

THE PUBLIC HONOURING  
OF CHRISTIAN BENEFACTORS\*  
Romans 13.3-4 and 1 Peter 2.14-15

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When Paul wrote to the Romans: 'Do the good (deed) and you shall have praise from the (civil) authority' (13.3), he was giving what C.E.B. Cranfield calls 'absolute assurance' that this would happen to the Christian.<sup>1</sup> E. Käsemann likewise notes the import of the statement by Paul. 'Furthermore the *ἐπαινος* is daringly promised (without even a "perhaps")' and, he adds, the reference is to 'the honouring which the public authorities mentioned customarily grant'.<sup>2</sup> W.C. van Unnik sought to show that the grounds of Paul's confidence could be established from literary sources from the time of Xenophon and Demosthenes right through to the second century AD.<sup>3</sup>

While Cranfield agrees that van Unnik's primary sources show that the ruler's functions were epitomized as honouring the good citizens and punishing the lawless ones, he rightly notes that none of the sources cited by van Unnik matches the absolute certainty of Paul that public benefactions would *ipso facto* be praised by rulers. He therefore rejects the interpretation of Käsemann and van Unnik for lack of proof and argues, with others, that 'the good' in v. 4 refers to a morality related to salvation and not to public benefactions.<sup>4</sup>

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that there is a considerable body of evidence from inscriptions which shows that Paul's assurance, and also that of the parallel statement in 1 Pet. 2.14, was fully justified. This epigraphic evidence clearly demonstrates along with literary evidence that not only did rulers praise and honour those who undertook good works which benefited the city, but at the same time they promised likewise to publicly honour others who would undertake similar benefactions in the future.

1. *The Benefaction Form*

Benefaction inscriptions from the fifth century BC through to the second century AD generally followed a standard literary form. They began with an announcement that a resolution had been passed by the city Ἐδοξεν τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῇ δήμῳ. Then followed the resolution itself, which began with the customary 'whereas', ἐπειδὴ, and recounted the benefactions bestowed on the city. This clause prefaced the resolution proper and that was universally introduced by δεδόχθαι.<sup>5</sup> It announced the honours the city was awarding to the benefactor. At the conclusion of the honours there was a final clause introduced by either ὅπως or ἵνα. The purpose of the final clause was to draw the attention of those who read the inscription to the fact that the city fathers knew how to bestow honours appropriate to benefactions.

The following is a typical inscription. The provenance is Ephesus. Its purpose was a grant of citizenship to a benefactor from Rhodes.<sup>6</sup>

'Resolved by the Council and the People'

Dion, son of Diopethes, moved, that whereas (ἐπειδὴ) Agathocles, son of Hegemon, of Rhodes, having imported a quantity of wheat, and finding that the corn in the market was being sold at more than (65) drachmae, persuaded by the superintendent of the market, and wishing to please the People, sold all his corn cheaper than that which was being sold in the market: it be hereby resolved (δεδόχθαι) by the Council and the People to grant citizenship to Agathocles of Rhodes, upon equal and similar terms, to himself and to his descendants: further, that the Essenes allot him a place in a tribe and a thousand, and that the Temple-wardens inscribe these (grants) in his honour in the Temple of Artemis where they inscribe the rest of the grants of citizenship; to the end that all may know (ὅπως πάντες εἰδῶσιν)<sup>7</sup> that the People understand how to repay with its favours those who are benefactors to it (ὅτι ὁ δῆμος ἐπιστάται χάριτας ἀποδιδόναι τοῖς εὐεργετοῦσιν αὐτόν). Admitted into the Bembinean tribe and the Agotean thousand.

The typical inscription conveyed the following information: 'Whereas A did X and Y for our city, it is therefore resolved to honour A as follows . . . in order that all may see that the People appropriately honour benefactors commensurate with their benefactions'.<sup>8</sup>

Three issues germane to this discussion are raised by these benefaction inscriptions in general, and their final clause in particular. Did inscriptions promise future rewards to public benefactors? If

they did so, what was their reason? How were benefactors 'praised'?

## 2. *The Future Promise*

There was a promise of rewards for future benefactors in the *ὅπως/ἵνα* clause of the resolution. Its aim was to indicate to those who read the inscription that the city authorities knew how to reward benefactors. An inscription from the island of Cos affirms what is implicit in *BMI* 445 cited above. It reads 'that the people might continue to be seen to give fitting rewards to those who choose (*προαιρεῖν*) to be their benefactors'.<sup>9</sup>

The bestowing of honours to future benefactors is explicitly stated:

so that we ourselves may be seen by those who propose to bestow benefactions on us (*ὅπως οὖν καὶ ἡμεῖς φαινόμεθα τοῖς προαιρουμένοις εὐεργετεῖν*) to give appropriate rewards, to praise (*ἐπαινέσαι*) and to crown (*στεφανῶσαι*) them.<sup>10</sup>

Another inscription at Ephesus spells out its message to intending benefactors even more clearly:

in order that our people may continue to be seen to bestow gifts on benefactors, and that those who come in future to serve as judges (independent arbitrators) in our city might seek to render verdicts worthy of praise (*ἔπαινος*) and honour, knowing that the People, both praise and honour (*ἐπαινεῖ τε καὶ τιμᾷ*) the fine and noble men (*καλοὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς*).<sup>11</sup>

An important Hellenistic Ephesian inscription promises incentives to future benefactors by detailing what public 'honouring' meant.

