinthian family and children, as a token of good faith to the divine χάρις.⁶⁷¹

When we return specifically to 1 Cor 4, we are not surprised to find there that Paul expresses how he entirely dedicates himself to apostolic service regardless of harsh conditions (4:10–13). The catalogue of sufferings in 4:9–13 conveys Paul's example of self-giving to his Corinthian family, resembling Christ's self-giving on the cross for the sake of God's family.⁶⁷² Juxtaposing the statement in 1 Cor 15 and the catalogues in 2 Corinthians, we can sense that 1 Corinthians 4:9–13 is an account of the apostles' destitution endured for the sake of Christ (διὰ Χριστόν; v.10).⁶⁷³

The catalogue contains six kinds of deprivations (twelve items) to present a cumulative effect to describe the severity of the apostles' afflictions.⁶⁷⁴ It is further subdivided into two groups of three. The first group employs a "we"- "you" ("ἡμεῖς" ... "ὁμεῖς") comparison to stress the sacrifices that Paul had made as a good father would do for his children and family (v.10). The second group concentrates on deprivations ranging from bodily maltreatment to social impoverishments that Paul and other apostles

⁶⁶⁹ Cf. 1 Cor 4:10–13; 2 Cor 4:7–12; 6:4–10; 11:23–12:10; Rom 8:18, 35–9; Phil 3:7–11.

⁶⁷⁰ Italics are for emphasis.

⁶⁷¹ David E. Fredrickson, "Paul, Hardships, and Suffering," in *PGRW* 2:1–25. Horrell, *The Social Ethos*, 115–116.

⁶⁷² A history of scholarship on hardship catalogues by Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ*, 1–23. L. Gregory Bloomquist, *The Function of Suffering in Philippians*, JSNTSup 78 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993). Barclay, *Paul*, 331–3. McFarland, *God and Grace*, 104, 148–9, 152–3.

⁶⁷³ Cf. 2 Cor 4:7–12; 6:4–10; 11:23–12:10. Fredrickson, "Paul," 1–25. Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ*, 1. Collins, *First Corinthians*, 183.

⁶⁷⁴ Collins, *First Corinthians*, 188–9.

experienced in everyday life. These two groups together offer a sharp contrast between a cross-centered apostleship in the image of Christ's self-sacrifice (cf. ὁ σταυρὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ; 1:17; cf. 1:23; 2:2) and a self-centered life in a pathological, φιλοτιμία-driven world that is full of puffed-up talk, seeking self-honor (τὸν λόγον τῶν πεφυσισμένων; 4:19; cf. 4:6,18; cf. 1:26–31).

Moreover, the second group of the peristatic catalogue expands the scope of afflictions from familial disparagement to extrafamilial mistreatment. Paul discloses how apostles have suffered in extreme conditions and been dishonored by worldly powers for the sake of the Christian family. Thus, Paul is not simply contrasting apostles with the other Christians but rather the Christian family with the worldly powers that are opposing Christ's χάρις (2:8; cf. 1:17,23; 2:2). In the end, Paul intends to show his fatherly love for the Corinthian family through his apostolic sufferings—not to shame the Corinthians so as to elevate himself or the other apostles (4:14)—so that they might learn to appreciate the gift of his apostolic service, patterned after Christ's χάρις and manifested in Christ's death and resurrection.

The list of hardships further provides a positive model for imitation while critiquing the Corinthians' worldly mindset.⁶⁷⁵ Although viewing the “we”-“you” comparison as a rhetorical *synchronis* brings out an “ironic critique” of the worldly mentality, it can easily ignore the expression of Paul's paternal love for the Corinthians in the context of familial reciprocity. Yet our introduction of Pitt-Rivers's explanatory paradigm into our discussion helps us retain the focus on Paul as a father who has made sacrifices as a gesture of self-giving *for* his Corinthian children, *not in spite of* them. He insists that apostles undergo hardships *for* the Christian family so that the latter may benefit from their labors (4:10). Garland affirms:

Paul is not defending his idiosyncratic way of living out his Christian calling but presenting the way of the cross as modeled by the apostles. His argument assumes that true apostles of Christ follow the example of Christ, since everything he says about the

⁶⁷⁵ Collins, *First Corinthians*, 139.

apostles' degradation applies also to Christ. In 2 Corinthians, for example, Paul draws a direct parallel between his being "poor, and yet making many rich (2 Cor 6:10) and the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, who "was rich, yet for your sakes became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich" (2 Cor 8:9). Apostles are first (1 Cor 12:28), not because they outrank others. But because they provide the model of a cruciform life.⁶⁷⁶

The hardships—the re-enactment of Christ's self-giving act on the cross—are the apostles' sacrifices for the Christian family. Paul reminds his Corinthian family that he has endured hardships, foreshadowing a cruciform way of life that Timothy would remind them of by his living example (1 Cor 4:16–17).⁶⁷⁷

Furthermore, in view of the discourse of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4–7, how Paul has borne all impoverishment and endured, all mistreatment corresponds to his understanding of the gift of self-giving to the Corinthians as "a still more excellent way" to cherish divine gifts (12:31b).

Additionally, Lim remarks that Paul is an honorable father because "[h]e sets himself as an example of someone who lives by what he preaches."⁶⁷⁸ In this way, we understand that Paul's calling to imitate is not focused on abstract moral precepts but on a concrete Christian way of life embodied in the apostles and Timothy, a beloved child (4:10–13; 17). Moreover, Paul's confession of his former childish ways of life may serve as a negative example for the Corinthian children to avoid because of how he was ignorant of Christ's χάρις (13:11; cf. 15:10–11). Thus, Paul's exhortation of imitation in 4:14–21 is a filial imitation of his grateful sharing of Christ's χάρις and Christ who gives himself as the ultimate gift of life.

When we turn to 2 Corinthians 8–9, we can now see quite clearly that this fatherly intervention in terms of the collection (the χάρις) is intended to help the Corinthian children understand the significance of the Christian return of χάρις (gratitude). On the one hand, Paul perceives that the Corinthian children have not correctly disposed of themselves for fruitful participation in Christ's χάρις (8:1–7; 9:7). Nevertheless, on the other hand, they have not fully realized the purpose of this generous

⁶⁷⁶ Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 139.

⁶⁷⁷ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 374.

⁶⁷⁸ Lim, *Metaphors and Social Identity Formation*, 112. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 145–6.

undertaking by delaying the collection (the χάρις; 8:9; cf. 1 Cor 16:3). The collection is not for personal gain but rather for the benefit of the broader Christian family in order to honor the Lord's ministers and glorify God in the divine gift-economy (9:13–14,19,23,14–15). One of many issues, as Paul perceives it, is that they still lack the ability to recognize the precious gift in the person of Christ given them on account of God's χάρις (graciousness). As noted previously, one's ability to recognize others' generosity through gifts and kindness in gift-giving (including favors and services) is the key to becoming a grateful person in χάρις-reciprocity. Therefore, Paul tries to arouse the Corinthian children to recognize Christ's χάρις and appropriately participate in it through their χάρις (gratitude), with gift-giving representing "immediate gifts" as a sign of good faith.

Accordingly, Paul explains patiently how the Corinthian children ought to respond to Christ's χάρις (generous act) by completing their generous undertaking (the χάρις).⁶⁷⁹ He begins his discourse by addressing that the collection (2 Cor 8:1–9; cf. 1 Cor 16:3) is an honorable act of gratitude (χάρις) that enthusiastically participates in Christ's χάρις. He then encourages the Corinthian children to emulate the generous undertaking (χάρις) of the Macedonians (vv.1–9) and not to delay the completion of their pledged donation (v.10–11). He pleads:

We want you to know, brothers and sisters, about the grace of God [τὴν χάριν] that has been granted to the churches of Macedonia; for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy [τῆς χαρᾶς] and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity [ἀπλότης] on their part. For, as I can testify, they voluntarily [αὐθαίρετοι] gave according to the means, and even beyond their means, begging us earnestly for the privilege [τὴν χάριν] of sharing in this ministry to the saints—and this, not merely as we expected; they gave themselves first to the Lord and by the will of God, to us, so that we might urge Titus that as he already made a beginning, so he should also complete this generous undertaking [τὴν χάριν] among you. Now as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness [σπουδῇ] and in our love for you—so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking [ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ χάριτι]. I do not say this as a command, but I am testing the genuineness of your love [ἀγάπης γνήσιον] against the earnestness [σπουδῇ] of others. For you know the generous act [τὴν χάριν]

⁶⁷⁹ Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 228.

of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich (8:1–9 NRSV).

Before anything else, Paul recapitulates that Christ's χάρις (generous act) is the origin and source of all χάρις (generous acts), henceforth the model of Christian giving and return of χάρις (gratitude).

