

Dr. Pate, May 2026

Paul's Romans Proposition

A Mystery Explained



God's Covenant with Israel

Romans 11:1-31

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**“I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He?
May it never be!”**

Rom 11:1

Israel, God's Chosen

Romans 11

- Romans 11 opens with Paul's emphatic assertion that God has not rejected Israel, the people He foreknew. The chapter addresses a pressing theological concern: whether national Israel's estrangement from God represents total or permanent rejection.
- Paul establishes his argument by invoking God's preservation of a believing remnant among Israel—a historical pattern demonstrating divine constancy—and then explains this remnant's existence through God's grace in Christ rather than through works¹. Drawing on the precedent of Elijah's time, when God preserved seven thousand faithful Israelites, Paul shows that a similar remnant exists in his own era, selected by grace rather than earned merit (Rom 11).
- The chapter's central paradox involves Israel's unbelief. Paul assigns Israel's failure to believe the gospel a positive salvific function—their rejection becomes instrumental in bringing salvation to the Gentiles, a role Paul places on par with Christ's saving act². Through their transgression, salvation reaches the Gentiles, and Paul suggests their eventual restoration will bring even greater blessing (Rom 11).



“I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous”

Rom 11:11

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Fullness

The Full Inclusion of Israel and the Gentiles

Inclusion with Israel

Romans 11:25

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Israel, Full Inclusion

Romans 11:25

- 12. How much more will their full inclusion mean! The ‘full inclusion’ (plērōma, lit. ‘fullness’) of the Jews is to be understood in the same sense as the ‘full number [plērōma, ‘fullness’] of the Gentiles’ in verse 25. The large-scale conversion of the Gentile world is to be followed by the salvation of ‘all Israel’ (verse 26); this salvation involves their ‘full inclusion’.
- F. F. Bruce, Romans: An Introduction and Commentary, vol. 6, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985), 212.



“Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be!”

Rom 11:12

Conceit

Romans 11:25

- 11:18 do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.
- 11:20 Do not be conceited, but fear
- 11:25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in



“Behold then the kindness and severity of God.”

Rom 11:22

An aerial photograph of the Roman Forum in Rome, Italy. The image shows the extensive ruins of ancient Roman architecture, including the Temple of Vesta in the foreground with its three standing columns. The forum is a series of terraces and arches built into a hillside, with many arches and walls still visible. Green trees and grass are interspersed among the ruins. In the upper right, a group of people is walking on a path. The lighting suggests a sunny day, with shadows cast across the ruins.