... whereas Skythes of Archidamus has been good to the citizens with whom he has been involved, eagerly coming forward and without hesitation, ... as it is right and proper for a man who loves his city and is concerned for honour and good standing among the citizens, the People, being grateful to such and having seen the fine and noble character of the man, have resolved to praise (*ἐπαινέσαι*) Skythes because of the diligence and forethought he has in both sacred and secular affairs and, in addition, resolved by popular decision, and to crown (*στεφανῶσαι*) him with a gold crown during the games at the Festival of Dionysus. . . that announcement taking place in the assembly of citizens, 'The People crown Skythes of Archidamus a fine and noble man who is well-disposed to the

city', so that all may know the People are eager to honour its best men... they might become zealous... and might eagerly give themselves...<sup>12</sup>

In other examples the word *ἀεὶ* is added. 'The city of Eretria always takes great thought for its friends (*ἀεὶ πολλὴ πρόνοια*).<sup>13</sup> In addition there is also an Ephesian inscription which promises rewards to 'each and all'.<sup>14</sup>

This representative sample of inscriptions provides sufficient evidence of what was a widespread convention of promising public recognition to intending benefactors.<sup>15</sup> They demonstrate that the assurance of Rom. 13.3 and 1 Pet. 2.14 was not 'daringly promised' as Käsemann suggests. New Testament writers merely reflected a long-established social custom of appropriate recognition of public benefactors. The very existence of these inscriptions century after century in city after city shows that the promise was fulfilled. This convention was not only confined to the Greek and Hellenistic periods but, as C.P. Jones notes, it remained as vital to the well-being of Greek cities in the Roman empire.<sup>16</sup>

### 3. *The Obligation of Gratitude*

If the final clause aimed to promise future benefactors that public works would be met with appropriate rewards, it also wished to show that in the case of the benefactor named in the resolution, the city had met its obligation of gratitude for the present public work bestowed on it. There is a clear nexus between the first part of the resolution and the final clause with the use of *ὅπως* or *ἵνα*. The city had indeed fulfilled the obligation by bestowing appropriate honours on the person concerned '... so that all might know the People understand how to reward with honours'. Those who read the inscription would be able to see that this was the case. It was not simply that honours were given, but that honours were seen by all to have been given by the rulers of the city. These were regarded as being commensurate with the value of the benefaction. Many of the inscriptions declared this by calling the honours *ἄξια* and *κατάξια*.

Literary sources strongly support the epigraphic evidence. They show that great importance was attached to meeting the obligation with gratitude. This obligation was not seen simply as a cultural convention, but some saw it as 'a law'. Benefactions could be called

'loans' which were repaid with gratitude, and they should be reclaimed with monetary compensation if not properly acknowledged. Such was the expectation of the benefactor that due recognition would be given in the appropriate way. Others saw failure to acknowledge public works adequately as a sin.<sup>17</sup>

#### 4. *The Praising of Benefactors*

How were benefactors publicly recognized for their good deed? The procedure was that an individual 'moved' (εἶπεν) in the Council that a benefactor be granted certain honours. His formal motion, duly endorsed by the assembly, constituted the wording of the inscription.<sup>18</sup> Some of the resolutions explain what was involved, with the use of the terms ἐπαινος and στέφανος or their cognates.<sup>19</sup> It has been suggested that the first term means a 'formal commendation'.<sup>20</sup> The latter term means literally 'a crown'.<sup>21</sup>

Dio Chrysostom, writing at the end of the first century AD, provides valuable information on the rewards for a benefaction which he says have been 'established' (πεποιήκε), viz. στέφανος καὶ κήρυγμα καὶ προεδρία. He adds that the public proclamation (κήρυγμα) contained 'three words' and notes that with them 'each good man is publicly acclaimed', although he does not say what they were.<sup>22</sup> It has been suggested that the words might be ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός ἐστι.<sup>23</sup> An Ephesian inscription of the Hellenistic period records the actual citation to be announced at the ceremony: 'The People crown Skythes, son of Archidamus, a good and noble man who is also well disposed to the city'.<sup>24</sup> The declaration by the officials crowning the benefactor in the theatre with the gold crown in this inscription was that he was καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός. The terms stood for the truly noble person who puts the interest of the state above his own.<sup>25</sup> Other inscriptions which record what is to be said at the crowning ceremony use ἀρετὴ καὶ εὐνοία, ἀρετὴ καὶ δικαιοσύνη καὶ εὐνοία.<sup>26</sup> Dio adds that 'the three words' were for some 'more precious than life itself'.<sup>27</sup> The third reward Dio mentions is the granting of a seat of honour in the theatre. This was a front seat and was a permanent place of honour.<sup>28</sup>

All the evidence presented to this point from diverse sources is also reflected in Demosthenes *De Corona*. It records his defence in 330 BC against legal proceedings by Aechines, an orator who objected to the provisional decree (προβούλευμα) of the Athenian council to award

Demosthenes a crown for his public benefaction. This literary source records the actual wording of four benefaction resolutions, and cites the law that the crowning in Athens would occur in the theatre. It also notes that the crowning occurred at a notable event; in his case it was to have been at the 'performance of the new tragedies'. The purpose for this public recognition in the mind of Demosthenes is somewhat cynically spelt out by him.

the whole vast audience is stimulated to do service to the commonwealth and applauds the exhibition of gratitude rather than praising the one who is crowned and that is why the state has enacted this statute.