McFarland succinctly states that “[g]race founds and funds the action of believers: the Christ-gift is generative of human giving, and in giving humans are drawn into the dynamic of God’s gift-economy.”⁶⁸⁰

For this reason, Paul insists that the Corinthian children must recognize how invaluable the gift of the person of Christ is for their new way of life as in generous giving and grateful reciprocating.⁶⁸¹

Therefore, Paul’s recollection of Christ’s χάρις (generous act; vv.1,9) is to foster the Corinthian children’s ability to recognize others’ generosity in gifts and kindness (including favors and services). In the direct speech (1 Cor 4:6–13), Paul already confronts the Corinthian children about their lack of ability to perceive what has been given them and God’s graciousness (v.7).⁶⁸² Their misconception about Paul and other apostles’ hardships displays their further failure to recognize a true gift and gracious gesture (e.g., 4:8–13).⁶⁸³

Due to Paul having chosen to support his initial evangelization with his own hands at Corinth, the misunderstanding became a full-blown accusation about his real intentions.⁶⁸⁴ As a result, some Corinthians took further offense about it (12:11–21), even though Paul had justified renouncing his apostolic right in 1 Corinthians 9:1–27.⁶⁸⁵ In essence, he wants the Corinthian children to know that God’s χάρις inspires him to offer the gospel “free of charge” (ἀδάπανον θήσω) because the Christ-gift is given unmeritedly (vv.16–18; cf. 15:8–11; 2 Cor 11:7). However, this act of generosity is not to put them under

⁶⁸⁰ McFarland, *God and Grace*, 203.

⁶⁸¹ Cf. 1 Cor 1:4; 3:10; 15:10–11, 57–58.

⁶⁸² 1 Cor 4:7; cf. 1:4; 3:10; 12:1ff.; 15:10–11.

⁶⁸³ 4:8–13; 2 Cor 4:7–15; 6:4–13; 11:16–13:4.

⁶⁸⁴ Cf. Acts 18:3; 1 Thess 2:9. Horrell, *The Social Ethos*, 115–6, 210–37. Ronald F. Hock, *The Social Context of Paul’s Ministry: Tentmaking and Apostleship* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 11–25. Stanley E. Porter, *The Apostle Paul: His Life, Thought, and Letters* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 24–27. Theissen, *The Social Setting*, 40. Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth*, 176.

⁶⁸⁵ For example, Horrell, *The Social Ethos*, 211–43. Rice, *Paul and Patronage*, 145–6.

debt in order to make them feel compelled to compensate for his apostolic service. Moreover, Paul intends to refrain from any suspicion that he might have been taking advantage of the recipients of the divine χάρις (cf. 2 Cor 12:16–18; cf. 8:21), even though he deserves support like any other apostle (1 Cor 9:3–12).⁶⁸⁶

Paul revisits the issue of support with frankness in 2 Corinthians 12:11–21. This time, he corroborates with fatherly love through a parent-child narrative. Unlike a patron or benefactor in the Graeco-Roman world, he is a father who has laid no burdens on the Corinthian family for the sake of building up the church (vv.14–20).⁶⁸⁷ In doing so, Paul reinforces that he is interested in them, not what they have or how he could benefit from them like other patrons or benefactors in their knowledge (οὐ γὰρ ζητῶ τὰ ὑμῶν ἀλλὰ ὑμᾶς; v.14). He frankly tells them his intentions; “I will most gladly spend and be spent for you” (v.15a). Therefore, Paul is willing to give himself unconditionally for his Corinthian children.

After all, what he desires is for them to recognize his genuine loving care and then reciprocate with their filial love and affection. So he retorts: “If I love you more, am I to be loved less?” (v.15b,19). Meanwhile, in defending his lifestyle for the apostolic service, Paul proves that he is not all talk (or boasting) since he has sought to contribute to the church’s mission by not burdening others (cf. 2 Cor 12:13–14).⁶⁸⁸ In this way, he aids the Corinthian children to recognize his fatherly way of showing generosity and steadfast love for his family. Hence, in retrospect, how Paul shows his love is consistent with the *encomium* on love in 1 Cor 13:1–13.

Paul counsels the Corinthians that they must reciprocate with a generous spirit and a gracious heart to be grateful. Moreover, the return of their gratitude (χάρις) must seek honor and glorify God (cf.

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid., 212–5, 233–7.

⁶⁸⁷ Ryan S. Schellenberg, “Did Paul Refuse an Offer of Support from the Corinthians?,” *JSNT* 40, no. 3 (2018): 312–36, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0142064x17753331>. Downs, “Was God Paul’s Patron,” 129–56.

⁶⁸⁸ Jan Lambrecht, “Paul’s Boasting about the Corinthians: A Study of 2 Cor. 8:24–9:5,” *NovT* 40, no. 4 (1998): 352–68.

1 Cor 10:31), which is once again following the grace-honor comparison: grace and honor are aligned together; to act gratefully is to act honorably, true in reverse. Then, Paul carefully qualifies that the Corinthians' generous undertaking (the χάρις) as the return of χάρις (gratitude) ought to be done with a sincere heart (ἀπλότης; 8:2; 9:11,13) and voluntarily (αὐθαίρετοι; vv.3,17), as well as with the genuineness of love (ἀγάπης γνήσιον; v.8) and eagerness or earnestness (σπουδῇ; vv.7, 8, 16,22).⁶⁸⁹ The succession of qualifying phrases communicates Paul's deepest concern about having grateful hearts (χάριν ἔχειν) more important than a larger amount of gifts. Paul's clarifications point to the reciprocity of hearts and reliance in the presence of God's χάρις through Christ (i.e., the spirit of gift). Therefore, he anticipates the Corinthian children to present their χάρις (gratitude) with cheerful hearts and offer gifts (the χάρις) willingly rather than reluctantly (cf. 9:7) because, in the end, they are answering to God's χάρις.

In 2 Corinthians 8:1–9, Paul deliberately takes the Macedonians as an example of generous giving (χάρις) because they have given eagerly (σπουδῇ) and voluntarily (αὐθαίρετοι) amid of their ordeal.⁶⁹⁰ More essentially, Paul highlights that the Macedonians' giving is oriented toward the honor and glory of God (cf. 8:19,23; 9:13). He testifies that “they gave themselves first to the Lord and, by the will of God, and to us [πρῶτον τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ ἡμῖν]” (8:5).

At first glance, it seems that Paul goads the Corinthian children to match the generous spirit of the Macedonians who have imitated Christ's χάρις (generous act) in an exemplary way. However, Paul's incentive is different from simply exploiting the Corinthians' cultural sensitivity of loving worldly honor (φιλοτιμία). He has already established that Christ's generous act (χάρις) must be the foundation of their generous undertaking (χάρις) toward all Christian members, which is opposed to the worldly

⁶⁸⁹ Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 554–5, 559–61.

⁶⁹⁰ Blanton, *A Spiritual Economy*, 104–33. Viateur Habarurema, *Christian Generosity According to 2 Corinthians 8–9: Its Exegesis, Reception, and Interpretation Today in Dialogue with the Prosperity Gospel in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Carlisle, Cumbria: Langham Monographs, 2017), 72–94.

honors (vv.1, 9). The hendiadys—grace and the fellowship (τὴν χάριν καὶ τὴν κοινωνίαν; v. 4)—further clarifies that the collection (the χάρις) is the way in which the Macedonians had eagerly participated in the χάρις (generous act) of Christ. In like manner, the Corinthian children must acknowledge that the Macedonians' χάρις is a participation of Christ's χάρις in honoring and glorifying God if they could fulfill their generous act, which is the collection (the χάρις).⁶⁹¹

The fact that Paul emphasizes that the gift is “first to the Lord” highlights one of the most important elements in Paul’s advice about χάρις-reciprocity. Paul repeatedly instructs the Corinthian children to be grateful so that they might render all their deeds honorably for the glory of God (8:19; 9:13).⁶⁹² Massinelli attentively comments that the collection (the χάρις; 8:6–7, 19; cf. 1 Cor 16:3) is the occasion to honor God; “In fact, divine χάρις empowers human generosity and, in Christ, provides a model for it. As a result, the relationship between early Christian groups is transformed so that the collection becomes for Corinth an opportunity to worship and glorify God.”⁶⁹³ In this way, Paul illustrates that Christian ways of giving are not only originated in the divine χάρις but also oriented toward the χάρις of God.

Paul presents Titus and his companions as a further example of χάρις (gratitude) and honor. For Paul, they show their χάρις through genuine love and generous spirit for others. Also, they display honorable characters through a total commitment to the services of the gospel (8:16–9:5).⁶⁹⁴ Again, Paul transitions into a different argument with a thankful note (χάρις δὲ τῷ θεῷ), stemming from his familiarity with Titus (cf. 1 Cor 15:57; 2 Cor 2:14–17).⁶⁹⁵ Paul is χαρίεις (thankful) for granting Titus an exceptional zealous heart for the Corinthians equal to his (διδόντι τὴν αὐτὴν σπουδὴν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐν τῇ

⁶⁹¹ Awet Iassu Andemicael, “Grace, Equity, Participation: The Economy of God in 2 Corinthians 8:8–15,” *ATHR* 98, no. 4 (2016): 621–38.

