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THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS  
THE CONFLICT BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY  
AND HUMANISM

By

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A THESIS

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## INTRODUCTION



## INTRODUCTION

### I. The Subject

In writing on the "Epistle to the Romans, The Conflict Between Christianity and Humanism", we are particularly interested in a repristination of Pauline theology in our age. We are indebted for our inspiration to the Dr. Karl Heim, Professor of Theology at the University of Tübingen, Germany, who, in his fascinating way, has made this Epistle a living challenge instead of a monument erected in honor of an ancient church near the banks of the Tiber. Today, as well as at the time of St. Paul, the same contrast holds true- God or man.

### II. Justification of the Subject

The reasons why the writer of this thesis has selected the Epistle to the Romans are threefold: First, the Epistle to the Romans is a clearcut statement of Christianity;<sup>1</sup> Secondly, this Epistle faces the question of humanism more inclusively than do other epistles;<sup>2</sup> Thirdly, historically considered, the Christian Church has witnessed radical revivals subsequent to the rediscovery of the message of this book.<sup>3</sup> This prejudices the writer to believe that this Epistle will always reappear

. . . . .

1. Cf. above, pp. 56f.
2. Cf. above, pp. 101f., 109ff.
3. Cf. above, pp. 109ff.

as the lost book<sup>1</sup> whenever man enthrones himself in the temple of the living God.

### III. The Delimitation of the Field of Inquiry

Our first aim is to make a contrast between Paul and the humanism of his day. This will serve as a link between the past and the present. The literary humanism of the days of the Reformation, including Zwingli, Calvin, and Melancthon, will not be touched upon. The modern and contemporary writers on humanism will engage all of our attention.

This work does not purport to be an exposition of the Epistle to the Romans in the technical sense of the term. We are indebted to many commentators for the work they have delivered. The few references to critical exegesis, as far as this project is concerned, are secondary. At the same time, in reading Romans we are in search of its fundamental message. At the surface two principles guide us: (1) Paul's eschatology, and (2) Paul's conception of and reaction to humanism. We hope to prove, however, that these two are essentially one. Paul is an anti-humanist because he is an eschatologist.<sup>2</sup> To maintain this position we shall have to concur with the remark of G. Vos that "It will appear throughout that to

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1. II Chronicles 34: 14ff.
2. Humanists and Eschatologists have always been disagreeable bedfellows- Cf. Herman Bavinck, Gereformeerde Dogmatiek, Vol. IV, p. 714.

unfold the Apostle's eschatology means to set forth his theology as a whole."<sup>1</sup>

We wish to trace the development of Paul biographically and theologically. Two questions have governed the inquiry: What is the relation of Paul to humanism? Why did Paul turn out to be (if he actually did) an eschatologist? We wish to know the book by knowing the author in order that we may arrive at the essential message of this epoch-making Epistle. From the point of view of eschatology and humanism we shall summarize the teachings concerning God, Jesus Christ, and man.

In the last part of the thesis the position of the humanist will be described. In evaluating the systems presented we shall not discuss every possible detail. There are many ethical and sociological questions we feel can be safely omitted, e.g., optional parenthood, child-labor laws, and the League of Nations. We have limited ourselves to the underlying metaphysical and logical assumptions. These assumptions will constitute the basis of our conclusions.

#### IV. Method and Plan of Procedure.

Fundamental to the understanding of our method of procedure is the suggestion of T. E. Hulme.<sup>2</sup> Everyone

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1. Pauline Eschatology, p. 11.
2. Speculations, pp. 49ff.

sees reality through concepts. These concepts are usually employed in an uncritical fashion. We may call these concepts the windows of the soul, or, preferably, interpretative assumptions. Every individual looks upon reality through windows. These windows, of necessity, shape or warp the thinking of individuals and groups. If we can discover the windows through which reality is interpreted, we have found the peculiarity of any age. The reason why certain aspects of the soul are emphasized more than others,<sup>1</sup> why certain evils seem peculiar to a certain period lies in the fact that we look through different windows.

We employ the concept "uncritical" in the Kantian epistemological use of the term. We are not interested in the question whether these windows in a formal sense warp or shape reality. Ours is the attempt to discover the content of these windows in order that we may make a satisfying contrast. The content, therefore, will indicate the underlying assumptions of any age. There are, for example, many windows in our age: evolution, science, the goodness of man, and the social task of the church.<sup>2</sup>

. . . . .

1. Anne Anema, in Onze Tijd en Onze Roeping, pp. 11f.
2. These stand out in bold relief especially when compared with the middle ages. That period was governed by the belief in the depravity of man, the need of salvation, and all the political and ecclesiastical institutions were the embodiment of the ideology of that age, including the contributions of the old Roman empire.

We have spent much time in search of these interpretative assumptions of Paul because he is farther removed from us than present day humanism. We have tried to read the Epistle to the Romans through the Pauline windows of anti-humanism at Damascus, Jerusalem, and Athens, as well as the eschatological approach to the understanding of this present life.

Armed with "interpretative assumptions" we shall discover the message, and then the contrast. Hence, of necessity, we must first of all know the man and the formative influences that have moulded his thinking. In discussing the man we shall keep before us the contrast between Paul and the humanists of his day. In reading Parts I and III of this thesis the fundamental agreements between the humanists of Paul's day and those of our day will become self-evident. The first chapter of Part I purports to make plain: (1) Paul's experiences were anti-humanistic; (2) Paul had a message for philosophers; (3) Paul was essentially one with the "pillars of the church". If so, the Epistle to the Romans becomes Christianity's message to the world. To establish this position we shall not follow a common method of comparing Paul with Christ. We have compared Romans with Acts, and have found in this comparison such an underlying unity that we feel justified in asserting that the Epistle to the Romans is Christianity treasured in Pauline language. The first chapter of Part I justifies

our title. It also teaches us the author of the great anti-humanistic doctrine. It also forms the necessary link in refuting the counter-claims.

Chapter two of Part I evaluates these counter-claims anticipated in chapter one. If Paul is a Greek then Paul is a humanist. If Paul is only a "revised edition" of pharisaism in consequence of his Damascus experience, then we still are at sea. These considerations become a means to an end. By dispensing with them we gradually learn more of the theologian. We shall compare Paul with the Esdras IV very briefly. We shall find that Paul must answer certain questions which are burning in the heart of man in his age. These questions are fundamentally eschatological. Then we look upon Paul the theologian historically. This, too, leads us to the same conclusion- Paul the Eschatologist. Different schools of thought which set forth this position are: K. Heim, K. Barth, P. Althaus, R. Bultmann, G. Vos, and especially A. Schweitzer. These then, (the age in which Paul lived, and the verdict of many students of Paul) guide us in considering Romans, contrary to the judgment of history, a work saturated with eschatology. This is an essential element for the proper understanding of Paul's interpretative assumptions. This eschatology is described for a twofold reason: (1) To show the philosophy of life of the author, which will help us to understand the relation between time, eternity, and the mind of the

Spirit;<sup>1</sup> (2) To show that genuine eschatology of necessity precludes the possibility of humanism. The second reason is by way of anticipation.

After reading the message of Romans with eschatologico--anti-humanistic eyes, we shall summarize the teachings about God, Christ, and man, which will form the basis of contrast later on. While we discuss Romans we make necessary excursions in order to make the comparison between Paul and humanism clearer. We believe that these comparisons are more in harmony with the method of procedure as outlined above than a critical study of the text. These digressions, if such they be, make Romans a present day challenge.

Parts I and II will then be seen to form a unit. The man, his theology, and his message may then be compared to a building in which all parts serve to support the entire structure.

Part III introduces a new subject-- "Contemporary Humanism". The various schools of thought will first be described. Then their positions will be evaluated. We shall attempt, first of all, to inquire whether humanism is self-satisfying on its own basis, after which we shall proceed to compare it with Romans.

We shall conclude that Humanism is consistent as far as it goes, but that it does not go far enough.

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1. Cf. above, pp. 92ff.

Humanism must surrender its logic to chance, and must always come to the awkward position of begging the question. Humanism is and of necessity must remain a question begging system.

Secondly, we shall set forth that Christianity cannot be proven rationally.<sup>1</sup> Eschatology in the Pauline sense precludes this possibility. Humanism cannot overthrow Christianity because it has limited itself by definition to man. At the same time, Christianity is self-satisfying. The eschatological life becomes the true interpreter of our present life, for Christianity has two foci: the Eternal God, unlimited in power, and human responsibility. Hence Christianity can account for the various manifestations of the one and the many problems without destroying either member of these problems. It puts evil on a personal, relational basis, not metaphysically necessary. Hence it alone has a hope that cannot be put to shame. This we discuss in "A Paragraph on Apologetics".

#### V. Definition of Terms

In speaking of Christianity we limit ourselves to the interpretation given by the citizens of Antioch.<sup>2</sup> The historical meaning of this concept will be employed

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1. Some may prefer the term rationalistically. Possibly we must distinguish between these two as well as the underlying activity of "reason" and "reasoning".
2. Acts 11: 26.



throughout without any reservations.

A preliminary definition of Humanism,<sup>1</sup> which will serve as a guide until we can make a more comprehensive study of it, is as follows: Humanism is that philosophy of life whose origin and destiny is limited to man. We must distinguish between humanism and humanitarianism.<sup>2</sup> To bind the wounds of the distressed, or to seek to eliminate social injustices is not necessarily humanism. Christianity also has its good Samaritans who are profoundly interested in the welfare of mankind.

Because eschatology and anti-humanism are intricately intertwined, we shall define the most fundamental concept employed (possibly not according to common usage) in this thesis- eschatology. We must guard ourselves against two extremes. First, we may not equate eschatology and the consummation of the ages. Consummation of the ages is but a "genus" of the "species" eschatology. Contrary to the second extreme, we may not ignore, nor consider of no importance the climacteric elements usually associated with the doctrine of the last things. Both extremes must be avoided. What then is the relation between the two? Eschatology is the doctrine of the end, including its antecedents. No end is thinkable without a beginning. This is also true of the Old Testament use of the word "end". In very many cases the whole process is

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1. Cf. below, Humanism, a Paragraph on Definitions, p.209.
2. Cf. below, Literary Humanism, pp. 224ff.

presupposed in the final state.<sup>1</sup> The wine that at the end bites like a serpent was the wine that in the beginning flowed down smoothly.<sup>2</sup>

So also in the New Testament. Eschatos, although it means end, does not imply an unrelated phenomenon at the close of this present drama. Although not limited to St. Paul, the qualitative life of the redemption in Christ is particularly emphasized by the chief of the apostles. Christ is "the eschatos Adam".<sup>3</sup> That is, Christ is the representative of the redeemed who brings the qualitative life known as eschatological life. When Christ returns, the angel will sound the "eschatological trumpet".<sup>4</sup> This does not mean that no trumpet will sound again. Paul is interested in more profound questions than the possibility of trumpets in heaven. This is the trumpet that ushers in the new order of life. As there is a trumpet for battle, a trumpet for retreat, so there is a trumpet to usher in the last things.

The consummation of the ages is, therefore, only a means to an end. As Christ's resurrection was the means of the introduction of Christ into this eschatological sphere,<sup>5</sup> so the final resurrection will introduce the

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1. G. Vos, op. cit., pp. 2f. Cf. also  $\sqrt{7} \text{ } \gamma \text{ } \Pi \text{ } \alpha \text{ } \nu$  in Brown, Driver, Briggs- Hebrew and English Lexicon, in loco; Proverbs 5:4,11; 23:31,32; Genesis 49:10, Numbers 23:10.
2. Proverbs 23:31,32.
3. I Cor. 15:45.
4. I Cor. 15:52.
5. Romans 1:4, cf. pp. 127ff.

children of God into the qualitative sphere of holiness and perfection awaiting the redeemed. This new life is anticipated. Regeneration, justification, and sanctification are the foretaste of the perfect life to come.<sup>1</sup>

Paul is interested also in climacteric aspect of eschatology.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, these are but contributory to the new life when sin shall be no more. In that sense we shall use the term eschatology. It is the new life with indispensable present antecedents,<sup>3</sup> awaiting the catastrophic changes to usher in the age when this life shall exercise itself unfettered by present limitations.

Because of the many aspects of the new life, we must show its various manifestations. We must guard ourselves, however, against "over-segmentation". The new life with its introductory cosmic disturbances of trembling firmaments forms an organic close to the redemptive work of Christ in this age. Dr. Kuyper maintains that all the loci of dogmatics end with something incomplete. Only in the locus of the consummation of the ages is the subject of Dogmatics rounded out.<sup>4</sup> The  $\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\varsigma$  of all things

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1. Cf. position of G. Vos, pp. 96ff.
2. Romans 8: 18ff, especially verse 23.
3. Cf. the use of the word "now" in Romans. In some instances now is used logically perhaps, still Paul thinks of the new life now, because Christ is already in the eschatological sphere. We only suggest Romans 3:21,26; 5:9,11; 6:19,21; 7:6,17; 8:1. For emphasizing only the qualitative at the expense of the climacteric, cf. Karl Heim, Glaube und Leben, p. 539, who refers us to Karl Barth's Römerbrief, Paul Althaus, Die letzten Dinge, Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus. This is not K. Heim's position.
4. A. Kuyper, "Locus de Consummatione Saeculi", in Dictaten Dogmatiek, Vol. V, p.4f.

ushers in the eternal  $\delta\sigma\eta$

Paul may be said to have had "formative experiences". Experiences per se cannot give us theology, for we are in need of categories of interpretation to make experiences intelligible to ourselves. This expression means nothing more in this thesis than an attempt to discover why Romans emphasizes certain truths. There were situations that produced certain reactions. Although we are not in search of a psychological account of the genesis of Romans, we believe that certain experiences will help us to understand the message in its relation to the whole of the then extant Christianity.

#### VI. Sources

Possibly because of his training the writer makes much use of the Dutch sources. He feels grateful that he can do so, for the Netherlands has contributed much to Reformed theology as well as to Calvinism. The German sources treasure for us the recent struggle between Idealism and Christianity, and, as such, are relevant to the question under discussion. The sources for humanism have been limited almost entirely to American authors. English and French writers have been consulted, but mostly for elucidation and comparison. Humanists' feathers are not very unlike each other.

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The writer of this thesis does not desire to pass by this opportunity of acknowledging a grateful debt to his faculty adviser, Dr. George W. Richards, as well as to all the members of the faculty responsible for his promotion for their helpful suggestions.