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Irrevocable

The Foundation for your Surety in the Faith

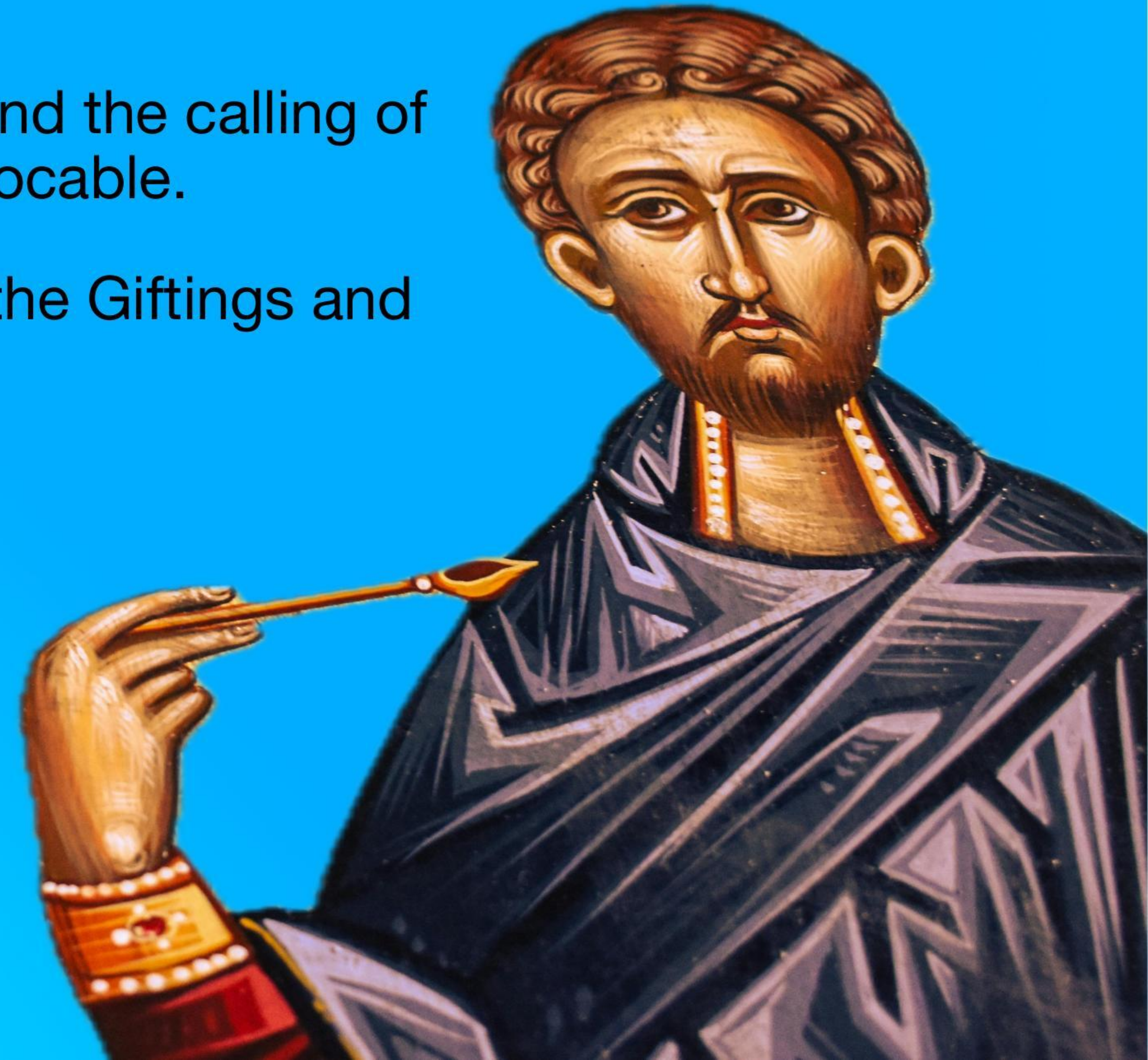
“For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.”

Rom 11:29

Giftings and Calling

Romans 11:29

- for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.
- Let's look at the Giftings and Calling