⁶⁹² Cf. 1 Cor 10:31; 2 Cor 2:20–22; 4:15.

⁶⁹³ Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 232.

⁶⁹⁴ Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 594–630.

⁶⁹⁵ See the relevant discussion on 2 Cor 2:14–17 and 1 Cor 15:57; Lim, *The Sufferings of Christ*, 66.

καρδία Τίτου; vv.16,17). Through his thankfulness (χάρις), Paul subtly insinuates that not only is Titus's genuine heart trustworthy in his service but also that it mirrors his own loving affection for the Corinthian family (vv.19–23). By the same token, this commendation of Titus is the reaffirmation of his own love for the Corinthian children. Later, he urges the Corinthians to do the same in return: “Therefore openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you” (v.24). Hence, Paul must see to it that the Corinthian children reciprocate their love toward Titus and his delegates so to show him the love and honor (i.e., the boasting) that he had been constantly poured out for them.

Next, for Paul, the most outstanding quality of Titus is, as we have already seen, that he, like the Macedonians, orientates his service first and foremost toward the honor of the Lord (v.19; cf. v.5). Paul's high regard for Titus and the Macedonians is grounded in his belief that one's χάρις must be (re)aligned with true honor before honorable people and before God. Thus, he first establishes that Titus is a man of honor because of his total commitment to the service “for the glory of the Lord himself (πρὸς τὴν αὐτοῦ τοῦ κυρίου δόξαν” v.19), which is further proven among all the churches by his proclamation of the good news, for which he is appointed to head the mission (v.18; cf. v.22). Then, he contends that the honorable character of Titus is the reliable conduit to show Paul's own goodwill (προθυμία) and an ideal person to ensure that the collection (the χάρις) remains graceful (honorable) for the Lord himself (πρὸς τὴν αὐτοῦ τοῦ κυρίου δόξαν; v.19).

Furthermore, by approving Titus's zealous heart and honorable character, Paul directs the Corinthian children's attention to recognize the true embodiment of χάρις and honor in Titus. In return, they need to show honor to Titus not only for his integrity but, more importantly, because “they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ” (v.23). Therefore, the collection (the χάρις)—shaped by Christ's χάρις—re-aligns the Corinthians toward the honor of the Lord's ministers and for the glory of God. In other words, human honor and divine grace are integrated as one in the generous act (χάρις) of

Christ and working together for the glory of God, which is consistent with the grace-honor comparison in grace-reciprocity.

Also, Paul intentionally mentions that the gifts of the Macedonians produce joy (χαρᾶς), one of the chief marks of generous giving (1 Cor 8:2).⁶⁹⁶ Correspondingly, he openly encourages the Corinthian children to offer gifts with all sincerity (2 Cor 9:8) and become cheerful givers (9:7), which is further evidence of χάρις-reciprocity. Van Berkel's treatment of χάρις-reciprocity is insightful to broaden our understanding of Paul's χάρις that strives to inspire grateful hearts with joy and sincerity proven in actions. She insists on integrating subjective feelings and objective appearances, active and passive roles in entering into reciprocal relations, and concrete and immaterial referents in meaningful interactions embodied by χάρις.⁶⁹⁷

For instance, the etymological connection of χάρις with χαρά (joy) and χαίρειν (to rejoice) speaks of the cultural significance of the objective χάρις that is inseparable from the subjective χαρά.⁶⁹⁸ In terms of active and passive participation in reciprocity, the joy of the giver and the enjoyment of being favored by the receiver are excellent indications of genuine love and affection.⁶⁹⁹ Likewise, concrete actions (i.e., gifts, favors, and services) with demonstratable virtues like honor and gratitude are necessary for enduring relationships.⁷⁰⁰

With van Berkel's clarifications, we may summarize Paul's essential argument in 2 Corinthians 8–9 this way: Paul urges the Corinthian children first to realize how immeasurable the Christ-gift is and how incredible God's graciousness, then to acknowledge the honorable and grateful character of the

⁶⁹⁶ Cf. Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 1155b33–1156a5; Menander, *Sam.* 4–18; Hippocrates, *Aer.* 22.9. BDAG, 1079. Conzelmann, *TDNT* 9:373; Spicq, *TLNT* 3:500–6.

⁶⁹⁷ A detailed discussion on the etymological connections to χαρά and attributes of χάρις by van Berkel, *The Economics of Friendship*, 81–2. Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 118–9. Pitt-Rivers, "The Place of Grace," 91, 97–8. Da Col and Shryock, in "A Perfect Host," xxvi, xxix. On one of the earliest studies concerning the connection between χάρις and χαρά, see Julius Stenzel, *Philosophie der Sprache* (München: Oldenbourg, [1934] 1964).

⁶⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁶⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁷⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

Macedonians and Titus for they dedicated their χάρις toward the honor of the Lord's work and the glory God. In return, they should be inspired to correspond with joyful and sincere hearts and display concrete actions of support for other family members with visible gifts.⁷⁰¹

At the end of the collection discourse, Paul envisions the Corinthian church becoming a χάρις-filled family in the divine gift-economy thanks to the Christ-gift (2 Cor 9:10–15). Massinelli summarily remarks: "Since the collection has its origin and source in God's gift of χάρις, it is necessary that thanks be offered not to the human contributors but to the divine giver. In Paul's words, the Corinthian generosity produces thanksgiving to God (2 Cor 9:11–12)."⁷⁰² Paul eventually summarizes his exaltation with mixed sower-sowing and harvester-harvesting metaphors:⁷⁰³

As it is written: "They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever." Now, He [God] who supplies [ὁ δὲ ἐπιχορηγῶν] seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply [χορηγήσει] and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that your generosity [ἀπλότητα] will result in thanksgiving to God [εὐχαριστίαν τῷ θεῷ] on every occasion. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the poor but is also overflowing in many expressions of thankfulness to God [εὐχαριστιῶν τῷ θεῷ]. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will give glory to God for the obedience [δοξάζοντες τὸν θεὸν ἐπὶ τῇ ὑποταγῇ] that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity [ἀπλότητι] in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you their longing [ἐπιποθούντων] will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God [τὴν ὑπερβάλλουσαν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ] has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift [δωρεᾶ]!⁷⁰⁴

In this way, Paul encourages the Corinthian children to respond with all eagerness to God's invitation to share Christ's χάρις and to grow into a χάρις-filled community with heightened grateful thanksgiving and practical actions.

In sum, Paul reminds his Corinthian children that he has generously brought the Christ-gift in his founding mission in Corinth in 1 Corinthians 4:14–21. Similarly, he has acted honorably by edifying his

⁷⁰¹ Cf. Fiore and Blanton, "Paul," 186.

⁷⁰² Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 228.

⁷⁰³ Cherian, "Toward a Commonwealth of Grace," 215–7, 249.

⁷⁰⁴ This translation is adopted from NRSV.

Corinthian children with the constant preaching of Christ's χάρις (e.g., 1:3–9; 3:1–11; 12–14; 15:1–58). Moreover, he has given himself unreservedly to the Corinthian children for the good of the Corinthian family by enduring various hardships (e.g., 1 Cor 4:8–13).⁷⁰⁵ He believes that by proclaiming the gospel of Christ's death and resurrection this way, he would become more grateful for the overflowing divine χάρις shown through Christ (e.g., 15:10–11). For this reason, he “worked harder than” other apostles, evidenced in his apostolic lifestyle, and did so “free of charge” (9:1–27; cf. 2 Cor 11:7), laying no burdens on the Corinthian family (2 Cor 12:11–21). However, he is aware that he will never be able to reciprocate the divine χάρις in Christ fully but only offers his grateful heart in thanksgiving and self-giving sacrifices to his Corinthian family so that he might preserve Christ's initial χάρις for the honor and glory of God. Accordingly, he invites the Corinthian children to learn to recognize God's inexpressible χάρις toward them so that they might, like him, willingly participate in Christ's χάρις (the generous act of self-giving) and show honor and gratitude toward the Lord's ministers and thus increase the glory of God. Paul hopes that he, as a spiritual father, has acted honorably and gratefully (including Timothy and Titus) and will therefore be an example for the Corinthian children to follow in honor of him for the glory of God.

C. Paul's Concluding Appeal: “Be Imitators of Me” (1 Cor 4:16)—in Honoring Spiritual Parents and God

The Corinthian correspondence contains the fullest discussions of imitation (1 Cor 4:16 and 11:1) that center on Jesus's death and resurrection as the model of apostolic ministry and the Christian way of

⁷⁰⁵ Cf. 2 Cor 4:7–12; 6:4–13; 11:23–12:10; Phil 2:17. For detailed studies on hardship catalogue 4:9–13 see, John T. Fitzgerald, *Cracks in an Earthen Vessel: An Examination of the Catalogues of Hardships in the Corinthian Correspondence*, SBLDS 99 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988). Michael Byrnes, *Conformation to the Death of Christ and the Hope of Resurrection: An Exegetic–Theological Study of 2 Corinthians 4,7–15 and Philippians 3,7–11*, TGST 99 (Roma: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2003).

life.⁷⁰⁶ Although previous studies have demonstrated a variety of ways to interpret Pauline imitation, they have not considered the vital roles that the parent-child bond of affections and Christ's χάρις play in Paul's exhortation to the Corinthian children to become imitators of him (1 Cor 4:16). By way of conclusion, this section will encapsulate some important theological implications and insist that the content of Pauline imitation should include Paul's religious understanding of χάρις through his living example of sharing the divine χάρις in Christ.