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PART I  
THE AUTHOR

CHAPTER I  
FORMATIVE EXPERIENCES

A. Paul At Damascus

1. The Story of His Conversion.

The mouths of babes ordained to praise the Saviour, the frantic twist of the cheeks of the frightened mother, the crowns of grey gotten in righteousness, the bestial humiliation involved in leading the straggling frame of one past the three score and ten years failed to melt the adamant heart of the infuriated persecutor- Paul. Intoxicated with a love toward Jehovah, sincere in staining his hands with Christian blood, Paul's march to Damascus is profoundly pathetic. In his zeal for God Paul was godless. In his quest for a perfect dedication to the true religion Paul apotheosized himself. Paul was in spite of himself a paradox. He executed ideals which in every way seemed logically necessary, and religiously, divinely enjoined upon him.

Paul was a "convict" of truth as he saw it. As truth's prisoner he dedicated himself to its lifelong servitude with joy and pride. Paul was passionately in favor of the sentence the first Christian martyr received.<sup>1</sup> In the

. . . . .

1. Acts 8:1, *συρεωδοκῆω* is a stronger term than our English word consent. cf. J.H. Thayer, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 604, R.J. Knowling, "Acts" in Expositor's Greek Testament, in loco says that the formula in Acts 8:1 indicates the lasting and enduring nature of Paul's consent. Also Luke 11:48, Acts 22:20, Romans 1:32, and I Cor. 7: 12,13.

post-conversion stage of Paul's career, Paul never even intimates that he was insincere. On the contrary, the pride of moral honesty and courage seems to have constituted the very warp upon which his career as a pharisee was to be woven into designs that would please even the very strictest of that sect. "I gave my vote against them."<sup>1</sup> In short, Paul's greatest joy was to persecute, not to satisfy the longing of bestial eyes, but to answer the summons of truth of the covenant God to extirpate the very name of the hated malefactor hanging on the cross of Golgotha.

The death of Stephen seems to have been the signal to begin a general persecution.<sup>2</sup> Possibly Stephen may have irritated the legalist in his powerful defense of Christianity in the Old Testament<sup>3</sup> and by identifying his prosecutors with the stiffnecked and complacent idolaters, covenant breakers of the Old Dispensation. The gospel was breaking through its Jerusalem confines like a forest fire to the very regions of Lebanon. How could error be eradicated except by martyring the persons confessing it. The logic is clear as crystal. Error is the product of

. . . . .

1. Acts 26:10. Quotations will be taken from the Revised Version.
2. Acts 8:1, "On that day" Knowling quotes Weiss who calls our attention to the emphatic position of *ἐκεῖνη* in the phrase *ἐν ἐκεῖνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ*, op. cit., p. 207. Dean Henry Alford in Greek Testament, in loco, claims that Luke uses the term indefinitely. There is, however, a definite relation between the death of Stephen and the general persecution.
3. Acts 7: 1-51.



wickedness mediated and fabricated by the mind of man. Without man there would be no human errors. Hence, to put these men to death we free ourselves from this the cesspool germinating heresy. It is a "quarantine" conception of truth and error. Besides, error is moral. It is a flagrant disobedience to God. As such it merits the extreme penalty of death. Paul in his zeal for God was logical and obedient according to his own premises. It is not surprising, therefore, that Luke should describe Paul's state of mind as living in the atmosphere of blood and murder. Paul inhaled and exhaled murder. "Yet breathing threatening and slaughter" was the very frame of mind in which Paul faced a new challenge-- the persecution at Damascus.<sup>1</sup> As far as the Book of Acts is concerned Paul loved the task of a persecutor for therein he gave expression to a conviction that he was serving his God.

At Damascus Paul becomes a question to himself. His premises are torn into shreds for he comes face to face with the Lord whom he persecuted. The glory was the glory of the risen Lord. The light brighter than the noonday sun was the radiance from redemption's throne.<sup>2</sup> The great significance of this crisis is the coming in contact of the person who persecutes and the person who

. . . . .

1. Acts 9:1 *ἐπιπνέων* both inhaling and exhaling, Alford in op. cit., p. 97. H.A.W. Meyer, The Acts of the Apostles, p. 182, only inhaling. Both would agree to the latter's interpretation, "sanguinary desire".
2. Acts 9: 3ff; 22: 9ff; 26:13.

is persecuted. Paul's "windows" or interpretative assumptions are smashed. Whether or no one finds the accounts in Acts mythical or fanciful, the fact remains, Luke describes this event as a personal appearance of Jesus Christ unto Paul. In all subsequent allusions to this event Paul himself is convinced that he saw the crucified Jesus in His glory.<sup>1</sup> The question is, could Paul's logic, his conception of obedience, his passionate faith in the God of the fathers stand the test? Paul realizes the open conflict. He knows that there must be a radical change and readjustment. In this sudden and unanticipated experience Paul is confronted with the question: "Why persecutest thou me?". Paul must answer the question. Paul is put on trial by the malefactor. Is there a new situation possible which he has overlooked? "I am Jesus."<sup>2</sup> "To destroy the church you must destroy me. If the church is the work of human hands martyrdom will answer your question. If the church is the work of the resurrected Lord in heaven then all your work is futile. Besides, if I am Jesus who am in heaven, then I am the Son of His obedience." Life's goal, life's longing came to nothing in the presence of the Prince of Life. Paul- a great collapse!

This painful defeat was the greatest victory on

. . . . .

1. Galatians 1:16; I Corinthians 15:8.
2. *Ἐγώ εἰμι Ἰησοῦς* Acts 9:5, 22:8, 22:15. The very repetition shows the grip these words had on Paul.  
*Ἐγώ* I, the speaker, am Jesus.

human records, except the cross of Calvary. Ananias, against his will, was commissioned to baptize this arch-heretic-hunter, Paul. One may call this Ananias' crisis. He too had to become a question unto himself. Would he dare to question the command of the risen Lord? He became the bearer of a great message. He was privileged to hurry to the street called the Straight to tell this collapsed pharisee that he was to conquer the world for the living Christ with new weapons of endurance and preaching. He was the chosen vessel to carry the Messianic name to the court of world authority- Rome, and to the center of learning- Athens.<sup>1</sup> How else could Christ receive a hearing at Rome? How else could Christ seek entrance into the pagan world of learning? Where Paul stands, Christ is, for where Christ's ambassador is there Christ makes his will known. When Paul's blood will mingle with the stream of the Tiber, "why persecutest thou Me?" will still be as valid as at Damascus.

### 2. The Problem of Paul's Conversion.

The problem of Paul's conversion may be stated in three propositions:

- a. His conversion is the natural outcome of psychological antecedents;
- b. His conversion is psychologically prepared, but

. . . . .

1. Acts 9: 15.

ineffectual until the supernatural appearance of Jesus Christ.

c. His conversion is a sudden transformation, having no psychological preparation at all.

a. Paul's Conversion as the Natural Outcome of Psychological Antecedents.

The question whether or no Acts teaches the supernatural character of Paul's conversion is irrelevant, for no one can doubt that point. The greater question is: Will one receive this testimony? For the humanist this testimony must be ruled out of court for it is based upon a belief in the supernatural. Is it possible for a humanist to be a dogmatist as well as a believer in the supernatural character of the Bible? The denial places one before the question: How account for the narrative as told by Acts?

According to the French scholar of the previous generation, Renan, two ways may satisfactorily explain why Paul may have misinterpreted the facts. (1) The storm in the Lebanon region sent forth a glaring flash of lightning, or (2) the march through the hot deserts may have caused an ophthalmic fever.<sup>1</sup> This, however, finds no acceptance.

William James includes Paul's conversion in the more general class of photisms. "There is one form of sensory automatism which possibly deserves special notice

. . . . .

1. Quoted by F. Godet, Epistle to the Romans, trs. p. 10.

the term of the psychologists. Saint Paul's blinding heavenly vision seems to have been a phenomēn [phenomenon] of this sort; so does Constantine's cross in the sky."<sup>1</sup> Without calling into question the right to classify Constantine, and, as he does in the same paragraph, President Finney with Saint Paul,<sup>2</sup> one can anticipate definite difficulties. Photisms may exist, but certain external resemblances do not warrant identification. To identify may be to beg the question. Then, too, the two mentioned were in different circumstances. They were not the arch enemies of the church as Paul was. Besides seeing a light, Paul heard a voice speaking unto him. Whatever this may have been others standing in his company knew that something was happening.. One cannot easily account for that. This would imply a group photism or a group abnormality. The question still remains why this photism should have made him the messenger of Christ to suffer and to preach the gospel to the Gentiles and the Jews, or why a photism should change the windows of his soul. Then, too, in order to explain the conversion of Paul psychologically one must include in the investigation a study of Ananias. Paul calls him a highly respected citizen, "well reported" among the Jews who lived in

. . . . .

1. William James, The Variety of Religious Experience, pp. 251 f.
2. 1. Both Constantine and Finney are post-Pauline experiences; 2. Paul claims to have met a person.

Damascus.<sup>1</sup> If Ananias is not a fictitious character, if he was well known among the citizens of Damascus, the duty of every psychologist is to account for this twofold vision, of Paul and of Ananias. The account is inexplicable with the omission of either. Moreover, how could an hallucination bring about such a radical change, transforming a persecutor into a sufferer, unless one ascribes to the hallucination what is accredited by Luke to Christ?

Or we may, perchance, follow either J. Pratt<sup>2</sup> or A. Holmes, "His brooding melancholy was broken by fits of activity, due to his choleric disposition; he could pass from the Damascus expedition to the Arabian desert meditation easily and readily".<sup>3</sup> This combination of melancholic temperament and choleric disposition escaped the detection of Saint Paul.<sup>4</sup> Again one is disposed to say: If these two factors can produce such a man, without the man being conscious of it- what a marvel! This seems to be a plain case of projecting modern psychology into a narrative bare of sufficient data to account for this experience naturally. Reading modern accounts of Paul, one would think that all the physiological and psychological data of Paul had been scrupulously kept. This is not the case. Of necessity any account of Paul's conversion is an inference, and an inference based on insufficient facts. Inferences may be

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1. Acts 22: 12.
2. James Bissett Pratt, The Religious Consciousness, p. 67.
3. Arthur Holmes, The Mind of St. Paul, p. 51.
4. Ibid., p. 51.

logical, but they remain cogent only in so far as the premise is true. Besides, one would expect confessions from a soul sold to moral uprightness. John Calvin was a temperamental man. As other great temperamental characters, he was a blessing to mankind. In spite of his migraine headaches, his colics, he carried on a great task.<sup>1</sup> But his life was full of remorse for the regretful moments of anger resulting from this temperamental disposition. In Paul's life we find nothing of this kind. Paul's outbursts are the volcanic eruptions of holy wrath for which he need not apologize.

Paul may have been moody at times. This, however does not make him pathological any more than the storm that offsets the summer's calm. Judging from his post-conversion career, (and fallaciously all psychologists must do that), Paul summons Christians to rejoice always, and to sing hymns of praise. There is much that seems to contradict a pathological explanation of Saint Paul.

We may, with Pratt, take recourse to the psychopathic disposition of "Split-off States". We may seek refuge in the subconscious life of the greatest of the apostles. This would account for the suddenness of the conversion. Besides, one could then explain why for Paul this was unanticipated. Conversion would be nothing more,

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1. Jean Moura et Paul Louvet, Calvin, p. 204.

as in Freud, Prince, and Sidis,<sup>1</sup> than the post-hypnotic suggestions. The difference between theology and psychology then is that the former has recourse to the supernatural, and the latter to the subconscious.<sup>2</sup> Even if all the mysteries of the subconscious life were an open book, we would still be confronted with insuperable difficulties. Does the subconscious preclude the possibility of the personal Saviour to address Paul? If not, then there are still these two possibilities: 1. A subconscious explosion in the conscious life, and 2. a person addressing a person. That the former is difficult to defend lies in the fact that we first of all are dealing with the conscious life of Paul. Even if one is successful in relegating the unaccountable to the subconscious, one is still bound to answer the question: Through what experience, hypnotic power, did the subconscious life absorb and then suggest the meeting of an enemy who in reality was the closest friend? In imposing the extant findings of his science upon the past, the psychologist may be the greatest means of misunderstanding a man. We can appreciate Machen's remark that psychologists are abandoning the attempt to account for Paul psychologically. There must have been a preparation, but what it is, they will not say.<sup>3</sup>

Photisms, split-off states, combination of

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1. J. B. Pratt, op. cit., p. 160.

2. Ibid., p. 160.

3. J. Gresham Machen, The Origin of Paul's Religion. pp. 62f.



melancholy and choleric, visions, maladies, epilepsy,<sup>1</sup> cannot account for Paul. The reasons are evident. 1. It is hard to recast the historical material into psychological moulds without building a structure only upon inferences based upon the laws of the psychologist in search of a solution. 2. It is staggering to account for the transformation of an enemy to Christ's representative even to the very courts of the Gentiles. 3. It is begging the question to assert that what theology calls supernatural, psychology calls the subconscious. 4. It is the task of psychology to account for the vision of Ananias as well as that of Paul. 5. It is beyond the range and scope of the science to call into question such problems as the existence of the risen Lord. At the same time the Lord is our great contemporary, why could he not have addressed Paul? The conversion of Paul has greater metaphysical difficulties than psychological. No one thinks it strange that a person addresses person. No one thinks it strange that a person suddenly makes his appearance. If Jesus is the living Jesus, why could He not for reasons momentous for the advancement of His kingdom speak unto an enemy to stay and to undo the work of evil? For psychology to negate this, psychology must enter the realm of metaphysics. If psychology renders a verdict it has thereby condemned itself, for a subtle transfer into another science is no

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1. Ibid., pp. 58 ff. Also Sabatier, St. Paul, p. 65.

solution to the problem in one's own field. On the face of it, this discussion brings out that the conflict between humanism and Christianity is already laid bare. If the Damascus experience is utterly impossible, if Christ cannot be our contemporary, if Christ cannot reveal Himself to Paul, then it follows that we cannot have an authentic account of the mystery of revelation as treasured for us in the Epistle to the Romans. But why can Christ not appear to Paul? What law of psychology, of metaphysics, was annulled?

b. Paul's Conversion was Psychologically Prepared.

The second possibility that must be considered is the conception that although Christ appeared unto Paul personally, this conversion was psychologically prepared. In itself there is no serious objection for the belief is that only the intervention of the risen Lord prevented the internal process from withering away.<sup>1</sup> God, of course, can use the past. The antecedents would be the heroic death of the martyr Stephen, especially his dying prayer for his enemies, and the courage of those confessing the despised Son of Man. Paul's soul was wounded when he heard the defense and the prayer of the dying saint. What could heal the wound but a redoubled dedication to a life of persecution?<sup>2</sup> Besides, was Paul not conscious of inward

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1. F. Godet, op. cit., p. 12.