Giftings

The Charismata Upon You

Dr. Pate, May 2026

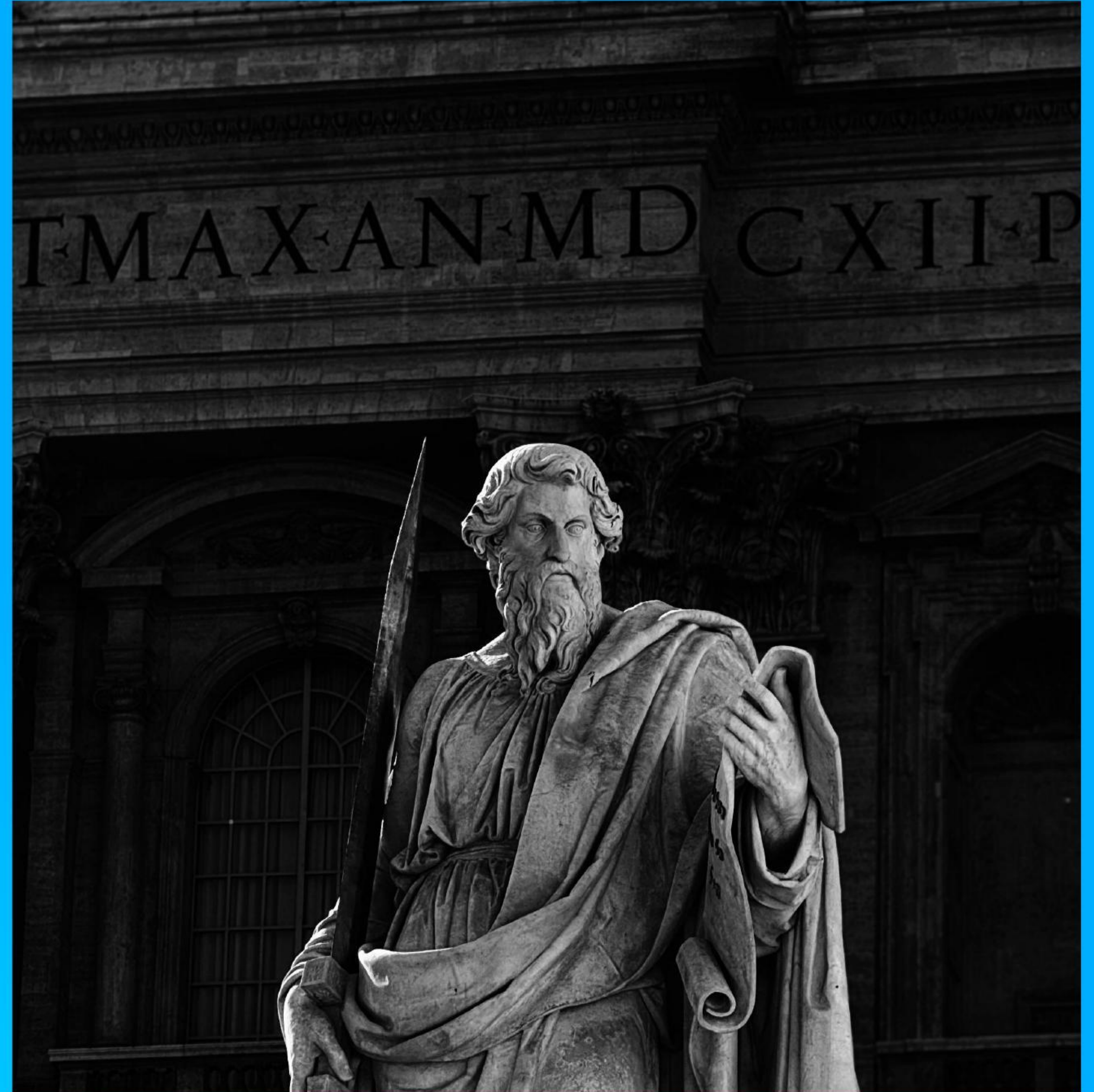
**“Paul describes as χαρίσματα
the ecstatic phenomena at divine worship
which are regarded as operations of the Spirit,
notably speaking in tongues and prophecy.”**

**Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley,
and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 404–405.**

Charismata

The Gifts of God by the Spirit

- a. In 1 C. 12–14 and R. 12 Paul describes as χαρίσματα the ecstatic phenomena at divine worship which are regarded as operations of the Spirit, notably speaking in tongues and prophecy.²⁴ According to the Corinthian measuring of the ecstatic life, glossolalia comes first as heavenly speech. Paul recognises that this phenomenon is the work of the Spirit but he subjects it to the criterion of χάρις.²⁵ He first points out the ambivalence of ecstasy as such, 1 C. 12:1–3. Then he establishes confession of the κύριος as a norm, since this is the work of the Spirit. There then follows an explication in which understanding of the phenomena is referred back to the concept of God and that of the Church, vv. 4ff. God does not give general manifestations; He gives to each his own; in this way the Church is built up as the body of Christ.
- 24 The change in the understanding of χαρίσματα may be seen by comparing F. C. Baur, Pls. (1845), Gunkel, Weinel, Wetter, op. cit. (→ n. 7) and modern exegesis. Baur, 559: The charismata are “in themselves ... only the gifts and talents that each brings to Christianity.” They become charismata only as out of them quasi material “Christian consciousness and life is shaped in its various individual forms” through the work of the Spirit. Baur’s idealistic interpretation of the Spirit has been outdated by the study of motifs in comparative religion. This has shown that the Spirit is not understood as an enhancement of the natural but as a supernatural potency. The works of the Spirit are “unspiritual” in the idealistic sense, for they involve ecstasy.
- 25 The link with χάρις is not expressly made in 1 C. 12. It is thus debated whether χάρισμα is more closely related to χάρις in Paul. But the ref. is there in R. 12. The close relation between 1 C. and R. should be noted. The concept of faith is adopted in R. 12:3; this leads to an individualising of gifts acc. to the μέτρον πίστεως, cf. Bultmann Theol.6, 326: This “corresponds to the share in the χαρίσματα ... For as πίστις individualises itself into specific attitudes, so divine χάρις individualises itself into specific gifts of grace.”
- Hans Conzelmann and Walther Zimmerli, Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 404–405.