In this third chapter, we apply some new insights from grace-reciprocity to 1 Corinthians 4:14–21. First, we reveal that Paul's family and grace languages are interconnected in speaking of the divine χάρις in Christ apportioned to his apostolic service for the good of the Corinthian family. Specifically, Paul's spiritual parenthood is characterized by the gift of apostleship and apostolic mission, originated from, and constantly sustained by Christ's χάρις (e.g., 1 Cor 3:10; 4:15; 15:9–11). Secondly, we maintain that Paul is an honorable father who is grateful in words and actions (e.g., 1 Cor 1:3–9; 4:9–13). Therefore, we propose that Paul's appeal to filial imitation is not a mere manipulative tactic for social dominance but rather an invitation to participate in Christ's χάρις cheerily and his grace-filled life and to honor him as a spiritual father for the glory of God.

For Paul, Christ's χάρις has re-created him from his spiritual deadness and re-established him as a gift that keeps on giving to the Corinthian children and family (e.g., 15:1–11). It further shapes him, empowers his apostolic ministry, and makes him part of the ultimate divine gift of Christ's death and resurrection. For this reason, he is a grateful steward who works more studiously to be a worthy servant before the Lord (e.g., 4:1–2). As a grateful father, he generously offers the Christ-gift to the Corinthians for their salvation in his founding mission (e.g., 4:15). As a worthy servant of the Lord, he acts as a responsible father to the Corinthian family established and entrusted by Christ's χάρις for their ongoing

⁷⁰⁶ Ibid., 184–6. Knootz, "The Imitation of Paul," 75–84. Ehrensperger, "Be Imitators of Me," 147–70. Harrison, "The Imitation," 213–254.

moral and spiritual development so that they might grow into the body of Christ. By portraying himself as an “untimely born” (15:8), he is self-conscious of his gift of apostleship that does not result from his worthiness but God’s incredible graciousness. He avows that his gift of apostleship bestowed by Christ’s χάρις is for the honor and glory of God, not for worldly honors and selfish gains. Finally, as an honorable father, he demonstrates his χάρις (gratitude) by unreservedly dedicating his life to the apostolic service both in thankful prayers and self-giving sacrifices to the Corinthian family.

Now, we are at a new vantage point to re-read Paul’s imitation and final admonishment in 1 Corinthians 1–4 as an appeal and invitation to share in Christ’s χάρις readily. When he says: “What would you prefer? Am I to come to you with a stick, or with love in a spirit of gentleness (ἐν ἀγάπῃ πνεύματι τε πραΰτητος,” 4:21), Paul sincerely hopes that the Corinthian children will choose of their own accord to reciprocate with honor and gratitude by imitating his example of life in Christ’s χάρις. In this way, he asks them to spare him from bringing a harsh “rod” of judgment commonly associated in this society with the ungrateful and ultimately by God as the worst kind of people.

Paul anticipates that the Corinthians, whom he loves as his children, will imitate his ways in Christ, first of all, in order to help them recognize God’s χάρις (graciousness) in the Christ-gift and respond with χάρις (gratefulness) in honor of God. Secondly, he shows how the Corinthians’ filial imitation will bring them to re-center their lives on the Christ-gift and become grateful children in honor of him. In short, he invites the Corinthian children to share Christ’s χάρις through their grateful and loving hearts in honor of him as a spiritual father and God the Father of all.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

This thesis thoroughly investigates the understudied parent-child relations in 1 Corinthians 4:14–21 and the Corinthian correspondence with anthropological insights into honor and grace. Chapter one discovers a twofold lacuna: the underlining issues of family studies in 1 Corinthians 1–4 and cultural values of honor and grace within the Corinthian correspondence. Chapter two then scrutinizes Pitt-Rivers’s anthropology of grace in the Mediterranean contexts to amend the previous approaches to family, honor, and gift-reciprocity. It further identifies the essential features of grace-reciprocity about social honor and familial reciprocity beneficial for comprehending parent-child relations in classical and biblical cultures. Finally, chapter three applies some of the illustrated anthropological insights from grace-reciprocity to 1 Corinthians 4:14–21 and the Corinthian correspondence concerning Paul’s vision of God’s family in the divine gift-economy. In doing so, I also offer a fresh look at Paul’s religious message of God’s χάρις in Christ and his parent-child spiritual relations in the mission of proclaiming the gospel for the good of the Corinthian family. In this final chapter, I will suggest how this social-scientific approach to parent-child interactions in the Corinthian correspondence can also contribute to our understanding of honoring parents theologically.

Toward a Theological Understanding of Honoring Parents

Methodologically, my thesis builds upon previous social-scientific approaches to family, honor, and gift-reciprocity by reconsidering Pitt-Rivers’s cultural value of grace and the principles of grace-reciprocity for a fuller understanding of parent-child relations in the biblical world. On the one hand, it addresses previous social-scientific studies of family that treat family language almost exclusively as metaphors and rare interactions with everyday family life governed by the cultural values of honor and grace, both

embedded in the social ethos of reciprocity of the Mediterranean cultures ancient and modern. On the other hand, it proposes an alternative approach to social-scientific insights of honor (and shame) and gift-reciprocity preoccupied with *public* social exchanges like patronage and benefaction.

I have sought to show how this new paradigm of honor and grace is more suitable for discerning parent-child relations as a distinct category different from other extrafamilial reciprocity. Moreover, this new paradigm complements Malina's duly well-known honor-shame model and the Maussian mechanisms of gift-reciprocity for a more well-adjusted approach to familial reciprocity and the familial bonds of affections and spiritual relations arising from graciously giving—imposing no obligations—and gratefully reciprocating. Consequently, it presents a more satisfactory explanation of familial and spiritual bonds of affections conveyed in the Corinthian letters and their roles in the Corinthians' moral and spiritual maturity in building up the body of Christ.

Concerning parent-child relations in Pauline studies, the focus on grace-reciprocity offers a different reading of 1 Corinthians 4:14–21 and its two related issues—the social understanding of *paterfamilias* and Pauline imitation—from previous studies of the cultural and religious milieux. Although a few studies have paid tribute to the social non-elites from the perspective of children and childhood, most studies have concentrated on *paterfamilias* and paternal roles, as well as the social functions of power relations in the form of the founder, patron, and benefactor in the Graeco-Roman and Jewish cultures. As a result of these *foci*, many studies have overlooked Paul's central concept of χάρις within his apostolic mission of proclaiming the gospel and the nuances of his parent-child expressions as familial reciprocity for a comprehensive understanding of parent-child interactions (including filial imitation) in the family of God.

Through a critical examination of anthropological grace, we can confirm that Pitt-Rivers's inclusion of the possibility of “free” gift—based on the theological notion of God's grace and the

common practices in the Mediterranean cultures—sheds new light on Paul’s language of family and χάρις. The “free” gift hypothesis espouses the possibility of non-reciprocity that embodies a different kind of familial exchange that imposes no obligations of return-gifts, favors, and services but inspires genuine loving respect and gratitude. It further establishes that genuine graciousness and gratitude in the ongoing giftship are vital for understanding moral and spiritual developments and the unique features of familial and spiritual connectedness in the biblical world. In other words, by focusing on grace-reciprocity as reciprocity of hearts and the spirit of gift, this refinement allows familial reciprocity to be treated in its own category because of the genuine familial bond of affections, including joy, honor, and gratitude. In turn, we can presume that long-term familial and spiritual relations reflect non-reciprocal exchanges that seek genuine love and true generosity and gratitude. Indeed, meaningful familial and spiritual relations do not focus on reciprocating material or prescribed gifts, favors, and services of equal or more value but on a sincere return of grace (i.e., reciprocity of hearts with gratitude in grateful words and actions) to preserve the initial grace (offered both in gracious gesture and favors themselves, i.e., the spirit of gift or the life-giving spirit).

Moreover, this new paradigm of honor and grace underscores how subjective or affective aspects of social exchanges are essential for interpreting familial reciprocity and interpersonal relations. Subsequently, it shows that feelings like enjoyment, honor, gratitude and religious convictions play crucial roles in shaping one’s moral behaviors and developing spiritual maturity. Significantly, the affections of honor and gratitude are indispensable in grace-reciprocity and must not be overlooked in long-term relationships like those of parents and children and of God and humans in the Corinthian contexts.