2. Ibid, p. 7.

defeats? As a sincere pharisee he could not fail to discover many sins.<sup>1</sup> The vision of a saint upon his knees, the failures of a sinner within were the goads against which Paul was kicking. As he approached Damascus the turmoil of the soul suddenly took an unexpected turn. He was trying to subdue the better knowledge, but the Saviour cried out to him in the critical moment. This caused the struggler to lay hold on the new anchor thrown out for his wrecked soul.

Whether Acts 26: 14 can stand the weight of this interpretation is questionable. Knowling<sup>2</sup> cautiously warns us not to press Paul's state of mind before his conversion too much. A more natural interpretation of this sentence would be the futility of Paul's resisting Christ. As it is hopeless for the ox to resist the goads, so it is for Paul to seek to destroy the church of Christ. The true goad is Christ. Why persecutest thou Me?<sup>3</sup>

c. His Conversion is a Sudden Transformation, Having no Psychological Preparation at all.

There are certain reasons why we believe that the records teach that this conversion was instantaneous, psychologically unprepared.

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1. J. Ernest Rattenbury, The Religious Experience of Saint Paul, p. 121.
2. In Acts 26: 14.
3. cf. Knowling, Alford, Meyer in loco, Thayer, Κέντρον, p.344, Machen, op. cit., p. 62. Machen gives two possibilities although he adopts the first, 1. As interpreted above; 2. In the very meeting of Jesus, Paul may still have resisted the risen Lord. p. 62.

1. Negatively. Albert Schweitzer points out that we must bear in mind Paul's age.<sup>1</sup> To look upon Acts as giving a psychological account of Paul's conversion is an anachronism. What psychology is found there, will of necessity be a by-product. The author was not interested in the psychology of conversion and we should not force it into the text. Hence we are very reluctant to find the data we moderns would desire. Resorting to inference is dangerous from the point of view of objectivity.

2. There are certain palpable assumptions. (a) To think of Paul as cringing not before force or challenge, but before the courage and calm of martyrs, is "very romantic, but very un-Pauline".<sup>2</sup> Somehow this does not jibe with the atmosphere of blood described by Luke. (b) To think of Paul as weeping over failures is likewise very gratuitous. It is very questionable indeed whether or no Romans 7: 7-25 describes his pre-Christian state of mind. There the law of God "after the inward man" seems to be simultaneous with the law of sin warring in Paul's members. "So then I of myself with the mind, indeed, serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."<sup>3</sup> Moreover, consciousness of failures is not identical with the consciousness of sin.

3. To assume that Paul's conversion was psychologi-

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1. Albert Schweitzer, Paul and His Interpreters, p. 106.

2. Machen, op. cit., pp. 66f.

3. Romans 7: 25.

cally prepared requires an argument from silence. Nowhere do we read of a preparation. On the contrary, the data at our disposal seems to favor the interpretation of a sudden volcanic eruption. In Galations 1: 14,15 the suddenness of the conversion seems to be emphasized.<sup>1</sup> The point at issue in this passage is to show that not for a moment, not from man, even from Paul himself, did his gospel come. His aim was to demonstrate from this Damascus experience that it came to him by revelation absolutely. The psychological preparation as set forth above seems to conflict with this absoluteness of revelation. This preparation, in a measure, would be "of him" instead of "to him".

4. Paul confessedly declares that in his pre-Christian life he caused many people to blaspheme, but did so in ignorance.<sup>2</sup> It does not necessarily follow that Paul did not have a struggle. One can cling tenaciously to a conviction even when another view may be crowding in one's mind. At the same time, Paul's keenness of mind, his sincerity of purpose, and his lofty moral ideals seem to preclude this possibility. Paul as a conviction-intoxicated man could not confess this sin later on and call such a conflict "in ignorance". Moreover, the very opening of the ninth chapter of Acts forms a contrast with the

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1. Machen, op. cit., p. 61.

2. I Timothy 1:13, cf. also Phillipians 3:6.

unexpected glory of the risen Lord. While Paul was enjoying the very climate contaminated with the stench of carnage, Jesus unexpectedly snatched him out of it as by a flash.

### 3. The Value of the Damascus Experience.

Our purpose in describing the Damascus experience at great length is twofold: (1) To understand the anti-humanism basic to Pauline thinking in consequence of this experience; (2) to appreciate the message to the Romans. As has been said above, Romans stands or falls with the probability of this experience.

First of all, we must understand the great role revelation plays in all Pauline theology. In the biblical sense, revelation is the deathblow to humanism. Not the work of man, but the word of God spoken by the risen Lord is the basis for all subsequent preaching. It was revealed to him who as a chosen vessel would bear the Messianic name to all the corners of the earth. Through him Christ's world wide mission would be partially realized.<sup>1</sup>

Secondly, the doctrinal benefits are not lacking. Of course, no experience per se can have doctrinal value, for all experience must have categories of interpretation. These categories were moulded by the contacts Paul had with

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1. Acts 9: 15 reminds one of Matthew 28:19. If so, then Paul is the chosen vessel to fulfill this command. This only through revelation.

the early Christians. Besides, who in Palestine did not know of Jesus of Nazareth? A flash of light, a voice, a prayer can give us no doctrine at all. For Paul the basis of all doctrine is an event, and this applies to Paul as well as to the other apostles. Without the knowledge of history there would be no interpretation which we call doctrine. The past in part supplies the categories for this present experience. If one would desire, this could be called a theological preparation in disguise. At the same time these facts are reinforced upon his mind and reinterpreted by Paul. He saw the personal Jesus. He received the great commission. Besides, if we may assume that the verb is the psychological carrier of the activity of the one described, we find this by-product in Acts:<sup>1</sup> First, to know; secondly, to see; and thirdly, to hear. The psychology is the psychology of personal contact. Paul must understand that God had appointed him to know the will of the Father, to see the Righteous One, and to hear His voice. In other words, Paul is appointed to know that Christ, the Righteous One, ( τὸν Δίκαιον ) is the Will of the Father, and, secondly, to hear the voice from the mouth of Him who was crucified. This psychological experience of knowing, seeing, and hearing was absolutely from God, not from man.

We may infer, therefore, certain truths:

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1. cf. Acts 22: 14.

1. The commission given to the hands stained with Christian blood would emphasize the doctrine of saved by Grace.<sup>1</sup>

2. Paul saw the Righteous One. In seeing Christ Paul's righteousness receives a deathblow. Not that this experience gives Paul the first inkling of righteousness. The Old Testament antecedents would preclude this possibility. At the same time Paul had to see the Righteous One, had to meet Him, in order that Paul may put that Old Testament righteousness upon Jesus Christ the Righteous One.<sup>2</sup> If Christ arose then He must have arisen as Messiah, then He must be the offering made for sin.<sup>3</sup>

3. Paul was to understand the mystical union between Christ and the believers. Touch the disciple, touch the Christ! As St. Augustine puts it, "Caput pro membris clamabat".<sup>4</sup> This was Paul's first lesson in the mystical union.<sup>5</sup> But Christ was objectively in the heavens. The union, therefore, between Christ and the redeemed cannot be physical. Christ was there. Whatever the expression "in Christ" may mean, it cannot connote a physical, pan-

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1. I Timothy 1:14,15, cf. N.P. Williams, The Grace of God, pp. 11 f.
2. Sabatier, op. cit., p. 69. D.A. Hayes, Paul and His Epistles, p. 32. That this fits in with Reformed thinking is evident from the incidental remark of Herman Bavinck, "Zonder twijfel hangt dit [doctrine of Justification] met zijn levenservaring saam". Geref. Dogmatiek, Vol. IV, p. 188.
3. Romans 3: 25 and Acts 17: 30 f.
4. Quoted by Knowling and Meyer in Acts 9: 5.
5. Knowling, in loco, p. 232.



theistical union, the identification of the human and the divine. "In Christ" means in His love, in His glory, in His suffering. This phrase refers to a relationship rather than to a substance. If a substance, how could Christ be "there"? This becomes clearer in the epistles of Paul. Paul refers to the benefits of the Christ-God-Man. If a physical union the personal, human Christ would have to diminish. Damascus rightly understood will prevent any possibility of accepting the interpretation that Paul was a mystic in a pantheistic sense of the term. This will become pertinent when such passages as Romans 4:25; 5:12ff, and 6:1ff., are discussed.

4. This revelation has also eschatological value. Jesus lives, Jesus defends His Church in order to lead her safe unto the end. This risen Lord has a definite program to direct all things to a great consummation.<sup>1</sup> In I Cor. 15 there is a close relation between Christ's resurrection and the resurrection of believers.<sup>2</sup> As Jesus appeared personally to Paul on the way to Damascus, so Jesus will appear in the last day to all His own. If so, the very appearance of Jesus ought to make Paul eschatologically minded.

5. As the living Jesus, as the returning Jesus, Jesus becomes our great contemporary.<sup>3</sup> This thought calls

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1. Acts 9:15.  
2. I Cor. 15:8.  
3. Phil. 4:5c.

for a decision every moment of our life. In every decision we make we must bear in mind that Christ is present. If so, if the returning Jesus is present now, the return of the Saviour has ethical significance. Although there is still another reason why eschatology is ethical, we must remember that a contemporaneous saviour makes life morally significant. This will likewise account for Paul's fervor.

#### B. The Council of Jerusalem

The facts known to all Palestinians, the new facts of the revelation of Christ to Paul on the way to Damascus, the new attitude Paul assumes, cause the chief of the apostles to emphasize definite truths which a priori we would expect to find in the Epistle to the Romans:

(1) Revelation; (2) Righteousness of Christ; (3) Saved by Grace; (4) the mystical union; (5) Eschatology; (6) Christianity's universal mission.

At the Council of Jerusalem<sup>1</sup> some seventeen years later,<sup>2</sup> Paul was called upon to defend especially the Righteousness of Christ, Saved by Grace, and the Universal message of Christianity.

#### 1. The Problem of the Council.

Antioch was confronted with a great theological question, possibly insignificant to the compromising mind,

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1. Acts 15, and Galatians 2: 1-10.
2. Gal. 1:18 and Gal. 2:1 gives us three plus fourteen or seventeen years. For identifying Acts 15 and Gal. 2:1-10, see Alford, "Prolegomena to Acts", pp. 26f., Machen, op.cit., pp. 76ff.

but weighty in import to those who could discern the issue. This active church had been disturbed by the representatives coming from no less a personage than James. Whatever the injunction may have been, the execution of the mission was decidedly bad.<sup>1</sup> Paul, although he magnanimously controlled himself by exercising Christian patience and love, seems to have been nervously aware of the consequences of the question at stake. In fact, there seems to be a touch of holy indignation in describing the messengers as false brethren ( ψευδαδελφοί ) who came to spy on Antioch's Christian liberty. The disturbing question reflects the thought of the period: How could such a state of affairs exist twenty years after the resurrection of the risen Lord? The problem becomes more interesting when one bears in mind that the master defendant of the cause of the Gentiles was formerly the strictest of pharisees. Now he seems to be the lone star in the heavens of Gentile liberty.

There are other questions that seek an answer. How could pharisees belong to the Christian Church and still insist upon the rite of circumcision? Why did Peter and James tolerate such a state of affairs? This question would have caused no bitterness at all at Antioch had the Judaizer at Jerusalem allowed the city of the Gentile

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1. Acts 15:1 Very general. Some came from the Jews. In 15:24, some from us, more specific, from the inner circle. In Gal. 2:12 definitely stated, from James.

church perfect liberty. The very fact that they did not reveals indirectly the importance attached to the question. Circumcision remained the essential vehicle for grace. This Judaistic vestige will account for the boldness of St. Paul. The moment circumcision becomes necessary for salvation Paul feels it incumbent to demur with an unambiguous denial.<sup>1</sup>

How could such a question arise twenty years after the resurrection of our Lord? There must have been sound logic in the demand for circumcision else Antioch could not have been moved as it was.<sup>2</sup> Logic was not lacking. There are two possible ways of accounting for this question. (1) Psychologically, a man's preconceived need of salvation will determine the salvation he will find. The need prejudices the search. The Jewish salvation-complex may cause one either to understand or misunderstand Jesus. This complex was hopelessly interested in making the world Jews. Surely, if the new sect could produce the same effect by circumcising then Christianity would be a means to an end- a new Judaism. That this was not the mission of the new band of disciples was difficult even for the apostles to comprehend. They were incredibly slow in

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1. Acts 15:1, Luke 3:8, Charles Hodge in his introduction to the Epistle to the Romans quotes Justin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho- Heaven is prepared for the natural seed. "Great is the virtue of circumcision, no circumcised person enters hell". pp. 9ff. Only through Israel, therefore, comes salvation.
2. Machen, op. cit., pp. 19f.

learning the true import of the message of Jesus, even on the very top of the Mount of Ascension.<sup>1</sup> Shall Christianity universalize the Old Testament? And the answer is an unequivocal yes. The very attempt on the part of the Christian pharisees to insist upon it, shows that the primitive church had no such dispensation theory of a church interlude. But how shall this take place? In what sense shall the Old Testament be universalized? Romans give us a clear answer to the very question, but one should remember that the Council and the bitter struggle antedates this monumental Epistle. In retrospect the decisions may seem simple, but, if we may anticipate, even today they have not been caught by all.

The second possible way of accounting for this situation is the need of doctrinal clarity on the part of the church on subjects not specifically touched upon by Jesus. The Great Commission implied a world dominion but failed to answer the question how this dominion would be realized. If Jesus had given a declaration of abrogation of Old Testament sacraments and rites, the case would have been very simple. In lieu of definite statement, interpretations were conjectured to fill the lacunae, but interpretations, although painstakingly logical, are open to subjectivity resulting from the premises posited. In short, there was room for sound reasoning, for even Barnabas and

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1. Acts 1: 7.

Peter seemed moved by the logic.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Solution Given.

The decision of the Council is very interesting. They magnanimously lent a sympathetic ear to Paul although they may have had to subdue the undertone of discontented grunts of the Christian pharisees. They sought to deal with the problem at hand courageously and honestly.

If Peter would not approve of the request for liberty and for a personal, unconditional grace, he would contradict the work of the Holy Spirit. Years ago the Holy Spirit came upon the devout Cornelius without the medium of circumcision. But why had this not shaped Peter's thoughts before this controversy? Possibly Peter may have thought this case had little evidential value in that it was unique. The Holy Spirit was poured out in his very presence, why should he then doubt? At this Council, however, he does produce this case as a testimony from history. History taught him that the Holy Spirit could accept one uncircumcised, why should He not others also? Peter proceeds in the second part of his defense to draw from practical life. The entire legal system is a complete failure. The Gentiles cannot keep the law, neither can Peter.<sup>2</sup> Historical and

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1. Gal. 2: 11-14.