Callings

Calling to God Himself and to Your Work in the World

Dr. Pate, May 2026

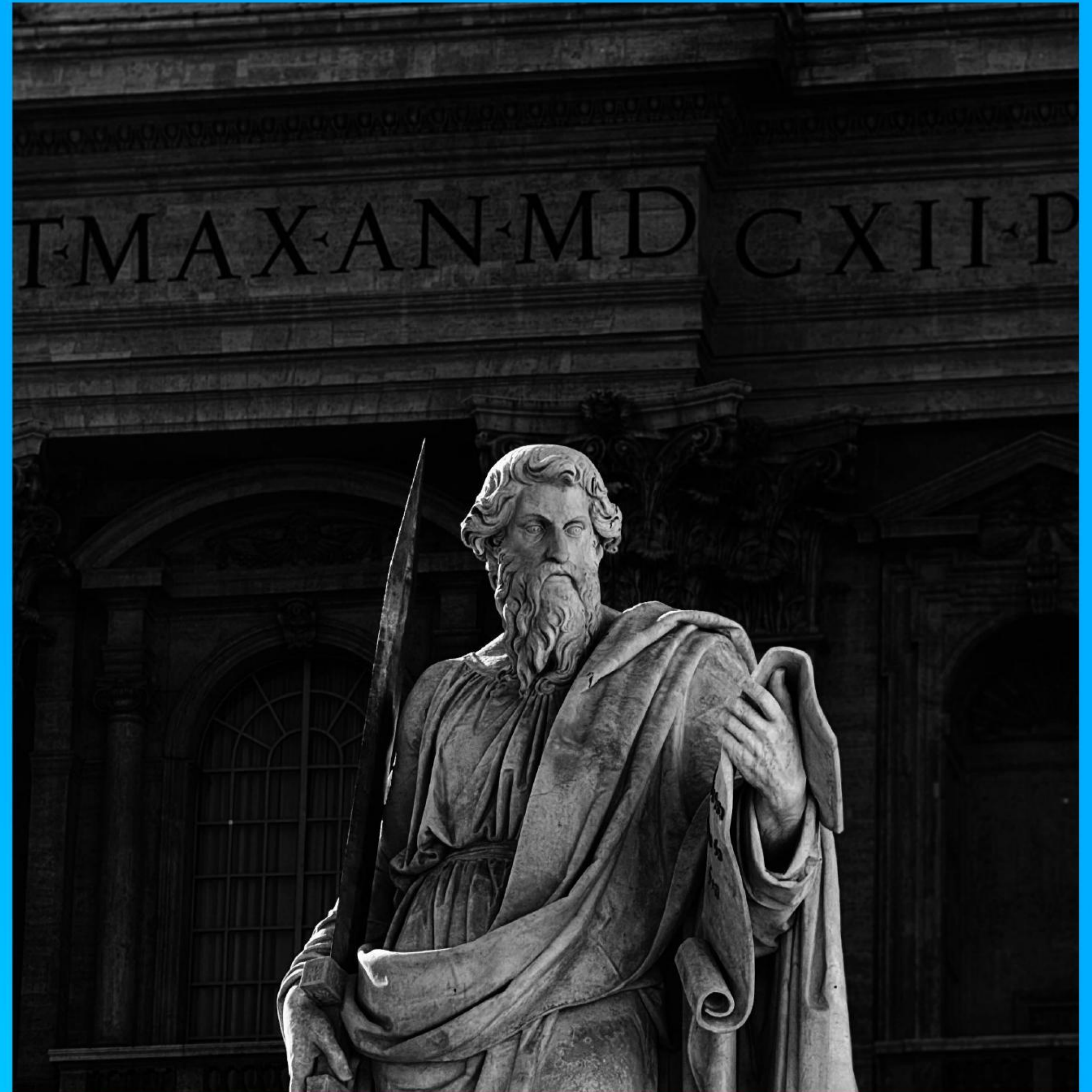
“κλήσις τοῦ θεοῦ, the “call” which goes out from God, the divine “calling,” elucidated by the words χάρισμα (v. 29) and → ἐκλογή (v. 28).

Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 491.