By applying these new insights concerning grace-reciprocity to 1 Corinthians 4:14–21 and the Corinthian correspondence, we begin to appreciate Paul’s parent-child expressions and language of χάρις anew. Specifically, chapter three concentrates on the idea of “free” gift or non-reciprocity

(imposing no obligations of return gifts, favors, and services), the presuppositions of true generosity and gratitude for long-term relations, and the roles of positive affections like joy, honor, and gratitude and religious beliefs in one's moral and spiritual development. Moreover, it utilizes the patterns drawn from the honor-grace comparison (interchangeable, complementary, and contradictory) and explores demonstrations of gratitude in both words and actions as the hallmarks of grace-reciprocity.

Here I want to suggest that in achieving these results, we can begin to draw theological implications from a deeper understanding of Paul's vision for his Corinthian family in light of Christ's χάρις. Firstly, we rediscover that Paul consciously builds on family and grace language to insist that his spiritual parent-child relationship with the Corinthians not only proceeded from the divine initial χάρις in the Christ-gift (in both the gracious gesture and the favor itself) but must also be maintained with their return of χάρις (gratitude) in Christ's χάρις ("free" gift and the life-giving spirit).⁷⁰⁷ Therefore, Paul believes that his apostolic services of preaching and Christian practice of mutual gift-giving are imprinted in Christ's χάρις because Christ has generously given himself to the ungodly (e.g., 1 Cor 3:10; 4:14–17; 15:9–11; cf. 2 Cor 8–9). For this reason, he is convinced that Christ's χάρις should always found and fund all the demonstrations of Christian χάρις (gratitude) in thanksgiving and actions so that all their χάρις will become a necessary means to participate joyfully in the divine gift-economy for building up the body of Christ and for the glory of God the Father (e.g., 1 Cor 10:31; cf. 2 Cor 4:15; 8:19; 9:15).⁷⁰⁸

Secondly, viewing the divine χάρις in the person of Jesus Christ as a "free" gift allows us to reconfirm the non-reciprocal nature of God's χάρις (1 Cor 4:15; cf. 9:18; 2 Cor 11:7). God's self-giving love is remarkably demonstrated through the immense generosity in the Christ-gift of one who willingly

⁷⁰⁷ In the Corinthians: "beneficence" in 1 Cor 1:3; 16:23; 2 Cor 1:2; 4:15; 6:1; 9:14; 12:9; 13:13; "benefaction" 1 Cor 3:10; 15:10 (3x); 16:3; 2 Cor 1:12,15; 8:1,4,6,7,9,19; 9:8; "gratitude," 1 Cor 1:4; 10:30; 15:57; 2 Cor 2:14; 8:16; 9:15.

⁷⁰⁸ McFarland, *God and Grace*, 212–3.

gives himself to unworthy humanity in his life, death, and resurrection (1 Cor 15:1–58).⁷⁰⁹ Moreover, for Paul, Christ is the first fruit of the resurrection and the life-giving spirit who regenerates humanity from sin and death (1 Cor 15:20–58), which is non-reciprocal because of Christ’s self-giving act and because the Christ-event cannot be reversed or undone; one can only but remain grateful. In addition, God transcends time, which, in turn, makes His graciousness and His generous gift in the person of Jesus non-reciprocal because the divine χάρις, especially the event of death and resurrection, has reached a point of no return in the divine gift-economy. Indeed, God’s generous gift in the person of Jesus Christ is independent of any prior human beneficence and, hence, is the *first true* “free” gift, which can neither be compared with nor be reciprocated by any human beneficence, whether by degree or in kind.

As Paul repeatedly mentions, he believes that he is graced to be an apostle, though undeservedly (3:10; 4:15; 15:1–11), and he is thus inspired to be the *first* to offer the “free” Christ-gift to the Corinthians. As an apostle, he becomes more grateful and acts honorably by being a responsible father (4:15) and a loving mother (3:1–2) for the Corinthians’ moral and spiritual development (v.16). By presenting to them his faithful child Timothy, Paul reminds the Corinthian family of Christ’s way of life in which he has thankfully participated (v.17).⁷¹⁰ Then, as a responsible father, he sternly admonishes some of them who allowed themselves to be obsessed with worldly honors through puffed-up talk and playing favorites (4:18–20; cf. 6–7). For Paul, such behaviors are despicable in God’s family because they are contrary to Christ’s χάρις bestowed freely on them (4:6–7; 18–20); their arrogance undermines the power of Christ’s cross (1:17); and lastly, their inflated talk is at risk of making a mockery of Christ’s self-sacrifice on the cross and the apostles’ sufferings (e.g., 4:9–13; cf. 1:17; 2:2).

Thirdly, highlighting affections like joy, honor, and gratitude in Paul’s letter helps us appreciate that he shares a genuine parent-child bond with the Corinthians and longs for an enduring spiritual

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid., 151.

⁷¹⁰ Bloomquist, *The Function*, 173–178.

relationship with them in Christ's χάρις (e.g., 1 Cor 4: 14–21; 2 Cor 12:11–21). Furthermore, it shows that Paul is a grateful and honorable person, which he demonstrates through numerous thanksgivings for God's χάρις in his apostolic mission (e.g., 1 Cor 1:3–9; 2 Cor 1:3–11) and the catalogue of his hardships as expressions of his self-giving love for the Corinthian children (e.g., 1 Cor 4:9–13).⁷¹¹ Paul endures all these afflictions joyfully despite the pains and tribulations (cf. 2 Cor 2:1–4; 12:11–21) because he genuinely loves the Corinthians and is proud of them (1 Cor 4:14,21; 1 Cor 15:31; cf. 2 Cor 8:24).⁷¹² He sincerely hopes that the Corinthian children learn to recognize God's true graciousness in the Christ-gift and the gift of his apostolic ministry for them (1 Cor 4:14-15; cf. 2 Cor 8–9). For him, Christ has suffered death and is raised again as the first fruit of the resurrection, the *true* “free” gift, so that the Corinthian family and all people might share in Christ's life-giving spirit for the spiritual renewal from their deadness (1 Cor 15:1–58; cf. 2:2,23; 4:18–20).

Importantly, we learn that Paul directs his gratitude (χάρις) firstly toward God, for God is the Father of all and the source of all graces (e.g., 1 Cor 1:3–9; 8:6; 10:31; cf. 2 Cor 8:5; 9:15). Likewise, he advises his Corinthian family to do the same in the Jerusalem collection (2 Cor 8–9; cf. 1 Cor 4:16-17; 11:1). For the sake of the Corinthian children, Paul sincerely hopes that his gratitude in words and actions will be an example so that they may begin to acknowledge God's overflowing χάρις in Christ (e.g., 4:16–17; cf. 11:1). In return, they may willingly reciprocate in their grateful hearts and actions with one another and with God the Father. To this end, they may mature morally and spiritually by becoming more grateful and honorable followers of Christ for the glory of God (e.g., 1 Cor 1:3–9; 4:16–17; 8:6).⁷¹³

⁷¹¹ Cf. 1 Cor 4:10–13; 2 Cor 4:7–12; 6:4–10; 11:23–12:10; Rom 8:18, 35–9; Phil 3:7–11.

⁷¹² Ibid., on “afflictions”; on “joy,” 2 Cor 2:14; 7:13–16; 13:11; cf. Phil 3:1; 4:4. Conzelmann, *TDNT* 9:373; Spicq, *TLNT* 3:500–6. Massinelli, *For Your Sake*, 118–9. William G. Maurice, “Joy,” *DPL*, 511-2. Bloomquist, “Subverted by Joy.”

⁷¹³ Cf. 12:1ff; 2 Cor 1:3–11; 4:15; 8:1–9:15.

Finally, it suggests that Paul's appeal to "be imitators of me" (1 Cor 4:16) is his sincere offer of "love in a spirit of gentleness" (v.21) to the Corinthian children. We conclude that Paul's appeal to filial imitation is not a manipulative tactic for social dominance but rather an invitation to the Corinthian children for their fuller participation in Christ's χάρις and his grace-filled life in honoring him as a spiritual father in the Lord and for the glory of God.⁷¹⁴

Toward an Intercultural Dialogue for Today's Biblical Studies of Family

In view of these theological insights, this research presents a multifaceted dialogue between history, modern social sciences, and Christian theology as part of an historical investigation that can benefit future New Testament studies of family relations and grace.⁷¹⁵ Procedurally, it concentrates on Pauline Christianity and texts, especially 1 Cor 4, through an in-depth examination of family history, social theories of honor and reciprocity, and a Christian theology of grace. Firstly, to situate parent-child relations properly in Pauline Christianity, we explore the familial imageries and social functions of *paterfamilias* and children within their Graeco-Roman and Jewish cultural matrix (e.g., Moxnes, Balla, Aasgaard, and Lim). Secondly, we discuss how cultural values like honor and grace—embedded in the social ethos of reciprocity—have not been fully utilized for understanding parent-child and God-human dynamics in the biblical world (e.g., Harrison, Crook, Barclay, and McFarland). Consequently, we are prompted to explore the notion of God's grace as "free" gift in the Mediterranean cultures (i.e., Pitt-Rivers; cf. van Berkel) to re-contemplate Paul's use of parent-child imagery and rediscover the unique

⁷¹⁴ Cf. 1:3–9; 4:16,21; 10:31; cf. 2 Cor 4:15; 9:14–15.