2. Ramsay places Gal. 2:11-14 before the Council of Jerusalem. St. Paul, the Traveller and the Roman Citizen, p. 163f. This will account for Peter's strange behaviour at Antioch. According to this writer we can understand why Peter should say that it is impossible for any one to uphold the legal system of Judaism.

practical reasons force Peter to concur with the wishes of Paul and Barnabas.

The presiding officer, James, adds prophecy. The coming of the Gentiles into the house of David seems to be a fulfilment of the vision of Amos. That dilapidated hut, tent, of David<sup>1</sup> shall be restored again. But why should this prophecy be appropriate? According to Keil and Delitzsch,<sup>2</sup> Israel was beguiled by its fictitious notion of the eternal value of a national election. Amos, to the contrary, instructs Israel that the true people of God is the people of a pure heart. It is not the carnal Israel, for the carnal Israel can become as the Ethiopians to the Lord. The true Israel is the Israel of the heart. Only the attitude of filial piety will satisfy the conditions of the Old Testament. It is not a question in the first place of a rite but of a relation. Hence the Council puts a threefold seal on the decisions taken: (1) History; (2) Life; (3) Prophecy.

The decision is twofold. First of all it does not command the Jews to abandon the rites, but does insist

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1. 777 520, "The tent of David". 770 fr. 720  
Brown, Driver, Briggs, means a wrapping over, a tent, a booth. Here a fallen dynasty, from which no great things could be looked for. That this passage has been considered Messianic by others, cf. Alfred Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Vol. II, pp. 734f., especially "who could have expected that the fallen tabernacle of David should be raised up by God, as it is written (Amos ix, 11) and who should have expected that the whole world should become one bundle (be gathered into one Church)?"
2. Minor Prophets, Vol. I, pp. 329 ff.

that the Gentiles shall not be molested. In this the cause of the Gentiles was maintained for the "essentialness" of sacraments was denied. That was just the point in question. Secondly, the Gentile Christians were admonished to abstain from pollutions of idolatry, from fornication, from things strangled, and from blood. A superficial glance may convince the reader that James is giving liberty to the Gentiles in one thing, and curtailing the same in other matters. If such were the case the Gentile gains would be imaginary. In appraising this second proviso we see that the two first restrictions are self-evident. The whole moral life of a Christian is at stake. Such so-called liberties would be the greater slavery. The last two are different. What James means to say seems to be this: "Exercise Christian charity. If you desire fellowship with the Jews, remember they read Moses. You will offend them. Why offend your brethren, the Jews and the proselytes, for the sake of eating food and meats made of blood?" The acceptance of this request is in conformity with Paul's ethics. Paul would refrain from eating meat to save a weak brother, and why should not the Christian Church? Instead of any curtailment, this very admonition finds explication in Paul's ethical teachings, as in our case, Romans 13 to 15.

### 3. The Value of the Council

This Council has a fourfold value. First, we



have an official approval of the doctrine saved by grace. Grace of God is immediate. Any deviation from the immediacy of grace forces one to uphold the entire legal system.

Secondly, the public acceptance of the person and the teachings of Paul. The consequences of this truth are far reaching as will be seen below when we discuss Paul the theologian.

Thirdly, we have a definite and official interpretation of the Old Testament. If what James says is true, then the new dispensation has the perfect right to distinguish between content and form. The form in which the message was case was prophetic, but the message had its fullest application and fulfilment in the Church. The New Testament becomes the true interpreter of the Old. The New Testament Church is the continuation of the Old, not in its external aspects, as the Christian pharisees desired, but in its internal, spiritual power, and in its faith in the living God. It is not surprising, therefore, to find Paul calling the New Testament Church the sons of promise, and Jewry Ishmael.<sup>1</sup> The Church is the true Israel of God. The Church is identified with the saints of promise. The Old Testament, rightly understood, is a message of grace that is universal, not destined for a nation, but for the human heart.

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1. Galatians 3:29, 4:28-31.

Fourthly, the unity between Paul and the apostles is seen in the admonition to show love and Christian tolerance to the weaker brother for whom Christ died.

Only a few more years would pass by before the chief of the apostles was to write his epoch making Epistle to the Romans. Whatever Paul was to write on justification by faith, or who is a true Jew, or how we should conduct ourselves in the presence of those weak in faith, or how does Old Testament prophecy predict and account for the present conditions, Paul has the sanction of the Council. When Paul is to react courteously but positively against the religious humanists found among the legalists, Paul has underneath him the sure support of Jerusalem.

#### C. Paul at Athens

There is another incident in Paul's life that seems to have played no small role in shaping Paul's ideals and methods- Paul at Athens. This event becomes the more significant as we approach the very time of the writing of the Epistle to the Romans. From Athens Paul went to Corinth. There he met a definite challenge having benefited by the Athenian experience. In that frame of mind Paul wrote to the capitol of the world. At Athens Paul encounters not the legal humanist, but the humanism of idolatry and philosophy.

1. The Narrative.

Paul had promised Silas and Timothy to wait for them at Athens. In the meantime this active soul could not find satisfaction in waiting for them. His first task was to visit the synagogue where he knew he would find Jews and devout persons.<sup>1</sup> He wandered through the city to enjoy the flowers of Athenian culture. He may have felt a strange delight and an irrepressible challenge to preach Christ in the same place where Socrates inflicted both the sophists and the frivolous youth of his time with dialectical torture. At Ephesus he lectured for two years. At Athens he became an Athenian to the Athenians. In the city of Socrates, in the market place of learning, of humanism, Paul fearlessly executed the Damascus mission to bring the Christ. This may or may not shed light on Romans 1: 13-17.

Ramsay,<sup>2</sup> allowing his imagination a little latitude, pictures the university student of Tarsus thrilled by the very sight of the rival university of Athens. In absence of data we must resort to inferences again which are as strong as their weakest premise. We have no reason

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1. Acts 17:17. In Acts 13:4 "devout Greeks", in 13:43 "devout proselytes", 13:50 "devout women", also 16:14, 18:7. Here most likely proselytes. The synagogue seems to have been very insignificant in Athenian life. Machen says that Paul had to begin at the very beginning. In other cities a synagogue usually served as a point of contact. This may also account for the different method employed in discussing with the Athenians. cf. Machen, op. cit., p. 11.

2. Ramsay, op. cit., pp. 237 ff.

to doubt, however, that Paul felt the challenge: Would the university of the world have room for Jesus on its faculty?

Both Knowling<sup>1</sup> and Ramsay<sup>2</sup> consider this Council the responsible body for the educational policies of Athens. To them Paul was not led to the hill outside of Athens as traditionally held, but to a city council of educators. How could Paul stand in the midst of Mars Hill?<sup>3</sup> The more natural interpretation is that Paul was surrounded by the men of that board known as the Mars Hill, a name derived from the name of the hill outside of the city. This is more plausible also when one bears in mind that Paul was talking in the market place, and that the Porch of the Epicureans and the Pillars of the Stoics were in the propinquity of the discussion. There the trial could be more public. It would be an easier matter to discuss there than on the hill possibly too sacred for a babblers. At any rate, this council does not seem to be invested with civil and judicial authority. Possibly it had the right to appoint new professors and lecturers for the university of Athens. No wonder, then, that some of the

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1. Op. cit., pp. 371 ff.

2. Op. cit., p. 246

3. ἐπι τῆς τοῦ Ἀρειοῦ Πύλου might mean "on" a hill. The Revised Version in a footnote has translated it before. "they took him before the Areopagus". This would agree with 17:22, "Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus". Would be very poor Greek, says Ramsay, to interpret this as the hill outside of the city of Athens, op. cit., p. 246. Knowling says Paul was brought before a council having power to act officially. Beyond that description we cannot go. cf. Acts 17:18,

Stoics and the Epicureans should consider Paul a bounder.<sup>1</sup> To them he seemed to be nothing more than a social parasite, picking up bits of information here and there, embellishing it with catchy rhetorical phrases, serving the same as the most palatable dish of philosophic acumen and learning. To them he was looking for a position.

That educated men should take hold of a stranger, as we read they did of Paul, seems to indicate to Ramsay that Paul made a powerful impression.<sup>2</sup> Alford, on the contrary, denies that any violence was implied in that statement.<sup>3</sup> Still one may gain the impression from the Acts that this was an eventful day for the Athenians. Three interests seem to be present. Paul had to contend with the populace, the Epicureans, and the Stoics. To understand the delicate touches of the story as reported to us by Luke these three attitudes must be kept in mind: What is the attitude of the populace, of the Epicurean, of the Stoic? At the same time all three have this one thing in common- they are all sold to humanism. We agree with Fritz Heinemann's summary: "das Sinnzentrum der griechischen Philosophie ist der Kosmos".<sup>4</sup> In fine, the challenge is between two profoundly different attitudes toward life. At the same time, a bridge must be found

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1. Robertson, Paul, the Interpreter of Christ, pp. 43f. Ramsay, op. cit., calls it Athenian slang. p. 242.
2. Ramsay, op. cit., p. 245.
3. Alford, Acts 17:19, op. cit., p. 193.
4. Fritz Heinemann, Neue Wege der Philosophie, p. 21.

between them in order that the apostle may make his message intelligible to all.

### 3. Paul's Defense.

Paul is fully aware that the opposition represents two schools of philosophy, and the popular mind incurably bitten with curiosity. Only a persuasive rhetoric, highly seasoned with witty and poignant remarks would gain the day. What common denominator could Paul find? This he finds in the inscription to "Unknown God".

It would be interesting and important to discover the associations this inscription would elicit from the minds of the Athenians. To the populace it meant a god unknown to the recipient of blessings during a drought, pestilence, or some other calamity beyond the power of the local deity to cope with.<sup>1</sup> To the Epicurean, if still true to the founder, possibly the expectation would be engendered to hear something about the gods considered far away, who according to this school of philosophy were supremely happy beings far removed from the toils and cares of the world. They were nestled in sweet repose. The cry of mortal man could not penetrate their home.<sup>2</sup> To the Stoics God was near, within, but still the wise had to gain access through reason to the Ultimate

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1. G.A. Deissmann, Paul, a Study in Social and Religious History, Appendix II, p. 288.
2. Alfred Weber, History of Philosophy, p. 137.

Reason.<sup>1</sup> This common basis was so common that at the surface it seemed that this starting point had nothing peculiarly Christian in it, or that it could be offensive to the Greek mind.<sup>2</sup>

A starting point, however, is never neutral territory. Similarity in phraseology does not imply similarity in outlook. Philological identity is no metaphysical and theological identity. The choice of a starting point is already indicative of one's philosophy. This is clearly seen in the narrative in question. Paul soon draws conclusions which were present in his mind when he courteously addressed the Athenians as too religious. When the conclusions were stated the philosophers disagreed. Paul was to discover that unexplained concepts do no man harm. When Paul becomes explicit he becomes the object of ridicule.

Paul was philosophically more akin, although radically different, to Stoicism than to Epicureanism. Christianity has never been enamoured of the latter system for it never could make an appeal to the deepest religious motives of man.<sup>3</sup> To the Epicureans the fear of God was the beginning of all misery and unhappiness.<sup>4</sup> Stoicism

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1. Charles M. Bakewell, Source Book in Ancient Philosophy, pp. 277f, and Friedrich Ueberweg, History of Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 197, also the very brief remark in F. Heinemann, op. cit., p. 19.
2. Ramsay, op. cit., p. 150.
3. Weber, op. cit., p. 139.
4. Ibid., p. 134.

was different.<sup>1</sup> Cleanthes in his Hymn to Zeus places the emphasis within. Zeus was not a god in some distant part of the Kosmos far from human suffering. In that particular hymn there was no denial of creation of the universe, but "For we come forth from thee, and have received the gift of imitative speech alone of all that live and move on earth. . .".<sup>2</sup> We come from the all pervading Reason. "For thou hast so conjoined to one all good and ill that out of all goes forth a single, everlasting Reason."<sup>3</sup> There is in fact, "no higher office for a man- nor for a god- than ever rightly singing of universal law" of reason.<sup>4</sup> In how far this one hymn is the product of pantheism is hard to determine. The Stoic school on the whole has generally been accused of that philosophic position. This indictment does not seem to be without foundation. The moment we set forth that the active element we call mind, and the passive element we call matter are two aspects of the same reality we come very close to the

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1. We are indebted to the following sources: Bakewell, Source Book in Ancient Philosophy, pp. 269-289, Horatio W. Dresser, A History of Ancient and Medieval Philosophy, pp. 146-162; Ueberweg, History of Philosophy, Vol. I, pp. 185-200; Weber, History of Philosophy, pp. 140-148; Articles on Stoicism in Christelijke Encyclopaedie, in loco, Arnold in Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. XI, Picavet, La Grande Encyclopedie, Vol. XXX, and Pohlenz, in Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, in loco.
2. Bakewell, op. cit., pp. 277 f.
3. Ibidem, 277 f.
4. Ibidem, 277 f.



system of Spinoza of modern times. Weber calls Stoicism a compromise between pantheism and theism, but when one seeks for the compromise one cannot find it. It would be better to say that this compromise, if there be one, was not rationally mediated. The statements that we have can at times be interpreted theistically. At times God is identical with the universe, then again, God has knowledge of things and especially a foreknowledge that seems to resemble the doctrine of providential love.<sup>1</sup>

Although the Stoic School of philosophy may have been pantheistical, Cleanthes' poem, however, does not necessarily imply it. There is reason to suspect it. If Cleanthes taught that which resembles creation, that we are the offspring of god, we have reason to attribute enough logic to the poet to know that creation and pantheism are antipodes. And that is the very thing Paul points out. In this discourse the apostle unambiguously asserts the Old Testament conception of God and man and the world. If created, there remains an unpassable gulf between God and the creature. The created idol remains only a creature.<sup>2</sup> Besides, if God is not created and the world is, then the visible forms are the most inadequate modes of representing the godhead. Idolatry is man's answer to the question: Who is God? We human beings would feel mortified to see our likeness reproduced and reinterpreted

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1. Weber, op. cit., p. 143.