In arguing his defence he observes that public accounts require audit and auditors, but the benefaction, in this case his gift to the theatre, deserves gratitude and formal thanks (χάρις και ἔπαινος). He puts the matter bluntly: 'I made donations. For those donations I am thanked (ἐπαινοῦμαι διὰ ταῦτα).' It was not the first time he had undergone the public ceremony. He thus expresses his sense of injury at the possible deprivation of this honour recommended some six years prior to the trial but deferred for final resolution pending the decision of the court on legal objections by an opposition group.<sup>29</sup> *De Corona* shows how firmly established the literary form and conventions with their legal support were in Athens in 330 BC, confirming both epigraphic evidence and the first-century witness of Dio Chrysostom already discussed.

There was then not only a formal recognition by way of a resolution by the Council to the Assembly and the erecting of an inscription, but also there followed a public ceremony at which the benefactor was proclaimed. The term ἔπαινος referred to this public declaration. It is suggested that it would be so understood by those in the churches both in Rome and Asia Minor who read Rom. 13.3 and 1 Pet. 2.14.

### *5. Christians as Benefactors*

This epigraphic evidence has thrown considerable light on Rom. 13.3 and 1 Pet. 2.14.<sup>30</sup> Both writers were on secure ground promising Christian benefactors public recognition.<sup>31</sup> Given these non-literary sources as well as the literary evidence of authorities praising benefactors, and the reference to this same activity in the New

Testament passages, what conclusions can now be drawn about the New Testament meaning of the terms which promised to evoke this official response? τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἔργον and τὸ ἀγαθόν in Rom. 13.3-4 are used in inscriptions to refer to a public benefaction. Likewise the injunctions τὸ ἀγαθὸν ποιεῖν (Rom. 13.3) and ἀγαθοποιεῖν (1 Pet. 2.14) are used in epigraphy to refer to the performing of public benefactions.<sup>32</sup>

Would the congregations, however, have understood the term ἀγαθός to refer to a public benefaction? Apart from the political context of both New Testament passages, which would have readily suggested the meaning of benefaction because of the praising by rulers, Paul in Rom. 5.7 refers to 'the good' man. His argument is that for a righteous man one would hardly be prepared to lay down his life, 'although perhaps for a good man one will even dare to die'. The order is firstly δίκαιος, and then ἀγαθός. Paul believes that the latter is a greater possibility because of obligations established through the receiving of a benefaction. This has been rightly taken to refer to one's benefactor.<sup>33</sup>

Those who reject the interpretation offered on Rom. 13.3-4 and 1 Pet. 2.14 are driven to the vague position C.E.B. Cranfield was forced to reach when he reluctantly concluded:

Paul means that consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, in one way or another, the power will praise the good work and punish the evil.<sup>34</sup>

In writing to the Christians in the vast city of Rome how could Paul expect the emperor or those in authority to observe for certain their good works if the reference is simply to moral conduct? How would the authorities know of the good morals of its Christian citizens in the cities mentioned in the provinces of Asia Minor in 1 Peter (Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia)? The authorities would certainly be aware of those who did evil, i.e. who transgressed the law. The petitioning of the authorities by an accuser for the commencement of litigation to bring the accused to justice would do this. There is no difficulty in identifying this role as Rom. 13.4b and 1 Pet. 2.14 do. What has been argued for in this paper is the long-established tradition which guaranteed that benefactors would be publicly praised. The objection Cranfield raised against van Unnik's position in his latest work on Romans 13 is thus removed with the epigraphic and literary evidence discussed in this paper. E. Käsemann's

conclusion is justified from this examination of primary sources.

The use of σοί in Rom. 13.4 is addressed to the individual and not the whole church.<sup>35</sup> The cost of a benefaction was very considerable and would be beyond the ability of some, if not most, members of the church.<sup>36</sup> However, there must have been Christians of very considerable means to warrant Paul's imperative in v. 3 and also that of 1 Pet. 2.15.<sup>37</sup> This further supports the view that there were some members of significant social status and wealth in the early church.<sup>38</sup>

The ruler is seen by Paul as God's διάκονος with respect to the benefaction εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν (v. 4). εἰς is best translated 'with respect to' the benefaction. The use of γάρ explains why he 'praises' the benefactor—ἔξεῖς ἔπαινον ἐξ αὐτῆς. θεοῦ γάρ διάκονος κ.τ.λ. Verse 4a would read: 'For he is God's minister to you because of the benefaction'. In v. 4b the other traditional function of the ruler is referred to: 'For God's minister is the "prosecutor" or "avenger" (ἔκδικος) with respect to wrath (εἰς ὀργήν) to the one who does the evil deed'. In this verse the dual functions of the ruler are referred to, as they are in 1 Pet. 2.14, a phenomenon not peculiar to New Testament literature, as van Unnik notes.<sup>39</sup> Paul declares the ruler is acting as God's vicegerent when he officially recognizes the benefactor with praise that he is a good man. This appears to be related in some way to Rom. 2.10, where God gives 'glory and honour and peace to every man who works τὸ ἀγαθόν...' The public recognition of a Christian benefactor in the theatre before the multitude was appropriate in the New Testament with the ruler acting as God's 'servant' for this purpose.