⁷¹⁵ E.g., Esler, *New Testament Theology*, 1–66; further readings see Moxnes, "Social-Scientific Readings," 160–71; Elliott, *What Is Social-Scientific Criticism; The First Christians*, 1–36; Malina, *The New Testament World*, 1–26; Moxnes, *Constructing Early Christian Families*, 13–41; Balla, *The Child-Parent Relationships*; Aasgaard, "History of Research on Children," 13–38; Moxnes, "Social-Scientific Readings," 160–71; issues concerning history, philosophy, and Christian theology, see Larsen, *The Slain God*; Meneses and Bronkema, *On Knowing Humanity*; Furani, *Redeeming Anthropology*.

ways of Christian giving and authentic the spiritual bonds between Christian leaders and their communities in the divine gift-economy.

More importantly, this investigation proposes alternative methods for how current biblical-theological discourse may fruitfully engage with anthropology and history. The intense relationship between Christian theology and the human sciences in biblical interpretation has become more complicated with the rise of social-scientific approaches to the Bible.⁷¹⁶ However, my study shows how social-scientific studies, as a subdiscipline of historical-critical exegesis, can be, *in and of themselves*, bearers of theological truth.⁷¹⁷ For example, by critically utilizing anthropological insights, I have sought to invite modern readers to enter into an interpersonal and intersubjective dialogue with biblical authors like the Apostle Paul, even while remaining fully conscious of the cultural differences between the biblical world and ours.⁷¹⁸ But it is precisely these cultural differences that have important implications for the reading itself, since this undertaking suggests a meaningful and authentic intercultural dialogue that ought to encourage modern readers to read respectfully and listen attentively to the religious messages of other ancient writers and spiritual fathers like Paul, even though the ancients' ideas may be profoundly different from ours.⁷¹⁹ In doing so, we can discern cultural differences and, more significantly, similarities—"typical probabilities" of behavior—between Paul's world and ours and, within our world, differences among cultures today.⁷²⁰

⁷¹⁶ For example, Robert Morgan and John Barton, "Theology and Social Sciences," in *Biblical Interpretation*, Oxford Bible Series (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 133–64; Esler, *New Testament Theology*; James K. Mead, *Biblical Theology: Issues, Methods, and Themes* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007); Edward W. Klink and Darian R. Lockett, *Understanding Biblical Theology: A Comparison of Theory and Practice* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012).

⁷¹⁷ Esler, *New Testament Theology*, 36.

⁷¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 38–66, 191–212, 229–72. Moxnes, "Social-Scientific Readings," 160–71; Malina, "Rhetorical Criticism and Social-Scientific Criticism," 5–6. Crook, "Critical Notes," 515–20. Esler, "Models," 1–20. Elliott, "Social-Scientific Criticism," 1–10.

⁷¹⁹ Esler, *New Testament Theology*, 8,

⁷²⁰ *Ibid.*, 51–2.

With such respectful attentiveness, this study also intends to foster a grateful attitude socially and theologically toward ancient writers as forefathers like St. Paul, recognizing them as those who offered distinct ways of wrestling with cultural and religious questions of honor and reciprocity in their own contexts.⁷²¹ In particular, highlighting χάρις in the Corinthian correspondence guides us to perceive Paul's unique spiritual vision of God's family through his apostolic preaching of Christ's χάρις (4:14ff), the first fruit[s] of thanksgiving (1 Cor 15:23; cf. 1:3–9) and the life-giving spirit (15:45). In reconfirming the non-reciprocal nature of God's χάρις, we can partake of the joy of the gospel and Paul as the *first* one who has eagerly presented the Christ-gift to the Corinthians on account of God's *true* "free" gift in Christ granted to him. In this way, we can begin to make sense of why Paul as a father gratefully offers his life to his Corinthian children by making enormous sacrifices even as Christ has done. It is thus with gratitude that our hearts are opened as readers who can entertain Paul's message of God's χάρις in the person of Christ. As a result, Christian families who read and appropriate this message today may, in like manner, renew their lives with thanksgiving for the life-giving spirit in the Christ-event and eagerly participate in Christ's χάρις in the divine gift-economy.

We can see the importance of this understanding by reflecting on our situation today, especially as it relates to Christian living (e.g., worship and charity) in the Church and the mission to the world. As regards Christian worship, Jesus Christ is the first fruit[s] of thanksgiving offered in the family of God. Just as the first fruit[s] of resurrection is offered as the thanksgiving to God the Father,⁷²² so also celebrating the Eucharist is an action of thanksgiving for God's favor shown in the Christ-gift, by which

⁷²¹ Ibid., 253–4.

⁷²² Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1223–4.

the Church, the family of God, expresses her gratitude joyfully toward God's generosity in the Christ-gift.⁷²³

Moreover, the Christ-gift is, in itself, a source of joy for Christians. As Pope Francis eloquently states: "The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew."⁷²⁴ In particular, St. Paul's understanding of divine grace (χάρις)—infused with parent-child language—effectively describes what is most central to Christian worship and which reaches its climax in Holy Week and the Easter Triduum.⁷²⁵ Namely, how God the Father has graciously given his Son Jesus Christ as the most precious Gift to humanity so that all Christians and non-Christians might share an eternal life through Christ's resurrection (cf. 1 Cor 15:1–58). Therefore, how can we speak of the Eucharist without being centered on how Christ has been graciously given to us on the cross? By joyfully participating in the Eucharist, we can share Christ's resurrection life with the divine generous giving and thanksgiving, which is what Easter Sunday signifies.

Furthermore, Christ has become the life-giving spirit in his resurrection, perpetually offered to the world (1 Cor 15:45). He inspires the Christ-followers to share joyfully in the divine gift-community. That is, Christian families are called to participate in the mission of Christ by constantly preaching the gospel—Christ as the life-giving spirit to renew a world that is dying spiritually. The joy of the gospel—

⁷²³ For example, see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2000), #1328, #1360. Eugene LaVerdiere, *The Eucharist in the New Testament and the Early Church* (Liturgical Press, 2016). Tom Greggs, "In Gratitude for Grace: Praise, Worship and the Sanctified Life," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 70.2 (2017): 147–65, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0036930617000047>. A. William DeJong, *Eucharistic Reciprocity: A Practical Theological Inquiry into the Virtue of Gratitude* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2019). Kimberly Hope Belcher, *Eucharist and Receptive Ecumenism: From Thanksgiving to Communion* (Cambridge University Press, 2020).

⁷²⁴ Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2013), #1.

⁷²⁵ Vatican Council II, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, in *Vatican Council II: Constitutions, Degrees, Declarations*, ed. Austin Flannery, OP (Northport: Costello, 1996). Catholic Church, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, ## 1169–71. Vincent Ryan, "Every Sunday an Easter Sunday: The Christian Meaning of Sunday According to the New Constitution," *The Furrow* 15.5 (1964): 298–311.

God's graciousness and the Christ-gift—are meant to be shared not only within the family of God but also with a world in need of repentance of sins for healing through God's mercy and forgiveness.⁷²⁶ God's graciousness reached Paul by forgiving his trespasses and showing a new hope and life in Christ's death on the cross and resurrection (1 Cor 15:1–11).⁷²⁷ Consequently, Christian families are summoned to preach repentance for the forgiveness of sins to all peoples with a renewed understanding of Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection (1 Cor 15:1–58; cf. Lk 24:45–47).⁷²⁸

Concerning love, Christians today, like the Corinthians in their social world, should strive to avoid inflated talk and a pathological pursuit of worldly honors that are not consistent with Christian charity.⁷²⁹ These problems include but are not limited to playing or seeking favors against one another, claiming self-honor and importance on account of the divine grace (1 Cor 4:6–7, 18–20; cf. 1:26–31), which manifest ignorance of Christ's χάρις given through his suffering, death, resurrection for our redemption (15:1–58).

Particularly, spiritual leaders must refrain from acclaiming self-importance in their service to the gospel in imitating and honoring St. Paul. They should not use their apostolic services as an opportunity

⁷²⁶ On grace as mercy and forgiveness, see Pitt-Rivers, "The Place of Grace," 82, 88. For instance, Barclay, *Paul*, 536–76, on God's incongruous grace as mercy shown toward sinful humanity. William A. Wright, "Salvation Determined Solely by Justification: 'God's Mercy Alone and Christ's Merit,'" in *Calvin's Salvation in Writing: A Confessional Academic Theology*, Studies in Reformed Theology 29 (Brill, 2015), 143–86, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004292321_005. Pope Francis, *The Name of God Is Mercy*, trans. Oonagh Stransky (New York, NY: Penguin Random House, 2016). Conrad Gempf, "Paul, the Gift, and Jesus; or What Happened to the Jesus Tradition?," *EvQ* 89.4 (2018): 311–17, <https://doi.org/10.1163/27725472-08904003>. Ligita Ryliškytė, "God's Mercy: The Key Thematic Undercurrent of Paul's Letter to the Romans," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 81, no. 1 (January 2019): 85–105, <https://doi.org/10.1353/cbq.2019.0052>.