2. Alford, op. cit., p. 196. cf. Romans 1: 22, 23.

through the forms borrowed from the animal kingdom and the world of bizarre figures. At the same time we think that our chisel has hewn out a theology that is true. Is God beneath us? This cannot be for we are His offspring. But according to the Stoic position the greatest in man is that in him universal reason is resident. This has made Stoicism a cosmopolitan philosophy. Athens is not elected to be the city of philosophers. Even the very galley slave has that universal reason. If such is the case, then we should think of God not in material terms, but in spiritual. The greatest in man is his spiritual activity, why should this not be maintained of God. Creation and the Imago Dei are the two deathblows to all forms of idolatry.

For this great sin of idolatry God was coming to visit them. This thought was foreign to the Greek mind. To the Stoics who in earlier days dichotomized men into "the wise and the mass" the words of St. Paul must have been irritating: "The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked".<sup>1</sup> These Stoics who had a pious respect for all forms of paganism, possibly interpreting them as myths, the meaning of which the philosopher had to unravel very much the same as Hegelianism of our day,<sup>2</sup> were charged with idolatry and ignorance. More damaging still, God

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1. Acts 17: 30.

2. Weber, op. cit., p. 143, footnote.

"now commanded men that they should all everywhere repent (πανταχοῦ μετανοεῖν)".<sup>1</sup> Paul's definite aim is to convince the Greek philosophers of sin and guilt.<sup>2</sup> This is an insuperable task. Sin to the average Greek was not a transgression against a personal God. If man would know, he would be pure. If man sinned, he did not know. Knowledge and virtue are twins. If the mind big with truth could be uncovered, the virtuous soul would simultaneously appear.<sup>3</sup> Sin is il-logical. Although seemingly hopeless, Paul enjoins upon them repentance. Again this was repulsive and offensive. The Stoic was convinced that he could live according to nature. If his life were regulated according to her claims, he would have absolute repose. The great aim of life was virtue, a virtue within the reach of every true Stoic.<sup>4</sup> Hence the second part of Paul's defense: (1) Stoics are illogical, inconsistent according to their very philosophy, and (2) they have wronged the personal God who commands them now to repent.

The prediction of the judgment day ought to re-

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1. Acts 17: 30.
2. W.L. Alexander, St. Paul at Athens, p. 267.
3. Weber, "Socrates", op. cit., p. 67.
4. Ueberweg, (ομολογουμένως τῇ φύσει ἔστιν) op. cit., pp.197f., Bakewell, op.cit., pp. 277f. Dresser, op.cit., pp.156f. Weber, "sequi naturam", op.cit., p. 146; The term "nature" φύσις, (not in its present connotation denoting hills and mountains, valleys and streams, possibly under the influence of Rousseau) a favorite term of the Stoics and basic to all its universalism. Paul uses the term in Romans 2: 14, 27, but in a more limited sense.

inforce the difference between man and God, and ought to challenge us to a closer scrutiny of our daily life. The Judgment Day is the climax of history. It gives life a finality. Nothing mundane can take place beyond this event. This event, naturally caused the disturbance. The Stoic's eschatology was repetition of worlds. Philosophers could live a limited time after this life, but soon all things would be enveloped in the all. The Stoics believed in an immortality, but emphasized an immortality of substance rather than that of persons. The soul will soon flow back into the Universal Reason from whence it came. The world conflagration will break down the present order but out of its ruins will create a new order which is destined to follow the pathway of its predecessors. Paul had an eschatology of the personal identity and responsibility of those who died and would arise again. This world will come to an end but its mission will then be completed. No new world will ever come in its place to relive the trials of this order. The Judgment Day introduces the end of this order and the beginning of something new and final. The Epicureans would not interest themselves with this eschatology. To them the world did not have a beginning why should it have an end. They could eat and drink and be merry. In a sense all men have an eschatology. Paul's was radically different from either the Stoics' or the Epicureans' for his eschatology was based on sin and redemption through

Jesus Christ.

The proof for St. Paul is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Paul maintains- because a resurrection, therefore a return. Luke does not give us the reason why this should follow. This reason we must find elsewhere, as in Romans 6: 10.

### 3. Value of the Athenian Experience.

Some of the foremost biographers of St. Paul say absolutely nothing of Paul's stay at Athens. We take the liberty of presenting this story as one of the most important episodes in Paul's life. We question whether it can be considered equal to that of Damascus, although we do feel that this narrative is second not even to his defense before the Council of Jerusalem.

There are certain values from our point of view.

1. There is the difficulty of convincing the Athenian humanist of sin.

2. There is the willingness on man's part to listen to "natural reason". A Greek humanist would have listened to a Hebrew humanist. As long as humanism is in its own universe of discourse no one will call upon the speaker some other day. Pauline Eschatology based upon revelation could not convince. Can reason bridge the two antagonistic worlds? Do we need something more?

3. Paul seems to have been disappointed in the results. Ramsay points out that in the city of Corinth he

never spoke in philosophic language.<sup>1</sup> He would know nothing but Christ and Him crucified.

In this we have a prophecy of the history of the Christian Church. What would gain the day- Christianity or Humanism? A few centuries later the question will disturb the sincere souls of the Catholic Church, will Athens or the preaching of the gospel lead us to God? The Athenian experience is the question of faith and reason in its embryonic stage. That this seems to be present in Paul's mind is evident from the context in which Romans 1: 16,17 is found. Paul is not ashamed although his face may seem to be scarred by the conflict, for the gospel is not reason but power.

4. Athens brings us to our very times. Stoicism has had its modern reincarnations. Says Friederich Paulsen, "If we disregard the somewhat extreme formulation of their view, we shall evidently find a rational meaning therein. It is at bottom the same conception which later philosophers desired to reach in their doctrine of parallelism between thought and extension, or the identity of the ideal and the real, or the view which Plato established by conceiving the corporeal world as an illusion- namely, monistic theology".<sup>2</sup>

5. Both systems claimed to be universal. The Stoics

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1. Ramsay, op. cit., p. 252.

2. Friederich Paulsen, Introduction to Philosophy, pp. 283 f.

had a universalism based upon reason, Christianity based upon sin and redemption.

Will the Epistle to the Romans written only a little later, based upon the conceptions of sin and redemption, creation and the return of Christ, ever satisfy the pantheism which knows no personal God, nor transgression, nor a personal return of Jesus Christ?

We shall not be surprised, therefore, to find in Romans an intertwining of three types of humanism. This cannot be otherwise for through the providence of God its author knew Damascus as the city of the collapse of Pharaonic humanism,<sup>1</sup> Jerusalem as the end of Christian humanism which developed into Ebionism,<sup>2</sup> and Athens with its idol-adorned streets and temple-crowned hill, as the hostility of the intolerant tolerant city of philosophic and pagan humanism.<sup>3</sup> Paul had to face humanism: First, his own; secondly, that of Christian pharisees; and thirdly, that of philosophers who delighted in a rationalistic approach to truth.

Besides the immediate expository value of this chapter, (for these experiences help to understand the

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1. Romans 2:17, 4:25.
2. In Romans the emphasis is upon faith, 1:17, excluding boasting 3:27; exercised by the father of faithful 4: 3,13. Romans 9-11 emphasizes sovereign grace. Grace transcends nationalism. In short, Romans teaches that grace is not conditioned by sacraments.
3. Romans 1:13 ff. To Greek and Barbarian (1:14). Paul is not ashamed of the Gospel. (1:16.)

"interpretative assumptions" of the author), we set forth what Paul says, Christianity approves of. Secondly, this chapter seeks to evince the fact that the author has been guided by the one principle- from God, by God, and unto God. If Paul were to write an autobiography, he could possibly use the sub-title, "From Damascus to the Tiber, a Study in Anti-humanistic Ideals". Thirdly, these facts of necessity shall guide us in our search for Paul the theologian. If this chapter is true, certain conclusions of chapter two of this thesis will become self-evident.



## CHAPTER II

### PAUL THE THEOLOGIAN

The theological world is indebted to Albert Schweitzer for systematizing and summarizing what we may denote as "The History of Paulinism". The value of this work will become more evident in proportion to the awareness of the difficulties besetting any student of the great apostle. Any renaissance of the study of Paul will benefit by considering the various interpretations, for the reception Paul enjoys in the Christian Church will answer the question whether that Church is humanistic or Christian. Our aim is to study the various possibilities in order to bring out that the underlying unity of all Pauline thinking is eschatology. If such can be maintained, we shall feel justified in denying that Paul is the flower of Greek culture and religion, that Paul, although influenced by Greek terminology, is the product of both the Jewish and the Greek training he possibly may have received, that Paul is nothing more than a pharisee with a Christian veneer. Over against such denial we wish to maintain that although Paul can never be explained apart from the Old Testament he represents a unique position which, in a sense, can be traced to its essential elements in the primitive church.

### A. Paul - The Greek

There are incredibly few, if any, who would make Paul the flower of pure Greek religion and philosophy. All realize that Paul was born in an orthodox home. There he received his early training. It is utterly inconceivable to think of Paul apart from the influence his boyhood training had upon him.

The significant question is which influence was the greater in Paul's thinking: The Jewish or the Grecian? On this question scholars differ. Especially in his post-Damascus development, which culture exercised the more profound influence upon his theological thinking?

The reason why some scholars have thought of Paul as primarily Greek was the antithesis between "flesh" and "spirit" in Paul's epistles. Every defense, whether in Holzmann or Phleiderer, centers around these two foci. Even one of the latest writers on Paul, R. Reitzenstein, stumbles over the concept "spiritual" in his chapter on "Paulus als Pneumatiker". He identifies "nous" and "pneumatikos". This identification of mind and "spiritual" is not permissible in ordinary Greek, but to him the passages in I Cor. 1-3 are inexplicable without it. This then would identify Paul with the mystery cults of his day. This "nous" is a divine fluid. "Nous muss hier jenes göttliche Fluidium sein, das dem Begnadeten allein verliehen wird und ihn zum 'pneumatikos'

macht."<sup>1</sup> According to Schweitzer, as long as these scholars remain very general they retain an air of credibility, but as soon as they pursue their theories into the very details, they discover that details are the foxes that spoil the vine.<sup>2</sup> In our own country, the late Dr. McGiffert gives preference to the Greek side of Paul's training. He does not state this explicitly, but the whole burden of the chapter seems to vindicate this position.<sup>3</sup>

We shall reserve our criticism of this position until the very last part of this chapter. In passing we may remark that there are certain facts that make us feel uncertain about the entire argument. The three facts have been discussed in the previous chapter, (1) The Damascus Experience. Christ was objectively "over there" addressing Paul "over here". One may ask, how could such a position as set forth by the records ever agree with the thought that borders on Greek mysticism? (2) The Council at Jerusalem. Here he received the right hand of fellowship of the apostles. They did not recognize any

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1. R. Reitzenstein, Die Hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen p. 338, and A. Schweitzer, op. cit., p. 66.
2. Schweitzer, op. cit., p. 68.
3. McGiffert, Arthur Cushman, "St. Paul", pp. 16-29 in his A History of Christian Thought, Early and Eastern. This book was published in 1932. The Bibliography includes the two writings of Albert Schweitzer (p. 336) but in the chapter itself no allusion whatsoever has been made to their contents. This is because of the aim of the author to make History of Thought palatable, but in so doing the author creates the atmosphere of begging the question.

pagan departure in him. They may have considered him an Old Testament apostate, but not a Greek innovator.

(3) His defense at Athens. If Paul were Greek, the Greeks did not recognize their own. These three facts prejudice one against the position above.

We may assume that the Jewish element was the stronger and the more influential, but that the Greek supplied Paul with terminology and symbols for expression. Although this is a very tenable position, there is much written that cannot stand scrutiny. Let us select a semi-scholarly and semi-popular textbook of D. A. Hayes.<sup>1</sup> This author sets out to prove that Paul is first of all a Jew. Without the Palestinian theology Paul remains a conundrum. At the same time he finds much in Paul that reminds him of the Greek orators and of Plato.<sup>2</sup> Suppose there are similarities of expression and terms, does that make Paul a debtor to the Greek world of thought? Logically not, for identity of expression may have other causes. At any rate it is not the word that is employed but the content that is poured into the concept that counts. We must discover a man's thought in his words,

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1. Hayes, D.A., Paul and His Epistles, pp. 98ff.
2. McGiffert, would also approve of this, (p. 19.) At the same time one can take the admission that Paul remained a Jew very seriously if not in form but in substance. Paul believed in the deification of Christians, p. 23. How a Jew could wipe out a distinction between God and man, how he could "eat" a god, is beyond our comprehension.

but we must also discover the meaning of his words through the man.

Undoubtedly Paul knew certain Greek authors. Direct quotations are few. The outstanding quotation is from the poem of Cleanthes to Jupiter. That this carries weight may be seen from the reaction this poem makes upon Schweitzer. "But for this Paul", says he, "the author of Acts must take all the responsibility".<sup>1</sup> This is a subjective reply. There seems to be no reason at all for denying the veracity of the story of Paul at Athens. Paul knew the poem and appropriated it. Paul could not have quoted the poem without knowing its content, its setting, and its appropriateness. Men of Paul's calibre do not make "hit and miss" defenses. Moreover, Paul was not reciting poems for entertainment. Paul had to meet the challenge philosophers would bring forth. Even if the evidence is scanty, the evidence we have favors some knowledge of Greek learning.

We may trace another avenue to arrive at the same conclusion. The language of Paul is not "Jewish-Greek jargon".<sup>2</sup> Paul does not hesitate to employ Greek terms. This, of course, does not imply the incorporation of Greek ideas any more than our modern missionary who reinterprets Christianity in a native language.<sup>3</sup> Paul

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1. Op. cit., p. 94.

2. Machen, op. cit., p. 44. Hayes, op. cit., p. 109.

3. Schweitzer, op. cit., p. 238.

makes use of such terms as nature and conscience,<sup>1</sup> terms which constitute the warp and woof of Stoic philosophy. It is very questionable whether Isaiah and Jeremiah without any explanation would have understood these terms in their day. At the same time the meaning poured into these new moulds rings true to the Old Testament. Believing in sin as Paul did, he could not have injected into the term nature the true and universal Reason as the Stoics did. Reason for Paul, especially after his failure as a pharisee, could not be to him the sure road to happiness. Nature for Paul has a different connotation for he realizes that only when men live according to the light that still flickers in them of the image of God, can they follow a course that is far better than a ruthless obedience to sin.