In 1 Pet. 2.14-16 public benefactions are commended to Christians as God's will, because they will also silence the unfounded rumours against Christians by ill-informed men: '... rulers praise those who do good. Because this is the will of God that by doing good, you put to silence the ignorance of uninformed men' (vv. 14b-15).<sup>40</sup> The public acknowledgment of a generous Christian benefactor by crowning him as a noble person, and the permanent reminder of the benefaction on an inscription would be the means of refuting unfounded rumours against Christians as being men of ill-will, subversive to the peace and well-being of a city.<sup>41</sup> The title 'benefactor' certainly did bestow status.<sup>42</sup> The doing of public good in vv. 14-15 is but one example of the theme from 2.12-3.6, where 'doing good' in the context of less than easy circumstances is seen as



the means of establishing Christian credibility in social relationships as well as in the political sphere.<sup>43</sup>

### 6. *Conclusions*

The role of the Christian as a public benefactor is the issue in Rom. 13.3-4 and 1 Pet. 2.14-15.<sup>44</sup> The discussion has thrown light on the important topic of the Christian's involvement in society in the first century AD and the warrant for it. The picture has emerged of a positive role being taken by rich Christians to contribute to the well-being of the community at large and the appropriateness and importance of due recognition by ruling authorities for their contribution.<sup>45</sup>

It has been argued: 'Plainly their [the Christians'] security as groups was felt to depend to a large extent on their activities escaping public attention'.<sup>46</sup> The New Testament teaching, however, would have placed benefactors to the fore in the life of the city. The writer of 1 Peter, as does Paul, endorses public benefactions *per se* but in 1 Peter there may have been a need to press home the importance of ethical conduct expressed in high-profile good works. This could well have been because of the natural tendency to withdraw from them in the face of possible persecution. It is also possible that the wisdom of long-standing public benefactors who are now Christians continuing to spend their resources on public works or emergency relief is now being questioned by some. The New Testament stance is clear that their light was so to shine in this arena also that men would see their good works.

The conclusion of this paper also runs counter to the view that Paul encouraged his converts 'to stand aloof from public life', an argument based on a possible parallel thought in 1 Thess. 4.11 and the Epicurean stance of withdrawal from society. R.F. Hock, who supports this view, argues that 'to live quietly' refers to political 'quietism', and 'to attend to one's own affairs' is the antithesis of 'to attend to public affairs'. The immediate purpose construction of 1 Thess. 4.12, 'that you may live honestly before those who are outside, and that you may have need of nothing', would militate against Hock's conclusion.<sup>47</sup> The possible Epicurean parallels must also be weighed against the hard epigraphic and literary evidence and their clear relationship to the political context of Rom. 13.1-7.

Furthermore, the rich were required either by custom or by law to undertake public office as part of their liturgy.<sup>48</sup>

Questions must also be raised concerning the recent conclusion that 'social marginality' or 'social separation' was actively encouraged in 1 Peter. This view of J.H. Elliott is reached by the use of the recently developed sociologist's model of the 'conversionist sect'. He concludes that the letter encouraged 'the maintenance of social distance' in order to preserve coherence and distinctiveness as the means of attracting potential converts, in the same way sociologists believe that rigorous religious distinctiveness accounts for the growth of sectarian groups in the twentieth century.<sup>49</sup> The text of the letter, however, suggests that the method by which God's virtues are declared is not by social separation but by the social involvement of Christians in the everyday life of the city through their good works (1 Pet. 2.9ff.).

Can the 'enthusiastic acceptance' of the dual roles of the authorities in 1 Pet. 2.12-14 by its author be cited as an example of 'the social function of contradictory actions' of the acculturation process theory of sociologists?<sup>50</sup> Even if it were possible to show that this was what actually happened, on what grounds was it adopted in the epistle as normative for rich Christians? The writer of 1 Peter is indebted to the overarching theological theme of Jer. 29.7 with the sojourners of the Dispersion seeking the welfare of the city until the realization of the future promise (cf. 1 Pet. 1.1ff.; 2.12ff.).<sup>51</sup> The Christian endorsement of this socio-political benefaction convention was not done in order to gain acceptance for acculturation purposes. It was done to bring good to the life of the citizens in terms of their physical and environmental needs. This teaching is in keeping with the highly important theme of the Christian lifestyle, expressing itself in the doing of good in all aspects of life. Verses 14-15 are set within such a context in 1 Pet. 2.11-3.17. Another result would be the silencing of the ill-founded rumours of anti-Christian elements in the cities of Asia Minor by the witness of public benefactions and the official *imprimatur* it brought, again a theme of seeking peace in the city in Jer. 29.7. The aim according to the text was for doing good and for refutation and not for assimilation.