⁷²⁷ E.g., 1 Cor 1:17–18; 2:2; 2 Cor 4:7–12; 6:9–10; 13:4; cf. Phil 2:8.

⁷²⁸ Just to name a few, Walter Kasper, *Mercy: The Essence of the Gospel and the Key to Christian Life* (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 2014). David Jasper, "Seeking Forgiveness and Retrieving a Theological Sense of Being Human: Leuven, 2014," in *Literature and Theology as a Grammar of Assent* (Routledge, 2016), 111–24, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315592671-9>. Patrick W. Carey, *Confession: Catholics, Repentance, and Forgiveness in America* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018). Wiesław Przygoda, "The Mercy of God as the Foundation of Charity of the Church," *Diacovensia* 27, no. 4 (2020): 637–51, <https://doi.org/10.31823/d.27.4.4>.

⁷²⁹ Cynthia Damon, *The Mask of the Parasite: A Pathology of Roman Patronage* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1997). Oprisko, *Honor*, 133–56.

to manipulate or lord it over those under their care for personal gains and selfish interests (cf. 2 Cor 1:24). Instead, they ought to offer themselves as self-sacrifice, like Christ's own on the cross, for the good of Christian families (1 Cor 1:17; cf. 1:23; 2:2). Servants of the gospel like St. Paul in proclaiming the Christ-gift need to be responsible and honorable spiritual parents to their communities as they proclaim the Christ-gift. Therefore, they should offer timely admonishments or encouragements with divine gifts bestowed on them (1 Cor 4:14ff; cf. 3:10ff). Especially when the Christian family appears to be ignorant of or to have forgotten God's graciousness in the Christ-gift, they must resolutely remind their spiritual children that the gospel of the Christ-gift is the foundation and mission of their Christian way of life (4:16ff; cf. 3:10ff). But equally important is that they should do so by setting an example and showing them how to be grateful children in the way of Christ Jesus (1 Cor 4:16–17; cf. 11:1), being respectful of others, always seeking higher values in God (10:23–33) and being charitable and generous (2 Cor 8–9).

Conversely, the followers of Christ who are their spiritual children must avoid playing favors with one spiritual leader over another (1 Cor 4:6), which could cause potential factions and fractions within and among Christian families (1:13–17; 3:4–7, 21–23). Likewise, they should avoid routinizing or ritualizing their participation in spiritual and actual gifts without sincerity or grateful hearts (1 Cor 12–14; 2 Cor 8–9). Ideally, Christ-followers are summoned to cherish all spiritual gifts and strive to perfect them in love for building up the body of Christ (1 Cor 12–14). These divine gifts are given to redress the malady of worldly honors lest the Christ-followers become ingrates or children of their own cultures rather than children of a gracious God in Christ's χάρις (cf. 1 Cor 1:26–31; 2:1–16; 2 Cor 6:14–18).⁷³⁰

As this study suggests, an anthropological understanding of grace in its religious origin—corroborated with a thorough reading of 1 Corinthians 4:14–21—recontextualizes the temporality of Christian giving and gratitude and the transcendentality of the Christ-gift. Christ's χάρις in this

⁷³⁰ Berger, "Gratitude," 303–5. Pitt-Rivers, "The Place of Grace," 98–9; "The Malady of Honor," 105–118.

eschatological age defies any conceived *raison d'être* and refuses to be reduced to any economic, legal, or moral justifications since it constantly moves beyond the limits of any received social norms and perceived horizon of time. Therefore, Christians in every age must be fully aware that Christ's χάρις ("the first fruits of thanksgiving" and "the life-giving spirit") inspires them to be truly generous and grateful for the glory of God rather than looking for personal gains and self-honor in the family of God.

On the other hand, like the Corinthians, we, too, are invited to join our grateful hearts to that of St. Paul, the spiritual forefather who first experienced the Christ-gift joyfully and offered it unreservedly to his spiritual children as a *bona fides* for the divine favors bestowed. With a grateful heart, we, too, can learn to recognize all divine and human generosity and respond appreciatively as a sign of good faith. Also, on account of God's generous giving in Christ, we may learn to enjoy genuine interactions with others and cherish all enduring relationships with demonstrations of gratitude verbally and practically so that we may continue to grow mature morally and spiritually with our spiritual leaders for the sake of proclaiming the gospel.

Ultimately, with thanksgiving and generous giving, Christians today can gratefully preserve Christ's initial χάρις ("the life-giving spirit") through the filial imitation of spiritual parents like Paul for the honor of the Lord and the glory of God the Father to advance the gospel of Christ to the world. Overall, this study demonstrates how social-scientific studies of the Bible can be a vital part of historical and literary criticism and biblical hermeneutics and how they can nurture us to present the sacred scriptures anew to modern readers for discerning theological meaning.

Finally, it is my hope that this thorough examination of grace-reciprocity can advance a social and philosophical discourse regarding filial duties (i.e., honoring parents) that will result in a more robust discussion concerning gratitude theory and filial morality for both Christian theology and the study of classical literature (e.g., van Berkel). True, my exploration of parent-child relations has only

established a fresh understanding of the cultural and religious presentation of grace within the New Testament world and ancient Graeco-Roman cultures,⁷³¹ but it should provide significant, new avenues for meaningful intercultural dialogues between, for example, the biblical understanding of honoring parents and the Confucian way of showing filial reverence.⁷³² For I am convinced that this study has potential for shedding light on the Confucian notion of *xiao* (孝) and gratitude studies in Eastern Asian contexts and its implications for the inculturation of Christian theology in the East.⁷³³

⁷³¹ In the classical and biblical world: e.g., Wagenvoort, “*Pietas*”; Hoklotubbe, *Civilized Piety*; Garrison, *Pietas*; Kranjc, “*Virtues in the Law*”; Janet Ann Berardo, “*Familial Transcendence as Exemplified by Pietas in the ‘Aeneid’*” (Ph.D. diss., Minnesota, Walden University, 2002).

Khiok-Khng Yeo, “*The Rhetorical Hermeneutic of 1 Corinthians 8 and Chinese Ancestor Worship*,” *BibInt* 2.3 (1994): 294–311, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156851594X00105>. Rosemont and Ames, “*Family Reverence (Xiao)*”; William Lakos, *Chinese Ancestor Worship: A Practice and Ritual Oriented Approach to Understanding Chinese Culture* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010); Paulin Batairwa Kubuya, *Meaning and Controversy within Chinese Ancestor Religion* (Palgrave Macmillan: Springer International Publishing, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-70524-8>; William Sin, “*Esoteric Confucianism, Moral Dilemmas, and Filial Piety*,” in *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Historical, Contemporary, and Pedagogical Perspectives*, ed. James M. Ambury, Tushar Irani, and Kathleen Wallace (Malden, MA: Wiley, 2020), 45–64.

⁷³² An excellent introduction to Christian understanding of filial piety and Confucian notion of *xiao* by James St. André, “*Consequences of the Conflation of Xiao and Filial Piety in English*,” *Translation and Interpreting Studies* 13, no. 2 (2018): 293–316, <https://doi.org/10.1075/tis.00017.sta>. See the discussions on literary transformations of filial piety and *pietas* in Graeco-Roman and early Christian cultures by Kranjc, “*Virtues in the Law*”; Garrison, *Pietas*.

Filial Piety (*Pietas*) and gratitude in Graeco-Roman contexts: D’Angelo, “*Ευσεβεια*.” Hoklotubbe, *Civilized Piety*. Saller, *Patriarchy*. Natali, “*Pietas*.” Berdowski, “*Pietas Erga Patriam*”; Rushdy, *Philosophies of Gratitude*, 19–47. Van Wees, “*The Law of Gratitude*,” 13–49. Maehle, “*The Economy of Gratitude*,” 55–90. Filial piety in Eastern Asian contexts: especially, Alan Kam-leung Chan and Sor-Hoon Tan, eds., *Filial Piety in Chinese Thought and History* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

Other related studies: for example, Gary G. Hamilton, “*Patriarchy, Patrimonialism, and Filial Piety: A Comparison of China and Western Europe*,” *The British Journal of Sociology* 41, no. 1 (1990): 77–104, <https://doi.org/10.2307/591019>; William P. Brown, *The Ten Commandments: The Reciprocity of Faithfulness* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004); Paul G. Kuntz, *The Ten Commandments in History: Mosaic Paradigms for a Well-Ordered Society*, Emory University Studies in Law and Religion (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004); Richard L. Kaplan, “*Honoring Our Parents: Applying the Biblical Imperative in the Context of Long-Term Care*,” *Notre Dame Journal of Law, Ethics & Public Policy* 21, no. 2 (2007): 493–515; Carolyn Chen, “*From Filial Piety to Religious Piety: Evangelical Christianity Reconstructing Taiwanese Immigrant Families in the United States*,” *International Migration Review* 40, no. 3 (2006): 573–602, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2006.00032.x>; Roger Van Harn, *The Ten Commandments for Jews, Christians, and Others* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007); Jeffrey P. Greenman and Timothy Larsen, eds., *The Decalogue through the Centuries: From the Hebrew Scriptures to Benedict XVI* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012); Edith M. Meyerson, Diane E. Meier, and Allison Kestenbaum, “*Honoring Thy Parent(s): Applying the Spiritual Domain in Palliative Care Decision Making*,” *Journal of Law and Religion* 31, no. 2 (2016): 183–96, <https://doi.org/10.1017/JLR.2016.13>.