That terms are determined by their philosophical content may be seen from the confusion of theological tongues of our present generation. Our age is lavish in illustrations. Walter Lowrie in his book, Our Concern with the Theology of Crisis<sup>2</sup> enumerates thirty distorted terms and ideas. We do not all mean the same thing when we talk of atonement, resurrection, return of Christ, the deity of Christ, the church, and salvation. The question

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1. Cf. Romans 1: 27, *παρὰ φύσιν*; 2:14, Gentiles do by nature ( *φύσει* ) the things of the law; 2:27, and shall not uncircumcision which is by nature ( *ἢ ἐκ φύσεως ἀκροβυστία* ), Galatians 2:15; Likewise "conscience", ( *συνείδησις* ), "self-sufficiency" ( *πᾶσαν ἀυτάρκειαν* ), II Cor. 9:8.
2. pp. 28-36.

must always be put, what do you mean? "What did Paul mean?" is preferable to the question: "What terms did Paul employ?".

We take the liberty to dispense with the question of terms. The discussion seems to favor the position that Paul knew Greek terms but put new content in the terms he used. The next question is: Could Paul make much use of Greek thought? Herein lies the danger of the popularization of Paul. Surface resemblances may countenance the tendency to make a Plato out of Paul.<sup>1</sup> Says Hayes, "Plato would have pictured for him the truth that the God of this world blindeth the eyes of his votaries, and Paul never could have forgotten the picture when he had once read it". This he says on the strength of Book Seven of the Republic.<sup>2</sup> Without questioning the propriety of employing the "would have" and "could have" type of argument, we strongly suspect the possibility that Paul would have resorted to the lesser to explain the greater. The city life then extant supplied him prodigiously with examples of depravity. Would Plato impress Paul, especially when the latter had a more intense and noble conception of sin and guilt? Plato has always been inadequate to explain the Christian truths.<sup>3</sup> He could philosophize on the Logos, but could not give us the

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1. Schweitzer, op. cit., p. 77, Hayes, op. cit., p. 106.
2. Plato's Republic, pp. 257-295, in the Home Library Series.
3. Augustine, Confessions of St. Augustine, trs. E.B. Pusey, Book III, paragraph 14, pp. 130ff.

Logos who made us the Sons of God, nor who dwelt among us to empty Himself in order that we should live with Him.<sup>1</sup> These differences may seem very insignificant, but such differences touch the heart of the matter. These differences show how essentially different Christian theology is from Greek philosophy. If this is so, what has the chapter on Greek education built upon the philosophy of "matter" and "Ideas" to do with Christian theology? Plato must be understood in the light of his age and not through Pauline phraseology. Plato is interested in showing how difficult it is for the men in the cave to appreciate the idea rather than the form shadowed on the canvass.<sup>2</sup> The dwellers of the subterranean cavern prefer the gluttonous joys to the higher ideals of the philosopher. Plato, therefore, emphasizes the study of dialectics, although not too early in life. "Dialectics lies, like a copingstone, upon the top of the sciences, and that it would be wrong to place any other science above it, because the series is now complete."<sup>3</sup> Paul's gospel was too exalted to find in Plato any affinity for Paul did not end with dialectics or the ransom from matter, but the salvation that included both matter and mind, the entire personality.

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1. Ibidem, pp. 130 f.
2. Plato, op. cit., p. 263, cf. also Phaedrus, parag.247.
3. Ibidem, p. 286. It is put in the form of a question. The reply is given "Yes, I believe you are right, he replied". p. 286.



Suppose one would reply: Could Plato not supply Paul with "vivid descriptions of those gluttonous and intemperate souls whose belly was their God"?<sup>1</sup> There is no way of denying or affirming this position. Here again we resort to inference rather than to fact. Our inference would be to the contrary. The reason for this conclusion is the fact that Plato and the Greeks did not have such a keen conception of sin. Should Paul with a keener conception of sin find Plato's description vivid? A fair illustration would be to ask a man accustomed to the strongest alcoholic liquor to be satisfied with water.

Analogies are very misleading. No one, for example, would credit Jesus with reading the Phaedrus. At the same time note the similarity between what Phaedrus says about inviting guests who are sure to return the invitation and what Jesus says about the same.<sup>2</sup>

Another example may be that of Ramsay.<sup>3</sup> He finds in both Seneca and Paul the comparison of life to a warfare. Seneca is indebted to the great Stoic Athenodorus for this metaphor. But may this not be the result of a struggle common to all mankind? Experiences common to all men of necessity will bring forth terminology that seems interdependent. Besides, we are all admonished to

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1. Hayes, op. cit., p. 106. For Greek conception of sin see below, pp.
2. Cf. Plato's "Phaedrus", in The Golden Treasury Series, paragraph 233, with Luke 14:12.
3. Op. cit., pp. 353f.

endure to the end.

Instead of resorting to terms, philosophy, we may ask the question whether or no the Greek mysteries may have determined Paul's conception of Christ and salvation. McGiffert calls Paul the great exponent of the mystery-cult among the Christians.<sup>1</sup> Paul did not receive the interpretation of Christianity from the mystery religions. They gave him the clue.<sup>2</sup> Through the mystery religions the term "Risen Lord" would have a special appeal to the Greeks. In short, Christianity becomes a mystery religion.

This is surprising, to say the least. Without anticipating too much we must confess certain difficulties make a preliminary acceptance impossible. Paul was an uncolored Pharisee. In Christianity he could not tolerate for a moment the Galatians who were leaning over to a different kind of religion. ( εἰς ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον ).<sup>3</sup> The mystery religions were inclusive. In becoming an initiate of a new mystery one did not forsake the old faith. Christianity is exclusive, its very intolerance proceeds from its finality.<sup>4</sup>

Likewise, one would be forced to place the introduction of the sacraments in the Greek period, for Paul does not differ from the synoptics, at least not

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1. Op. cit., p. 28.

2. Ibidem, p. 20.

3. Galatians 1:6. Qualitatively different.

4. Machen, op. cit., p. 9.

consciously so. He too has received from the Lord. Says Rudolph Bultmann, "The hellenistic Christians have placed the sacramental story as now related in the mouth of Jesus. The sources are unreliable".<sup>1</sup> Again, this is a clear case of begging the question. All records have the story. Paul also! If Bultmann were correct it would imply that all the hellenistic Christians either changed the manuscripts or that all the documents were very late. But why should we try to put the sacraments in the Greek period or think of them as the product of Greek thought, as the last writer quoted does? We are unconsciously injecting our theology into our documents. Sacraments can flourish on Jewish soil as well as Grecian. In fact, more so, for the Greeks began to woo the oriental mysteries, not the oriental mysteries the Greek religion. Then, too, there is a certain indifference to rites in St. Paul. McGiffert accedes that rites were only secondary in Paul's thinking.<sup>2</sup> This is what one would anticipate. He who rebuked Peter, who defended his conception of circumcision, who reacted against the "mediacy" in the acquiring of grace would not think of demanding rites as an approach to God. Paul's conception of grace is always the personal relation of the offended God to the needy sinner. But form and ritual were essential in the mystery religions.

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1. Jesus, pp. 140f. (Our translation).  
2. Op. cit., p. 22.

And this is not accidental for the form was the very mode of transferring grace from the god to the initiate. There could be no transfusion of grace without the ceremony.<sup>1</sup>

We can make this subject intricate by reading all things into the text which were never intended to be there. Our task seems difficult because we have forced extraneous material into data at our disposal and now we are helpless in disposing of it.<sup>2</sup> If we interpret the sacraments as "signs and seals" we shall have no difficulty at all.<sup>3</sup> In this respect we must guard ourselves in reading the Christianity of later generations into this period.

Without pushing the question any further at this time, we wish to ask a few pertinent questions which, when answered, will justify us in eliminating this possibility in accounting for St. Paul. (1) When did the mystery religions become popular? There is a difference between the time of their origin and the time of their popularity. Possibly Christianity and the mystery religions may have been confluent forces for some time, but the two streams do not seem to flow together in this period.<sup>4</sup> If Paul antedates this latter reciprocation,

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1. Franz Cumont, Les Religions Orientales dans le Paganisme Romain, pp. 61 f.
2. Cf. below our paraphrasing of Romans VI.
3. Romans 4:11. To deny this position one would have to show why Paul changed from a "seal" to a "transfusion".
4. Machen, op. cit., p. 8; and Schweitzer, op. cit., pp. 182ff.

then we have no right to interpret him in the light of the teachings of the Mithra Mysteries of Persia whose rapid spread came about in the second century.<sup>1</sup> (2) Do we find any direct statements either in the Acts of the Apostles or in the Epistles? If we do, then the case is closed. If not, we must resort to inference, and inference reappears in the closely woven veil of subjectivity.

Our question is only preliminary. At the same time it is relevant. Mystery religions are man's attempt to reach the Almighty and to gain immortality. They embody the reachings-out of man from the narrow stream of time and sorrow into the ocean of the eternity of bliss. Did Paul receive his clue from the Greeks or from revelation? If the former then the Epistle to the Romans is a preposterous invention of a heated brain, for the ultimate question is already present, man or God? Is this the revelation of his soul as mediated Jewish-Greek knowledge, or is this the gospel not of man, but of God?

There are two possibilities: Paul had a different message from the apostles or he did not. This seems to be an insulting truism. At the same time it brings home the difficulty. Suppose Paul had a different message. Then he was either aware or unaware of this foreign absorption. Suppose he was aware of it, then the question becomes a moral issue. But no one seems to

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1. Robertson, op. cit., p. 61.

question the apostle's ethics. Suppose he was unaware of it. But that cannot be. Greek and Jewish thought cannot mix without a sacrifice. What applies to the modern Jew who seeks to evaporate the forms of the Old Testament eschatology to make it palatable for this age applies also to the Pauline period. Says Eth. Stauffer, "Die Bildung des gebildeten Judentums ist nicht mehr jüdisch. Sie ist abendländisch-griechisch. . . . Sie haben in Wahrheit den Geist des Judentums dabei preisgegeben: sie haben die konkrete Messias Hoffnung ihres Volkes preisgegeben gegen eine Blosser Idee".<sup>1</sup> That is, how could Paul remain a Jew and at the same time put his theology in the Greek-mystery thought-forms. At bottom the difference is the difference between a symbol of immortality,<sup>2</sup> and the religion based upon an event and consummating in a great event. If the religion of Paul issues into that future mundane upheaval, and all men shall be judged at that time according to faith or lack of faith in the risen Lord, it is hard to see how Paul could ever have been unconscious of the difference. The difference is too radical. Besides, this would be an indictment against the intelligence of the one we consider a thinker. If Paul could detect in Peter's delinquency and temporary lapse

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1. "Die Messiasfrage im Judentum und Christentum", in Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, 1931, Heft 3, pp. 172 f.
2. Cf. Schweitzer, on Attis and Dea Mater of Phrygia, op. cit., p. 182.

into expediency at the expense of truth, the very denial of the death of the cross,<sup>1</sup> would he not discern the pantheistic evils of the pagans so foreign to the Jewish mind? Then, too, all the apostles must have been unaware of the change. Paul answered many a protest against him, but never a single protest was proffered accusing him of apostasy. In fact, he received the right hand of fellowship. Stranger still, Paul quotes copiously from the Old Testament. His defenses abound with quotations from the documents held sacred in the paternal home.

We believe, therefore:

1. That Paul knew Greek. This he may have received from Tarsus or from Gamaliel.

2. Paul did not receive his ideas from Greek sources. Others may have found difficulty in understanding Paul's terminology, as a new convert a missionary, but Paul himself was always clear on fundamental issues and differences.

3. Mystery-religions are diametrically opposed to the Jewish-Old Testament conception of life.

4. There are fundamental differences in the conception of sin, and consequently in the eschatological outlook. Athens could not tolerate Paul.

5. As the Old Testament will account for the concepts "flesh" and "spirit" (which we shall indicate

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1. Galatian 2:14-18.

below), we have no reason at all to resort to Greek philosophy.

6. The early community did not see anything radically different in St. Paul. Questions of the day were Jewish and legal.

7. We must go to the epistles themselves to interpret St. Paul. We do not deny that Paul was a child of his age, but his age must become clear to us through his epistles. Schweitzer claims that the epistles have no specifically Jewish-Hellenistic conceptions. Paul did not absorb any more Hellenism than the parish priest of today imbibes the critical theology of the twentieth century, or the evangelical pastor the theosophy of our age. This is said especially of Paul at Tarsus after his Damascus period.<sup>1</sup> Klausner in a very brief allusion, to the contrary, credits Paul with being an expert in combining "the Haggadic and Midrashic methods of the Sages of Israel with the Hellenistic methods of thought as they had been developed during the twenty years before the Destruction".<sup>2</sup> Of course, Paul can use a method without accepting the content. At the same time there seems to be good reason for Schweitzer not to be too hasty to credit the early writings with having too much influence on Paul, for we know very little about them.

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1. Op. cit., pp. 87, 96, 229f.
2. Jesus of Nazareth, p. 63. On page 197 the author indicates a fundamental difference between Philo and Christianity.



The formulation of most of these documents takes place a few centuries later.

8. The early Greek Fathers never own any allegiance to Paul. Says Zahn, "Aber die lehrhaften Grundgedanken des Römerbriefs haben auf die Lehrentwicklung der griechischen und der von ihr abhängigen Kirchen so gut wie keine Wirkung geübt."<sup>1</sup> This may be said of the western church also, but the fact remains that this Epistle was more influential in the western controversies than in the eastern. If Paul were Greek, then the Greeks would have found him their chief support.

What is there to gain to resort to any Greek hypothesis except to be able to tone down the Gospel of Revelation? The New Testament gives a unified account of the life and the work of the chief of the apostles that finds its embodiment in the Epistle to the Romans. The New Testament is consistent as long as we do not make it inconsistent with extraneous ideas.

#### B. Paul A Jew

We know very little of the boyhood days of St. Paul. We know that he was born in the reputable city of Tarsus, a city of no mean advantages.<sup>2</sup> Ballard in a popular work<sup>3</sup> pictures Paul taking his friends to the

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1. Theodor Zahn, "Römerbrief", in Kommentar zum Neuen Testament, Vol. VI, p. 4

2. Acts 22: 1, 2.

3. Spiritual Pilgrimage of St. Paul, p. 30.

harbors of the city and to the university of no little fame. Here they could hear the Stoic students discourse on philosophy. The picture enjoys the delightfulness of free fancy, but no one can affirm nor deny anything that transpires in the land of imagination. One thing is certain: if we take our guests to Columbia College we do not expect them to return with a mastery of American Pragmatism. McGiffert says it is not surprising that Paul imbibed a liberal attitude as a result of his boyhood days in this city.<sup>1</sup> Again, there is no shred of evidence. His pre-Damascus life seems to repudiate this position for Paul was the persecutor par excellence. We are not logically forced to believe anything of Paul's boyhood days, for we do not know anything about them. The fact is, we do not know at what age Paul arrived at Jerusalem to sit at the feet of Gamaliel.