Is the injunction to undertake benefactions based on 'acute sensitivity to public opinion' and intended 'to avoid upsetting the government'?<sup>52</sup> There is no suggestion that the Christian endorsement of this socio-political convention in the city was done in order to

maintain the *status quo* but because it brought good to the life of the city. The doing of good and not evil is a central theme in 1 Peter even in the far from eirenic atmosphere that prevailed. The committing of one's soul to a faithful Creator is accomplished by doing good and this again reflects the strong encouragement given to Christians to make positive contributions to the everyday life of others. An assessment at the Great Assize is the stated reason given for doing good works (1 Pet. 1.17; 4.19).

Finally, can precedents be sought for Paul and 1 Peter on this issue in Hellenistic Judaism? For Christian writers to declare undertaking benefactions to be the will of God was, for instance, in stark contrast to the contemporary teaching of Philo, the Hellenized Jew of Alexandria.<sup>53</sup> Although Philo discusses the theory and practice of citizenship and makes substantial use of εὐεργεσία and its cognates, he never suggests, let alone commands, the Alexandrian Jews to be given to public benefactions.<sup>54</sup>

W.C. van Unnik, whose early essay on doing good in 1 Peter remains a model treatment of ethical instruction against the Jewish and Graeco-Roman parallels, rightly sees this New Testament teaching as 'an incitement for Christians to live up to this standard of first-class citizens'.<sup>55</sup> The theme of Rom. 13.1-7 was developed in 1 Pet. 2.13-17 to meet the new reality of slanderous rumours against Christian communities. Official endorsement of Christian benefactors by public honouring and permanent epigraphic record would have shown to all the city that 'they take part in everything as citizens', to cite the second-century Christian observation in the Epistle to Diognetes.<sup>56</sup>

#### NOTES

\*This research has been made possible through the generous grants of the Jubilee Foundation and the Witness Foundation.

1. C.E.B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Edinburgh, 1979), II, p. 655 n. 1.

2. E. Käsemann, *An die Römer* (Tübingen, 1973), p. 342, *ET Commentary on Romans* (London, 1980), p. 358. He provides no evidence of customary grants.

3. See W.C. van Unnik, 'Lob und Strafe durch die Obrigkeit. Hellenistisches zu Röm. 13,3-4', *Jesus und Paulus, Festschrift für Georg Kümmel zum 70.*

*Geburtstag* (Göttingen, 1975), pp. 336-40, for the literary evidence. Although he cites Dio Chrysostom's *Oration* 39.2, he fails to note the reference to honouring benefactors as a binding 'law', i.e. convention (*Or* 75.7-8).

4. C.E.B. Cranfield, *op. cit.* M. Borg, 'A New Context for Romans XIII', *NTS* 19 (1973), pp. 205-18, adopts the same position. E. Käsemann rejects Cranfield's position in an earlier work (*A Commentary on Romans 12-13* [SJT Occasional Papers, 12; Edinburgh and London, 1965], pp. 74-75) and argues that 'the good' refers 'simply to earthly well-being, a fact scarcely more than security against attacks' (*loc. cit.*), whereas this paper argues that general public benefactions are being referred to.

5. Perhaps the only exception was the resolution of citizenship decrees in Athens from the fifth to the third centuries BC with the use of εἶναι αὐτόν, although δεδόχθαι is implied. Other Athenian grants during this period used δεδόχθαι, e.g. *IG* 223 (343 BC). For a discussion of the citizenship decrees of that city see M.J. Osborne, 'Attic Citizenship Decrees', *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 67 (1972), p. 144.

6. *Ancient Greek Inscriptions in the British Museum—Ephesus* (cited as *BMI* 455) (150 BC). For the enormous importance of the grain supply see D. Rathbone, 'The Grain Trade and Grain Shortages in the Hellenistic East', *Trade and Famine in Classical Antiquity* (ed. P. Garnsey and C.R. Whittaker; Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1983), p. 53; G. Rickman, *The Corn Supply of Ancient Rome* (Oxford, 1980); H.W. Pleket, 'Economic History of the Ancient World and Epigraphy: Some Introductory Remarks', *Akten des vi. Internationalen Kongresses für Griechische und Lateinische Epigraphik* (München, 1972), pp. 247, 253-54.

7. The final clause cited above uses one of two verbs. The other is the passive of the verb φαίνεῖν. ὅπως οὖν καὶ ἡ βουλή καὶ ὁ δῆμος φαίνωνται (*IG* II<sup>2</sup> 992).

8. For the extent of the form of the final clause see over seventy examples of extant inscriptions up to 1914 (W. Larfeld, *Griechische Epigraphik* [München, 3rd edn, 1914], §226). For further similar inscriptions from Ephesus as an example of one location see *Die Inschriften von Ephesos* (*IE*), 1390, 1405, 1408, 1411, 1412, 1440, 1442, 1443.

9. Circa 200 BC. For the text see J. Benedum, 'Griechische Arztinschriften', *ZPE* 25 (1977), p. 271.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 266.

11. *BMI* 420 (150 BC).