⁷³³ For example, Keller, “*Four Theories*.” Jeske, “*Special Obligations*.” Ivanhoe, “*Filial Piety*.” Tudge and Freitas, *Developing Gratitude*.

Additionally, I see two areas for future research in early Christianity and classical literature that this study has opened up. Here, too, there is potential for future theological reflection.

In the first place, this study of grace-reciprocity will provide a fuller view of the studies of the family value of *ἑυσέβεια/pietas* in the cultural matrix of the Graeco-Roman and Jewish worlds. As indicated in the Introduction of this study, the notion of *ἑυσέβεια/pietas* governs all political, social, familial, and spiritual relations, which is reciprocal by nature and embedded in everyday family life.⁷³⁴ However, current explorations of *ἑυσέβεια/pietas* have not paid close enough attention to the Pauline language of grace. Hence, they have missed the significance of grace-reciprocity and gratitude's affective and moral implications for a fuller reading of familial and reciprocal relations. As a result, those studies continue to conflate the familial with extrafamilial exchanges and have not extended their explorations to spiritual aspects of parent-child and divine-human relationships.

Secondly, in the course of researching parent-child relations and the Graeco-Roman notion of *ἑυσέβεια/pietas* in early Christianity, I have noticed that there is a greater need to differentiate the English use of “filial piety”—rooted in the Latin root of *pietas*—as a Christian virtue from “filial piety” as a common translation of the Confucian notion of *xiao* (孝). This has significance when we consider the importance of our study for current theological reflection in an Eastern Asian context. According to

Just a few examples of intercultural dialogues in classical, Confucian, and Christian traditions: Eun Chul Kim, “The Fulfilment of Filial Piety: The Development of Korean Protestantism and the Shape of a Theology of Filial Piety” (Ph.D. diss., Scotland, UK: University of St. Andrews, 2001); Yanxia Zhao, *Father and Son in Confucianism and Christianity: A Comparative Study of Xunzi and Paul* (Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2007); Khiok-Khng Yeo, *Musing with Confucius and Paul: Toward a Chinese Christian Theology* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2008); Kai Tai Tony Wong, “Filial Piety and Christian Piety: Wang Zheng and His Attempt to Inculturate Christianity in Late Ming China” (Ph.D. diss., Melbourne, La Trobe University, 2009). Eric Mullis, “Confucius and Aristotle on the Goods of Friendship,” *Dao* 9, no. 4 (2010): 391–405, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11712-010-9185-y>; Daniel Qin, “Confucian Filial Piety and the Fifth Commandment: A Fulfillment Approach,” *AJPS* 16, no. 2 (2013): 139–64; van Berkel, *The Economics of Friendship*; Gideon Sappor, “A Comparative Study of Filial Piety in Beijing and the UK,” *Journal of Education and Culture Studies* 5, no. 1 (2021): 22–44, <https://doi.org/10.22158/jecs.v5n1p22>. Erin M. Cline, *Families of Virtue: Confucian and Western Views on Childhood Development* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).

⁷³⁴ Hoklotubbe, *Civilized Piety*. Balla, *The Child-Parent Relationships*. Saller, *Patriarchy*. Lacey, “*Patria Potestas*”. Natali, “*Pietas*”.

James St. André, “filial piety” is originally a native English term—signifying the Christian virtue of piety—not a Chinese calque, nor is it associated with Chinese culture in English literature before 1651.⁷³⁵ Before the 18th century, *pietas* or filial piety was a well-attested Christian virtue in both Latin and English literature, identical to the Roman virtue of *pietas*—consisting of the Ciceronian tripartite understanding of one’s dutifulness toward God, parents, and country.⁷³⁶ Therefore, the Christian reception of *pietas* as a virtue leads us to reconsider how the family value of *pietas* or filial piety was (re)negotiated in early Christianity within its Graeco-Roman and Jewish cultural heritages. Situating *pietas* in its first-century Mediterranean contexts, in turn, provides a new basis for comparing the early Christian family value of *pietas* in the biblical world and the Confucian notion of *xiao* (孝) in Eastern Asian contexts.

Finally, this social-scientific study of grace (i.e., gratitude) and parent-child relations offers an alternative approach to current childist studies of both biblical and Confucian texts, complementing the discussion of children’s agency.⁷³⁷ In particular, it points out that recent childist and social-scientific readings of the Bible and recent studies of Confucian texts have overlooked gratitude’s cultural and

⁷³⁵ St. André, “Consequences,” 293–316. St. André notes that only in 1669 are the Chinese cultural understanding of *xiao* (孝) and filial piety linked in the English language. Even then between 1669–1715, there were only four references which discussed the Chinese culture concerning the term of filial piety.

⁷³⁶ Ibid. Cicero, *Inv.* 2.65–6. The literary transformation of “filial piety” may be divided into two periods: before the 18th century and after the 18th century. The notion of *pietas* appeared in English primarily in three ways: “filial” or “piety” independently, or “filial piety” together. “Filial” as an adjective derives from Latin “*filialis*” (referring to offspring for both sons and daughters). Thus, calling someone “filial” is equivalent to saying that the person possesses the virtue of filial piety. Similarly, the Latin word *pietas* and equivalent English translation “piety” by itself could connote the virtue of filial piety. However, the English word “piety” began to carry on the meaning inherited from Latin *pietas* as dutifulness and a Christian emphasis of meaning pity (mercy and godliness).

It is noteworthy that *pietas* in the post-classical Latin began to include the meaning of “pity,” “mercy of God,” and “mercy” or “compassion” shown by people. Thus, piety seems to have multiple origins: for instance, besides *pietas*, it can also be traced back to Anglo-Norman *piété* and Middle French *piété* (pity, godliness, religious devotions to God, and one’s duty and respect for parents, the dead, etc.). See “Filial, adj.,” <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/70172>; “Piety, n.,” <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/143641>; “Pity, n.,” in *OED Online* (Oxford University Press, 2003), <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/144814>. P. G. W. Glare, *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), s.v. “piestas,” 1516.

⁷³⁷ Garroway and Martens, *Children and Methods*, 1–16, 217–28.

spiritual implications of children's moral development in parent-child interactions.⁷³⁸ Integrating these studies also integrates broader understandings of parent-child and divine-human relationships in the Bible and in the Confucian notion of *xiao* (孝) in Eastern Asian contexts. This study shows the significance of Pitt-Rivers's anthropological concept of grace for addressing the lacunae that are evident when failing to take gratitude in family relations seriously. It can help contribute to a sound debate about children's agency, which grapples with questions such as whether children love their parents. If so, in what way did they do so and to what extent?⁷³⁹ As this study argues, considering the cultural value of grace (i.e., gratitude) corroborates how loving relationships exist between parents and children by looking into the moral and spiritual dimensions of gratitude (i.e., grace) with respect to children's agency. Therefore, this study not only builds on the *status questionis* of children's agency but can also advance the understudied moral and spiritual significance of gratitude concerning children in the Bible and the Confucian texts. Therefore, my study will lead to more promising ways for understanding the Confucian notion of *xiao* (孝) and gratitude studies in Eastern Asian contexts and for the inculturation of Christian theology of parent-child relations in the East.

In sum, my study of honoring parents in the Corinthian context can serve not only to explore ways to encounter the first Christians and for a better understanding of how the first Christians responded to the Christ-gift in Jesus's life, death, and resurrection through culturally-loaded terms of family (e.g., parents and children) and grace (i.e., gratuity, graciousness, and gratitude), but it also lays a groundwork for exploring in a new way the significance of family and spiritual relations in the Church today, both in the West and in the East.

⁷³⁸ Just name a few, Keller, "Four Theories." Jeske, "Special Obligations." Ivanhoe, "Filial Piety." Kim, "The Fulfilment of Filial Piety." Zhao, *Father and Son in Confucianism and Christianity*. Yeo, *Musing with Confucius and Paul*. Qin, "Confucian Filial Piety and the Fifth Commandment." Cline, *Families of Virtue*.

⁷³⁹ Laes and Vuolanto, *Children and Everyday Life*, 5.

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