Was the attitude of the Diaspora liberal or conservative? Again, we do not know, and, consequently, must resort to hypotheses. In a cruelly over-simplified account of Paul, Wilfred Knox maintains that the Diaspora was very liberal. The Jews were well satisfied in their more comfortable circumstances,<sup>2</sup> and felt no need of a better land on this side of the grave. Emmet follows

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1. Op. cit., footnote, p. 20.
2. Knox, Wilfred, Paul, pp. 17f.

Montefiore<sup>1</sup> in proving just the opposite. Montefiore has a very interesting approach. Two great writers of the Diaspora, Paul and IV Esdras are very pessimistic as to this world. Dating IV Esdras at 100 A.D., we find a great difference between it and the apocalypses of the homeland. The Palestinians were satisfied that the law could be fulfilled by human endeavor. The breaches can be repaired. There will be salvation for the Jew. Not so in Esdras! These two pessimistic writers are outside of the Palestinian boundaries. Hence, Montefiore concludes that the Diaspora is less liberal than the homeland.

Psychologically it is very well possible that the Diaspora should be more conservative. The contrast between judaism and paganism would be more evident, and the danger of losing the heritage of the fathers more imminent. In Palestine the danger of paganism would not be felt as keenly as in the countries where paganism was the sole ruler. At the same time the opposite could also be maintained. Jewish children would play with Greek children. They would be invited to the homes of the Greek friends. Jewish business men would probably have to compromise for the sake of business. Psychologically both can be maintained, depending upon the

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1. Emmet, C. W., "The Fourth Book of Esdras and St. Paul", in The Expository Times, 1915, 1916, Vol. 27, pp. 551-556. (cf. Also Machen, op. cit., p. 176.)

sincerity of the father.

We have no evidence either way. To judge from a few writings is a rather precarious procedure. Certainly, it is not safe to build a superstructure upon such meager evidence. There is no reason at all for waxing eloquent on the marvellous emancipating influences of the city of Tarsus. We do not deny the wholesome influences a cosmopolitan city may have, but we possess nothing evidentiary in this given case.

One thing is certain, Paul's home was very conservative. There is no reason for doubting that. Paul was a Hebrew of the Hebrews.<sup>1</sup> In his paternal home the Aramaic language was spoken. In language Paul was a Jew.<sup>2</sup> Knox in a superficial way interprets this expression to mean that Paul was born in Palestine.<sup>3</sup> This is a flagrant oversight of the plain teaching of Acts.<sup>4</sup> Paul came from a bilingual home where Aramaic had the preference. Some Hebrew homes conversed in Greek. Not this home! In spirit Paul's father lived in Jerusalem. His daughter was there. Gamaliel was there, the teacher for his promising son.

How old was Paul when he arrived at Jerusalem?  
In his defense he reminds the Jews that he was brought

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1. Philippians 3:5.
2. Machen, op. cit., pp. 45,47,177.
3. Op. cit., p. 20.
4. Acts 22:3. (γεννημένος ἐν Ταρσῷ ).

up in the city.<sup>1</sup> If we take ἀνατεθραμμένος very literally we shall have to infer that Paul spent his boyhood days in the capitol of Judaism. However, such need not be the case. In Luke 4:16 Christ returns to the city in which He was brought up. ( οὐ ἦν τεθραμμένος ). Jesus was there until his thirtieth year. In classical Greek ἀνατρέθω may mean to educate. This word appears only in Lukan writings,<sup>2</sup> the Greek fellow-servant of Paul. We can paraphrase somewhat as follows: "Do you not see that I am a true Jew? Although born in Tarsus I had my education in this very city". According to Knowling, to receive a good education, Paul could not have arrived later than his thirteenth year, possibly his eleventh.<sup>3</sup> If such is the case, many a fanciful hypothesis of the great boyhood days of Paul turns out to be a beautiful soap-bubble.

More than that! Paul sat at the feet of the great teacher Gamaliel. The question arises: From whence did Paul receive his Greek training, from Tarsus or from Gamaliel? He prided himself, however, in having been privileged to sit at the feet of the great scholar of Jewish antiquity. We never read a scintilla about the marvellous courses the university of his natal city

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1. Acts 22:3. (ἀνατεθραμμένος δὲ ἐν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ )  
According to Thayer, in loco ἀνατρέθω means to nourish up, as the German aufnähren.
2. Knowling, in loco.
3. Ibidem.

offered. Besides, Paul was a member of the strictest sect. All this seems to indicate that we can put very little stock in those boyhood days of the Apostle.

If the foregoing is true, then the paramount question is: What theological questions were engaging the attention of serious minded men and women of the Jewish faith? It is this milieu that must instruct us what Paul had to face as a student and as a teacher. Judging from the New Testament it may be safe to say that the eschatological question was the burning issue of the hour. This does not preclude many other possible questions. The fact that this question is stressed more than others seems to favor the contention that the eschatological question was demanding an answer. Shorn of her pristine glory, insulted by the presence of foreign legions, Israel was mindful of the golden halo of Solomon and David, and of the still more marvellous promises of her prophets of centuries gone by. The question of the rich young ruler seems to indicate the spirit of the age: What shall I do to gain eternal life?<sup>1</sup> This searching was found in a heart Jesus considered very sincere.<sup>2</sup> Bultmann points out that the two great New Testament figures, John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, were incurably eschatological. The very baptism of John had eschatological

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1. Luke 18:18, (τί ποιήσω; ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω;) Matthew 19:16; Mark 10:17.

2. Mark 10: 21.

significance.<sup>1</sup> There was the necessary washing away of sin symbolized as the only condition for entering the Kingdom of God. In Barthian fashion Bultmann explains the eschatology of Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup> He warns us not to be enamoured of the mythological elements in the Lord's eschatology<sup>3</sup> but to see in the draperies of the age the forms of the true essence. This essence hidden in the thought-forms of the age is a crisis, a decision. It is not a future event, but the consummation of all events. It is something in the present, a crisis. This crisis is the true future.<sup>4</sup> This is reading a theological approach into the text. Sufficient, however, to indicate that the age was eschatologically minded. Out of this milieu we see the emergence of St. Paul.

Not only are Jesus and John the Baptist concerned about this problem. Even the Old Testament is inexplicable when shorn of its eschatological framework. The tree of life implies a decision and a future reward. When man fails God promises the deliverance. The Protevangelium is the embodiment of man's pristine destiny as well as the new elevation the seed of the woman will reach. Genesis fifteen has been called "a miniature

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1. Jesus, p. 26.
2. Ibidem, pp.28-55
3. Ibidem, pp. 53f.
4. Ibidem, pp. 50,120,158,161f. Cf. Heinemann, Fritz, "Martin Heidegger - Vom Wesen zur Existenz", in Neue Wege der Philosophie, pp. 370-391; cf. Deissmann, op.cit., pp.6,137. Deissmann would consider this secondary in Paul.

Apocalypse".<sup>1</sup> The promises made to Abraham, the prediction of Jacob to Judah, the Star that shone to the prophet, the writings of Ezekiel and Daniel besides the numerous predictions found elsewhere, all enter into the theological texture of that age. The very questions of existence, why the promised people of God must endure the ignominy and degradation at the hands of infidels, would either heighten the expectation of a speedy redemption or cauterize beyond identification the faith in the hope of Israel of any verile Jew. In order to have a message for his day, Paul had to face this specific problem.

Possibly we may look upon this age as a very active period in Jewish history. "It is," says Klausner, "a mistake to suppose that the learning of the time was confined to the Torah. There was secular learning also in Israel. The poetical and narrative literatures which have been preserved as Apocrypha and Pseudepigraphas in foreign languages, and which possess a wonderful beauty and variety, mostly emanated from a time a little earlier and a little later than the time of Jesus. And contemporary Jewish art, especially architecture, the mausoleums and ceramic ware, has a notable beauty and granduer, and exhibits considerable national peculiarity".<sup>2</sup> From a

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1. Torrey, Chas. C., "Apocalypse - Jewish" in the Jewish Encyclopaedia, Vol. I, p. 672.

2. Klausner, op. cit., pp. 194f.



cultural point of view it may be regrettable that the destruction of Jerusalem had to take place. Although Klausner confesses (by indicating that the documents in question are preserved for us in foreign languages,) with Schweitzer, that the documents we have in our possession are later than the time described, we may possibly infer that this age was very productive. This productivity in the secular sphere may have sublimated the millennial hopes of the age. At the same time it shows that the spirit of man was active, for it brought forth religious writings as well as mausoleums. We need far more light than the present can give, but the tendency would be to fit Paul into this movement.

This literary movement was not buried in the ruins of Jerusalem. In the Babylon of the world, IV Esdras was penned, a writing teeming with questions, and surging with deep emotions and sorrows. Life had become too much for him. Hence this writing is not only of local significance. It too seeks a solution to the questions which are fundamentally human. The importance of this writing is the light it throws upon the age in question.

It is instructive to make a comparison between Paul and IV Esdras. The form, to be sure, is far different. At the same time we should not be deceived by this difference. There are many striking similarities between the Epistle to the Romans and the apocalypse of

this unknown author, although Paul antedates the latter by forty years.<sup>1</sup> These similarities will, however, bring out the differences in sharper contrast. This comparison will be subservient to the quest of discovering the uniqueness of Paul.

There are seven similarities. First, both look upon Adam as the representative of man whose weighty deeds and sin ushered in the dispensation of death.<sup>2</sup>

"O Adam", deplores the writer of this Apocalypse, "what hast thou done?". The results were not Adam's only.

"The Fall was not thine only but ours also who are thy descendants."<sup>3</sup> Secondly, both sought to answer the question of Israel's destiny.<sup>4</sup> In the second vision

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1. IV Esdras may have been written in 100 A.D. Torrey places it at 90. Claims that the standpoint of the book throughout is that of Palestinian Judaism, Jewish Encyclopaedia, Vol. I, p. 672. Emmet in the Expository Times, Vol. 27, 1915-1916, pp. 551-556, and Bruno Violet, editor of the "Die Apokalypsen des Esra und des Baruch in Deutschen Gestalt", in Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Drei Jahrhunderte pp. XVIXf., at 100 A.D. The city in which it was written is Babylon, a pseudonym for Rome. In Vision 1 we read that thirty years after the Fall of the city Ezra was in Babylon. The Destruction of Jerusalem at 70 A.D., and the lapse of thirty years equals 100 A.D. To the latter this writing has a decided Roman coloring.
2. Romans 5:12,14 and IV Esdras 3:7f; 3:21, 7:118, (Vision 3).
3. IV Esdras 7:118, Emmet, op. cit., p. 553, "The way Esdras emphasizes our connexion with Adam was not prevalent in Judaism". Cf. with Baruch, 54:19, "Adam is therefore not the cause, save of his own soul, but each of us has been the Adam of his own soul." Ibidem. This difference accentuates the similarity between Esdras and Paul.
4. Romans 3:1ff; 9:1-11:36, and IV Esdras 10:21ff.

points out to God that of all the nations of the world Israel was the chosen one. Of all the cities that have been built God had chosen Zion. There is the present contradiction between God's promises, His election, and the cold realities of life. So abjectly desperate are their needs, that they are not even worthy of compassion. Thirdly, the woes of the world engage the minds of Paul and Esdras.<sup>1</sup> Fourthly, the doctrine of election seeks an answer. This, strange to say, is introduced subsequent to the discussions on Israel's sad plight.<sup>2</sup> Fifthly, both contrast Isaac and Ishmael, Esau and Jacob.<sup>3</sup> Sixthly, both deal with the question of law and its present significance.<sup>4</sup> Seventhly, both believe in the universality of sin. This of necessity must take place the moment the same premise of our relation to Adam is posited. Now these similarities are either accidental or not. If accidental one must account for the similarities of thought. If not accidental, then one may infer, and this remains an inference based upon the similarities that these were the questions that concerned not only a few, but many. Why should Paul be called upon to discourse on the very same questions another writer discusses later, except that these questions were the questions of the hour?

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1. Romans 3:9ff, 11:11, IV Esdras 8:38, 9:13.
2. Romans 9; and IV Esdras 10:21 ff.
3. Romans 9:13 and IV Esdras 3:16.
4. Romans 2:1-16, and IV Esdras 3:16.

The differences are thoroughgoing. They are the differences of solutions to the problems. Paul has "in Adam" but also "in Christ".<sup>1</sup> IV Esdras is concerned about the ruins of the fallen city of Zion, Paul, to the contrary, (for he could not as yet) is more deeply perturbed about the question of Israel's rejection of the Messenger of the Covenant. Both Esdras and Paul resort to the doctrine of election. Both fall back upon the mercy and righteousness of God. Paul, however, includes the Gentiles. They who knew not the Lord are now calling upon Him through the inclusive provision of the doctrine of election. Paul's doctrine of election is, consequently, constructed upon grace, the grace that may follow national lines for a time but is essentially international or supernatural. Paul differs radically in his conception of the law. According to Esdras Israel in not obeying the law brought upon itself destruction. In this respect Esdras was closer to the Palestinian apocalypsis. Esdras, in spite of maintaining the universality of sin, believes that a few have sufficient "works" to gain salvation.<sup>2</sup> This doctrine would, according to Paul, entitle a man to boast, a quality of life that is abhorrent to God and absent in man in so far as he is renewed by the grace of God. For Paul the fulfilment of the law was

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1. Romans 5:12-21.