12. *IE* 1390 (Hellenistic period).

13. C. Michel, *Recueil d'inscriptions grecques*, 345 (3rd cent. BC).

14. *IE* 1412.

15. One may cite examples of benefaction inscriptions with the 'promise' clause in Rome: *IG Urbis Romae* 2, Corinth, *Corinth: Greek Inscription 1896-1927*, 4 and a first-century AD inscription, *SIG* 800 (Claudius). For the

wide spread of provenances see W. Larfeld, *op.cit.*, pp. 377-81, 422-23.

16. C.P. Jones, *The Roman World of Dio Chrysostom* (Loeb Classical Monograph; Cambridge, Mass. and London, 1978), p. 104 and also his discussion of Dio's benefactions to his native Prusa c. 101 AD (pp. 104-14); P. Garnsey, 'Taxatio and Pollicitatio in Roman Africa', *JRS* 61 (1971), p. 116.

17. See J.W. Hewitt, 'The Development of Political Gratitude', *TAPA* 55 (1924), pp. 35-51 and more recently S.C. Mott, 'The Power of Giving and Receiving: Reciprocity in Hellenistic Benevolence', *Current Issues in Biblical and Patristic Interpretation—Studies in Honor of Merrill C. Tenney* (ed. G.F. Hawthorne; Grand Rapids, 1975), pp. 60-72, and in particular evidence cited from Greek and Latin authors in the section 'The Obligation of Gratitude', pp. 61-63. Cf. Cicero, *De officiis* 1.47 on the great importance of returning gratitude; Philo, *De decalogo* 165-67, for whom this obligation of honouring benefactors comes within the purview of the Old Testament with the commandment on honouring parents; Seneca, *De beneficiis* 1.1.3, 4-8, 13, on benefactors expecting 'repayments' and a sin of ingratitude if ignored: 'He who does not return a benefit sins. . .'

18. Motions were almost universally moved by an individual whose name was recorded in the inscription.

19. E.g. *BMI* 457 *IG* 617, 621.

20. See A. Strobel, 'Zum Verständnis von Rom. 13', *ZNW* 47 (1956), pp. 82-84.

21. C.B. Welles, *Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period* (New Haven, 1934), p. 363. This was originally a crown made of a sacred plant and valued for the significance of honour attached to it. Later a sum of money was given with a wreath, and still later the crown was made of gold.

22. *Or.* 75.7-8 οὗτος ὁ τὰ τρία ῥήματα and seen by Dio as 'a law', i.e. an established custom. On proclaiming see P. Gauthier, *Les cités grecques et leurs bienfaiteurs*, *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique Suppléments*, 13 (1985), p. 33.

23. H. Lamar Crosby, *Dio Chrysostom* (Loeb Classical Library, 5), p. 247 n. 2; *IE* 1412.

24. *IE* 1390 mentions praising . . . crowning . . . announcing . . . See also *BMI* 452, 'to crown with a gold crown and proclaim. . . in the theatre. . .'; cf. Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 66.2

25. E.g. *OGIS* 215, 339; *BMI* 420; *SIG* 312, 762; *IE* 1395, 1412; *Michel*, 307, 468, 487; some have καλὸς κάγαθός (*SIG* 307), and *IE* 1390 prefaces the announcement with the term καλοκαγαθία. On the importance of καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός see G.E.M. De Ste Croix, 'Additional Note on KALOS KAGATHOS, KALOKAGATHIA'; W. Den Boer, *Private Morality in Greece and Rome* (Leiden: Brill, 1979), pp. 161-62.

26. *OGIS* 339; *SEG* XXII, 226, XXIV, 1099 use the first phrase and *SIG* 193 uses the second.

27. *Or.* 75.8; 66.2.

28. *προεδρία* meant the seat of dignity and the privilege of the front seats at the theatre. Not only does Dio refer to the seat of honour as a reward (*Or.* 75.7) but *BMI* 448 suggests it was one of the honours given 'to the rest of the benefactors'. For examples of other inscriptions including this honour see *BMI* 448, 452, 453.

29. *De Corona*. For the four resolutions see 84, 114-16, 118; for the legal stipulation of crowning and reason for public crowning, 120; and for the firm expectation of *ἔπαινος*, 113. The resolution commended him for *ἀρετή* . . . *καὶ καλοκαγαθία*.

30. A substantial study has recently been undertaken on the benefaction theme in relation to New Testament word usage: F.W. Danker, *Benefaction: Epigraphic Study of a Graeco-Roman and New Testament Semantic Field* (St. Louis, Missouri, 1982). It includes over fifty inscriptions and documents in translation and aims to identify key words from them in order to illuminate their meaning in the New Testament corpus. What is missing from this study is any reference to Rom. 13.3, even though there is ample evidence of the final clause of recognition of benefactors cited in his inscriptions. What is said of Rom. 13.1-7 is 'And benefactors deserve honour'. Hence the concluding words in v. 7: 'Render honour to whom honour is due' (p. 401). The 'honouring' Paul has in mind is that due to rulers. It was the ruler who gave praise to benefactors. In his section 'Response to Benefactors' reference is made to the theme of 'honour' but none to 'praise' by authorities, although adequate reference is made to this in Danker's collection of inscriptions. The parallel passage in 1 Pet. 2.14 is not discussed in relation to the theme of Christians as public benefactors. Danker regards 1 Pet. 2.13-5.11 as a 'benefit' response theme with no specific comment on public acknowledgment of good works in 2.14 (p. 452).