Calling

The Calling from God and towards Man

- R. 11:29: κλήσις τοῦ θεοῦ, the “call” which goes out from God, the divine “calling,” elucidated by the words χαρίσματα (v. 29) and → ἐκλογή (v. 28). 1 C. 1:26: βλέπετε ... τὴν κλήσιν ὑμῶν ... ὅτι οὐ πολλοὶ σοφοὶ κτλ, “consider the state of your calling, that there are not many wise etc.” In v. 27 we have instead of κλήσις the stronger → ἐκλέγεσθαι; 7:20: ἕκαστος ἐν τῇ κλήσει ᾗ ἐκλήθη, ἐν ταύτῃ μενέτω, “each should remain in the state of the calling in which he was called,” because in any case he is ἐν κυρίῳ κληθεὶς (v. 22), because you τιμῆς ἡγοράσθητε, were brought back, redeemed (v. 23), because this κλήσις is παρὰ θεῷ (v. 24). 1 Eph. 1:18: ἡ ἐλπίς τῆς κλήσεως αὐτοῦ, “the hope to which he (God) has called.” 4:1: ἀξίως περιπατῆσαι τῆς κλήσεως ἧς ἐκλήθητε; 4:4 like 1:18; Phil. 3:14: τὸ βραβεῖον τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως (codd apud Orig: ἀνεγκλησίας) τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) “the reward of the high (heavenly) calling through God in Christ Jesus.” 2 Th. 1:11: ἵνα ὑμᾶς ἀξιώσῃ τῆς κλήσεως ὁ θεός. 2 Tm. 1:9: (θεοῦ) τοῦ σώσαντος ἡμᾶς καὶ καλέσαντος κλήσει ἁγία, οὐ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν ἀλλὰ κατὰ ἰδίαν πρόθεσιν καὶ χάριν. Hb. 3:1: ἀδελφοὶ ἅγιοι, κλήσεως ἐπουρανίου μέτοχοι. 2 Pt. 1:10: σπουδάσατε βεβαίαν ὑμῶν τὴν κλήσιν καὶ ἐκλογὴν ποιεῖσθαι.
- These 11 passages, which are given in extenso, show that κλήσις is in the NT a technical Pauline or deutero-Pauline term. Here, too, we may adopt the simple rendering “call.” But it is better (cf. καλέω 1.c.) to adopt the more emphatic “calling.” It is always God who calls in Christ. Hence the direct attributes are the corresponding ἄνω, ἁγία, ἐπουράνιος, and the related nouns and verbs are also in correspondence, viz. χαρίσματα, χάρις, ἐκλογή, πρόθεσις, and ἐκλέγεσθαι, σῶζειν. The fullest expression at 2 Tm. 1:9 brings out particularly clearly that our concern here is with a pure act of grace on the part of God.²
- Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 491–492.



IRREVOCABLE

God's Great Promise to Mankind

Dr. Pate, May 2026

“μετανοεῖν and μεταμέλεσθαι are distinct in class. Gk. → μετανοεῖν means a change of heart either generally or in respect of a specific sin, whereas μεταμέλεσθαι means “to experience remorse.” μετανοεῖν implies that one has later arrived at a different view of something (νοῦς), μεταμέλεσθαι that one has a different feeling about it (μέλει)

Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 626.

IRREVOCABLE.

Repentance of God and Man

- μετανοεῖν and μεταμέλεσθαι are distinct in class. Gk. → μετανοεῖν means a change of heart either generally or in respect of a specific sin, whereas μεταμέλεσθαι means “to experience remorse.”¹ μετανοεῖν implies that one has later arrived at a different view of something (νοῦς), μεταμέλεσθαι that one has a different feeling about it (μέλει). But it is easy for the two ideas to come together and even merge, since a change of view often carries with it an uncomfortable feeling. The pass. deponent is attested from Thuc. To Democr. is attributed the statement: μεταμέλεια ἐπ’ αἰσχροῖσιν ἔργμασι βίου σωτηρίη, Fr., 43 (II, 155, 13 f., Diels⁵).² μετάνοια and the related μεταμέλεια are common on class. soil, but, as the sentence of Democr. shows, they were not understood merely intellectually. They were differently estimated and could even be rejected. ταραχή and μεταμέλεια are in Plato two related signs of sickness in the human soul: καὶ ἡ τυραννουμένη ἄρα ψυχὴ ἥκιστα ποιήσει ἃ ἂν βουλευθῇ, ὥς περὶ ὅλης εἰπεῖν ψυχῆς. ὑπὸ δὲ οἴστρου (prick, strong emotion) αἰεὶ ἐλκομένη βίᾳ ταραχῆς καὶ μεταμελείας μεστὴ ἔσται, class. classical.
- Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 626