31. Van Unnik's twenty literary sources cited in support of the role of rulers as reflected in Rom. 13.3 and 1 Pet. 2.14 are explicated in the inscriptions (*op. cit.*, pp. 336-40). The value of the epigraphic evidence is that it has shown that the ruler's role discussed in literary sources was indeed carried out with respect to benefactors.

32. Cf. *SIG*<sup>3</sup>174: ' . . . to praise him because he is a good man and does whatever good he can, ποιεῖν ὅτι δύναται ἀγαθόν' and is called 'a benefactor'. See also *SIG* 127, 167; *GDI* 5366, 5464, 5698, *et al.*; *SIG* 1105 for τὸ ἔργον καλὸν καὶ ἄξιόν ἐποιήσαν; W. Larfeld, *op. cit.*, §223. Compare C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, II, p. 664 n. 5, who states that the terms 'are naturally understood as denoting that which is morally good. . . *pace* Käsemann'.

33. C.E.B. Cranfield feels this gives the best sense (*Commentary on Romans*, I, pp. 264-65).

34. C.E.B. Cranfield, 'Some Observations on Romans XIII.1-7, *NTS* 6 (1959-60), p. 245.

35. C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, II, p. 666.

36. Benefactions included the supply of grain in times of necessity by diverting the grain-carrying ships to the city or forcing down the price by selling it in the market below the asking rate. The erecting of public buildings and the adorning of old buildings with marble revetments were also regarded as benefactions in Corinth, along with refurbishing the theatre, widening roads, helping in the construction of public utilities, going on embassies to gain privileges for a city, helping the city in times of civil upheaval. This reflects some of the activities of benefactors in the Ephesian epigraphic material (*BMI* 449, 450, 452, 455 etc.). On Corinthian buildings see J.H. Kent, *Corinth: The Inscriptions 1926-50* (Princeton, 1966), Vol. VIII, Part III, pp. 20-21 for discussion, pp. 123-37 for inscriptions. For an example of bestowing benefactions on a city see C.P. Jones, *op. cit.*, ch. 12.

37. E.A. Judge, *The Social Pattern of Early Christian Groups in the First Century* (London, 1960), and 'The Early Christians as a Scholastic Community', *Journal of Religious History* 1 (1960-61), p. 130.

38. E.A. Judge 'The Social Identity of the First Christians: A Question of Method in Religious History', *Journal of Religious History* 11 (1980), pp. 201-207; G. Theissen, 'Social Stratification in the Corinthian Community: A Contribution to the Sociology of Early Hellenistic Christianity', *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity* (Philadelphia, 1982), pp. 69-119; W.A. Meeks, 'The Social Level of Pauline Christians', *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven and London, 1983), ch. 2.

39. See van Unnik, *op. cit.*, pp. 336-40 for literary evidence. For example Demothenes, *Against Leptines*, 504, argues that the strength of the State depended on zeal for those laws which assign rewards to those who do good, ἀγαθὸν ποιεῖν, and the punishment of those who do evil. Wrong doing, κακὸν ποιεῖν, is described as a break of the law and good deeds are explained as εὐεργεσία for which there are public rewards for those 'ambitious for honour'.

40. W.C. van Unnik rightly argues that the good works in 2.15 are something more than 'doing one's duty' but doing something deserving 'special distinction', since 'public honours' will be bestowed on them: 'it is well known that εὐεργέται of Greek communities were often honoured by tablets in the market place extolling the great services they rendered to the State' ('The Teaching of Good Works in 1 Peter', *NTS* 1 [1954], p. 99). He makes this observation without epigraphic evidence, citing the comment of E.G. Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St. Peter* (London, 1946), p. 173.

41. J.H. Elliott argues that 1 Peter does not reflect the view of the state as a 'servant of God' in Rom. 13.1-7 but simply as a human institution, worthy of respect and deputed to administer justice (*A Home for the Homeless: A Sociological Exegesis of 1 Peter: Its Situation and Strategy* [Philadelphia,

1981], p. 87). F. Schroger argues that both passages are loyal and friendly to the state (*Gemeinde im 1. Petrusbrief* [Passau, 1981], p. 148). Certainly both passages have the same expectation of public recognition for Christian benefactors.

42. A.R. Hands, *Charities and Social Aid in Greece and Rome* (London, 1968), p. 36.

43. The benefaction theme is developed in 1 Peter not only for the rich in the churches of Asia Minor mentioned in 1.1, but for all Christians (2.12), household servants (2.20), and wives (3.6). The present writer rejects the view that 'the day of visitation' in 2.12 is the eschatological judgment day when unbelievers will glorify God because of the good works of Christians (as argued by W.C. van Unnik, 'The Teaching of Good Works. . .', *op. cit.*, p. 101) and holds the view that the epiphany is God's revelation of the Gospel when preached and accepted (cf. 1.12).

44. This is not to be confused with rulers who were 'called benefactors' and whose description as such is mentioned in Lk. 22.25. On this role see E. Skard, 'Zwei religiös-politische Begriffe: Euergetes Concordia', *Norske Videnskaps Akademi i Oslo, Avhandlingar* 13 (1932), pp. 1-66. His study incorporates epigraphic evidence. The literary evidence deals especially with Isocrates' view of the monarch as benefactor, but he does not discuss the role of the citizen as benefactor. As F.W. Danker notes the ruler was called a benefactor because he was seen as the provider of benefits such as security and welfare for the people (*op. cit.*, p. 324). I.H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Exeter, 1978), p. 812, cites some of the evidence of rulers from Ptolemy III to Trajan. The prohibition then,  $\upsilon\mu\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma\ \delta\acute{\epsilon}\ \sigma\upsilon\chi\ \sigma\upsilon\tau\omega\varsigma$  is not against Christians operating as benefactors. See D.J. Lull, 'The Servant-Benefactor as a Model of Greatness (Luke 22.24-30)', *Nov. T.* 28 (1986), p. 296, where he notes that the phrase 'those in authority are called benefactors' is a descriptive term. The point of Lk. 22.25 is that Christians were not to operate in an overbearing and dictatorial fashion as Gentile kings and those in authority who were commonly called 'benefactors'.

45. Epigraphic evidence of Christians having fulfilled this role is slender if not totally absent, unless there are in the extant material names of benefactors who were indeed Christians but whose profession of faith would not, of course, be discernible from the inscription. For a discussion of Erastus in Acts 19.22; Rom. 16.23; 2 Tim. 4.20; as a possible candidate see H.J. Cadbury, 'Erastus of Corinth', *JBL* 50 (1931), pp. 42-58; P.N. Harrison, 'Erastus and His Pavement', *Paulines and Pastorals* (London, 1964), pp. 100-105; G. Theissen, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-83. The case of Erastus was only slightly different in that he undertook public benefactions in exchange for election to public office. For a description of procedures see P. Garnsey, '*Taxatio* and *Pollicitatio*. . .', p. 116.



46. E.A. Judge, *The Social Pattern* p. 73.

47. R.F. Hock, *The Social Context of Paul's Ministry* (Philadelphia, 1980), p. 46, following A.J. Malherbe, *Social Aspects of Early Christianity* (Philadelphia, 1983), p. 26. Support is invoked by Hock on the 'unmistakably' political nature of Paul's language from E. von Dobschütz, *Thessalonicher-Briefe* (Göttingen, 1909), pp. 179-81. That view, however, was rejected at the time by J.E. Frame, *The Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians* (Edinburgh, 1912), p. 161 and more recently by I.H. Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians* (Grand Rapids and London, 1983), pp. 116-17, who argue from the context which follows and the further reference to idleness in 4.13-5.11, 14.

48. See P. Garnsey, 'Taxatio and Pollicitatio', p. 116; P. Garnsey and R. Saller, *The Roman Empire* (London, 1987), p. 33.

49. E.H. Elliott (*op. cit.*, pp. 74-77) when he cites substantially from B.R. Wilson 'An Analysis of Sect Development', *American Sociological Review* 24 (1959), pp. 3-15. 1 Peter may well have been written in part to overcome a social separatist tendency developed in the face of pressure, but the teaching in no way encourages a separation from society but only from sin (cf. 1.17; 2.11). D.L. Balch, 'Hellenization/Acculturation in 1 Peter', *Perspectives on First Peter* (NABPR Special Studies Series, 9; 1986), pp. 83ff., is critical of Elliott's use of early ideas of Wilson which were later refined, and argues that Elliott has not applied the correct model for the data.

50. D.L. Balch (*ibid.*, pp. 86ff.), while rejecting Wilson's model, adopts as an alternative the sociologists' findings on acculturation based on South Pacific peoples and the Indians and Amish people of North America. He argues on that basis for 'the social function of contradictory actions' with an 'enthusiastic reception' of 1 Pet. 2.14-15 and a firm rejection of other behaviour in 1.18; 4.3-4.

51. See the author's chapter 'Seek the Welfare of the City': Social Ethics according to 1 Peter', *Themelios* 13 (1988), pp. 91-94.

52. E.A. Judge, *The Social Pattern*. . . , pp. 73-74.

53. On Philo's concerns about living peacefully within the law and abstaining from rumour and slander see R.G. Barraclough on Philo's ideal citizen, 'Philo's Politics. Roman Rule and Hellenistic Judaism', *ANRW* II.21, (1984), pp. 533-35.

54. Philo uses εὐεργεσία and its cognates 127 times in his corpus, primarily with reference to God as the Benefactor bestowing blessings on the creation. It can be said that he uses the terms and conventions of praise and obligations to describe God, His works and the right response by men but never draws the conclusions of Rom. 13.3-4 and 1 Pet. 2.14. G. Bertram (*TWNT*, II, p. 655) comments on Philo's strong Hellenistic usage.

55. W.C. van Unnik, 'The Teaching of Good Works', p. 99.

56. *The Epistle to Diognetes* V.4-5.



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