2. IV Esdras 8:33, cf. Emmet, op. cit., p. 553.

Christ, and without Christ life is a failure. The law had to be subservient to the gospel, and only through the gospel could the law regain its dignity in the believer. In Esdras next to nothing is said of the Holy Spirit, especially not as bringing in the new dispensation. In Paul the pages are veritably laden with references to His work. No one can understand Paul without taking into account the importance of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in his writings. For Esdras Christ would come at the end of time. He would pass away as all mortals. After seven days he would arise again.<sup>1</sup> Then we all shall appear before the judgment throne, but not necessarily the throne of the Messiah. The question will not be asked about our relation to the Son of Man, but about law and the attitude toward the Israel of God. For Paul, Christ was not at the end but in the center. In a sense Christ was the end of all mundane things, for through His coming this life has lost both its fascination and power. As "end" in this sense, He becomes the "center" of a new order- eternal life. He has already come, and where He is there the new and heavenly life is. Christ died once for all,<sup>2</sup> becoming the hub upon which all history turns. The periphery is inexplicable without the very center- the hub, or the death and the resurrection of our Lord. For Paul, Christ is our intercessor, the great

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1. IV Esdras 7: 29.
2. Romans 6:10.

atonement, but for Esdras, the impossibility of atonement was beyond doubt. Can a father eat for his son, can he sleep or become sick vicariously? In like manner will every one bear the results of his righteousness or unrighteousness.<sup>1</sup> Inconsistently the writer teaches that the prayers of intercession are possible for this world only. This world is not the end. The judgment is the end of the world and the beginning of the new.<sup>2</sup> If intercession, however, is impossible, this should be carried out consistently, both in this world and in the next. But this the writer will not do, possibly because of the prayers of the saints of the Old Testament in behalf of the people. To Paul the greatness of Christ is the intercession that makes us sons of God to enjoy the fellowship of the new life, the new world. Emmet is of the opinion that Esdras is consciously reacting against Christianity in his remarks on intercession.<sup>3</sup> If such is the case, the contrast becomes the more remarkable. Then, finally, we do not feel the Messianic glow radiating from the pages of future hope. In some ways the Messiah seems to be an appendage rather than the lofty conception of the Christ through whom the heavens were made. The great difference is, therefore, that Christ is the center of all of Paul's thinking. This determines Paul's

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1. IV Esdras, 7:104f.
2. Ibidem, 7:113.
3. Op. cit., p. 555.

eschatology. The resurrection is the return of Christ in its incipient stage. This Christ has given us His Spirit, the Holy Spirit, in order to bring about the new life, the eternal life. The intercession of the glorified Lord is our only hope of entering the new world, the life everlasting. When overwhelmed with the great questions of election, Paul has a definite answer that in spite of the limitations of human reason to fathom the bottom of this dark abyss, the God who elected is the God who loves, who has given us the Son of His love. This is not an inference, a symbol, but an event. Both could raise the question whether we show more compassion upon the fallen than God, but Paul could answer it concretely in the cross of Calvary.

#### C. Paul - The Christian

From whence this difference? The Damascus experience could not account for it, unless we take the revelation imparted at the experience seriously. With all the latitude permissible we cannot distil the pretentious theological system of Paul from the data at our disposal. We cannot deny that the Damascus experience has eschatological value. It gave Paul the vision of the glorified Lord who held the destiny of mankind in His hands. In the masterpiece on eschatology, Paul alludes to this event.<sup>1</sup> Having seen Jesus, Paul is convinced

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1. I Cor. 15:8.

that the Lord will return. What Christ did to Paul personally, Christ will do to the human race at the end of time.

1. Paul and the Eschatological Question of the Christian Church.

We must push our quest farther back. When Paul allowed himself to be baptized, baptism must have had meaning. He realized that he was surrendering himself to the Christ of the primitive Christianity. These early Christians waited earnestly for the Lord's return. At times, later on, they may have grown a little impatient, for another apostle records the complaint: "Where is the promise of His coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation".<sup>1</sup> They legitimately expected as a result of the resurrection the new day. Since the resurrection nothing startling took place except defeat and shame. Instead of a mighty Jesus they saw the frame of the martyr giving way to the severe blows of stones. Instead of the throne of honor they knew of the decapitation of James. Did Christ arise or did He not? If He did why has this world order not given way to the new order? There lies the problem of the early church. Why did the resurrection of Christ fail to bring about the hoped for change? When will the new season come?

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1. II Peter 3:4.



Paul stands on the foundation of the primitive church. With the apostles who walked with Jesus, Paul could understand the true significance of the Pentecost. Did Christ return? Did any changes take place? Peter could truly say that the Risen Lord is returning now through His Spirit in the Pentecostal outpouring.<sup>1</sup> In this respect, although fundamentally at one with the primitive church, Paul seems to be more aware of the implications. The new world is here but it is buried under the sands of time and sin. We cannot see it with carnal eyes. Still our citizenship is in heaven above, while we are still good Roman citizens. There are two worlds, the present and the eternal. The eternal is Christ's return through the Holy Spirit. This eternal is like the acorn waiting for the proper moment to become the mighty oak. This we may say also of the believer whose life in this present stage is but the earnest of the full life when the climax of this world's history shall end all sin and usher in the life perfect. When the new heaven and the new earth shall come, the life that shall be lived will not be qualitatively different from the life the Christian lives now. Paul's change is first of all ethical. The fruits of this resurrection-change are present now. Every change indicates that Christ has returned as well as shall return in the last day.

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1. Acts 2: 33.

To see this underlying interest in St. Paul is to depart from the usual interpretation of the chief of the apostles. In consequence we shall have a different approach to the Epistle to the Romans. We shall not find a lengthy discussion on eschatology, but shall find a different kind of eschatology present in every phase of the interests of the writer. Although we believe that there is essentially no difference between this interpretation and that of the Reformation, we do maintain that this new approach of some modern writers on Paul is an advancement. The Epistle to the Romans must have an answer to the pressing problems of that time. The Reformation experience enables one to understand this Epistle, for a neutral, objective exegesis of this Epistle is impossible. Olshausen has said, "Indeed it may be said that where there is wanting in the reader's own life an experience analogous to that of the Apostle, it [the Epistle to the Romans] is utterly unintelligible".<sup>1</sup> We believe that Luther's experience and interpretation bring about a repristination of the true Pauline message.<sup>2</sup> Our aim is to make this more positive. To accomplish this we wish to relate the concepts employed by Paul with the problems of his age. In so doing we shall inevitably

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1. Epistle to the Romans, p. 55.
2. Fr. W. Schmidt, "Die Frage nach Gott als Frage der Reformation", in Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche Heft 1, 1934, pp. 1ff.

fall back upon the relation of the Christian's present life to the life anticipated.

### 2. Paul and History's Interpretation of Him.

Albert Schweitzer has endeavored to prove historically how this eschatological undertone in Paul had to be recognized. Baur first ignores its very existence. Ritschl in his attempts to relate Paul to the Primitive Church finds eschatology the missing link, but fails to take it seriously.<sup>1</sup> In the later years of his life, Baur, however, tries to do justice to this subject. Kabisch in writing on ethics, finds himself returning to this one theme. In our own day such men as Karl Barth, Karl Heim, and the Princeton scholar, Geerhardus Vos, although radically different as far as theological position is concerned, seek to understand Paul by placing eschatology in the center and not in the periphery.

### 3. Paul and Karl Barth's Eschatology.

Although Barth's theology may sound like the heavy rumblings of an overweighted theology over the stony roads of humanism we must recognize his place among the prophets of our age. Whether or no he is the true interpreter of Paul is another question. We must recognize the possibility of a development in Barth. In the preface to the English translation of Römerbrief, Barth

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1. Op. cit., p. 17,18, calls "Lip Service to Eschatology".

admonishes his English readers that they "ought not to bind the Professor at Bonn too tightly to the Pastor of Safenwil, nor to assume that the present state of theological controversy in Germany can be directly gauged from this book [the Epistle to the Romans]".<sup>1</sup> The essential element of Barth's position is not retracted. He still maintains the qualitative difference between time and eternity.<sup>2</sup> "Gott ist im Himmel und du auf Erden."<sup>3</sup> This is an "unendlichen qualitativen Unterschied".<sup>4</sup> Just what constitutes this difference is hard to discover. Is it essential, metaphysical, that is, is it inherent in the very creation? If so, then we shall never know God, unless we cease to be creatures. Besides, if a metaphysical dialectics, will this dialectics remain with us? Possibly it may be an ethical difference. An ethical difference can be bridged by the removal of the ethical disturbance. This is the plain teaching of the Bible.<sup>5</sup>

Karl Barth recognizes that sin is more than the distance between God and the creature. The fact that man "ignores this distance with the guilty ambition to be like God" constitutes the very essence of sin.<sup>6</sup> But if

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1. Karl Barth in his "Introduction" (p. vi) to the English edition of the Römerbrief.
2. Der Römerbrief, VI Edition, p. XIII.
3. Ibidem, p. XIII.
4. Ibidem, p. XIII.
5. Lowrie, W., Our Concern with the Theology of Crisis, p. 186 f.
6. Ibidem, p. 187.

he did not ignore this difference and did not have the guilty ambition to be like unto God would the distance be still qualitative? What shall we do with the "image of God" in man?

All Barth's eschatology is colored by this "time-eternity" framework.<sup>1</sup> Resurrection is not an historical event, for resurrection belongs to the eternity side of the dialectics. A future resurrection, in the commonly accepted sense, would belong to the chronological development of life.<sup>2</sup> Resurrection in the physical sense (I Cor. XV, Romans 8:23) and the predicted cosmic disturbances do not constitute "the last things". Not that Barth denies the possibility of these prophesied catastrophes. Why should they not be worthy of earnest consideration?<sup>3</sup> At best, however, they serve as a "parable" of the true eschatology.<sup>4</sup>

Time for Plato depended upon the solar movements. For Plato time was something "there".<sup>5</sup> This is true of all Greek philosophy. For Barth time is limited by

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1. Der Römerbrief, pp. 167-187, "Die Kraft der Auferstehung".
2. Auferstehung der Toten, p. 57.
3. Ibidem, p. 56, "Warum sollte sie nicht ernstlicher Bedenken wert sein?"
4. A "Gleichnisse", Ibidem, p. 57.
5. P. Brunner, "Zur Auseinandersetzung zwischen antiken und christlichem Zeit und Geschichtsverständnis bei Augustin", in Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, 1933, Heft 1, p.7. Page 8, for Aristotle although time and movement are not identical they are simultaneous. On p.9, "Jene antiken versuche, der zeit habhaft zu werden, haben das gemeinsam, dass sie diezeit als Weltzeit verstehen, die ihr da in der Welt hat".

eternity. Time is like the moon surrounded by the blackness of night. Eternity is the ocean that touches the island of time on all its shores. This eternity is the "last thing", the true eschatos. For Barth all eschatology is eternal. This applies to the Word of God, election, resurrection, eternal life. Eschatology does not come from within time, is not nurtured by the sands of time, but is an inundation of the ocean of eternity. To maintain this position Barth has given us an ingenious interpretation of I Cor. XV. There he forces the historical categories into his dialectical framework by destroying the former.<sup>1</sup> Barth, however, has rendered the theological world a service. We do not know whether he is aware of it or not; but we are forced to think through the concept "time" if we are to have a sound eschatology. Any delinquency on the part of the theologian unavoidably brings failure.<sup>2</sup> There can be no true eschatology without a proper understanding of time. Our question therefore emerges: In Barth's time-eternity framework, did he do justice to the Pauline conception of time? Undoubtedly Barth has a unified system, but has he a Pauline theology

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1. We take the liberty to make this assertion for even the New Testament scholar of the Barthian movement, R. Bultmann, says of Barth- "Das kann ich nur für Gewaltsamkeiten halten", in "Karl Barth: Die Auferstehung der Toten" in the Theologische Blätter, January, 1926, p.9.
2. Karl Heim, "Zeit und Ewigkeit, die Hauptfrage der keutigen Eschatologie", pp. 539-568, in Glaube und Leben.

or a theology of Kierkegaard?

4. Paul and Geerhardus Vos's Eschatology.

Dr. Vos, of Princeton, stands out among the Reformed theologians in relating the ordo salutis with eschatology. Vos differs from Barth in insisting upon the climacteric consummation of this present world order. All such language in the hands of the Barthians, becomes parables. They are myths to express something too great to be expressed otherwise. Possibly the difference is fundamentally the difference in the conception of time, and the redemptive value of "events". It is a question of the relation between creation and recreation.

Dr. Vos in determining the importance of the Holy Spirit in Pauline eschatology finds the Old Testament full of allusions to His work in bringing about the end. There are four lines of thought. (1) The Spirit by special signs of the supernatural heralds the near approach of the future world. (Joel 3:1.)<sup>1</sup> Secondly, the Spirit supplies the official equipment of the Messiah. (Is. XI: 2 xxviii 5.) Thirdly, the Spirit seems to be the source of the new life of Israel. (Ez. 36:26.) Fourthly, in the Old Testament the concept Spirit implies the supernatural and transcendental. To understand Paul's

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1. "Eschatology and the Spirit in Paul" in Biblical and Theological Studies, by the Faculty of the Princeton Seminary, pp. 217-220.

use of the term Spirit this must be kept in mind. This Old Testament conception of the Spirit in its bearing upon Pauline eschatology is not mentioned, or at least, not emphasized in the works on Systematic Theology as by Calvin, Bavinck, and Hodge. Even Kuyper in his work on the Holy Spirit does not pay any attention to its eschatological import. This emphasis upon "Spirit" both in its Old Testament setting and Pauline usage seems to be Vos's distinctive way of linking up the Old Testament with the New Testament eschatology, and as such fastens Paul more tightly to the Old Testament moorings.

Dr. Vos relates all the usual concepts of soteriology with eschatology.<sup>1</sup> Resurrection is not merely an analogy of the regenerated life. Christ's resurrection is the source.<sup>2</sup> As far as salvation is concerned, Paul and his converts "by a sort of reversion", thought themselves saved as in the future so in the present.<sup>3</sup> To employ pictorial language, they brought the heavenly life of love and righteousness to earth, for they knew this life was the ideal life, and any life different from the ideal life would always be a cause for shame. Justification "so far as the believer is concerned, a last judgment anticipated".<sup>4</sup> Romans 8:33,34, "could not be more abso-

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1. The Pauline Eschatology, p. 44.
2. Ibidem, p. 45.
3. Ibidem, p. 51.
4. Ibidem, p. 55.



lute than the sentence rendered in the last judgment". This declaration is so absolute that the categories of past and present do not apply.<sup>1</sup> The doctrine of the Spirit teaches us the mode of existence of the heavenly life which mode characterizes those who are saved although still on this side of the grave.<sup>2</sup> In John's teaching the Spirit was promised until Christ returns, in Paul's the Spirit is resident in the believer as the eternal source of the eternal life for the believer. This rightly understood would prevent the segmentation of the work of salvation in the believer. The whole process of salvation is the new life.

#### 5. Paul and Time-Eternity.

In all eschatology we must combine two elements. Eschatology is the consummation of its temporal antecedents, and the full release of the eternal life already present at salvation. For Paul the resurrection spelled return. (Acts 17:31.) The same life we are to live in the hereafter is the life we must have now. We are children of light.

Th. Steinmann says that the conception of time and eternity of Biblical Writers is very naïve.<sup>3</sup> This may be so. Possibly ours is also. At the same time this

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1. Ibidem, p. 57.

2. Ibidem, p. 59.

3. "Zur Dogmatik" in Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche 1931, Heft 1, p. 70.

conditions Pauline eschatology.

Time is determined by the sun, moon and stars. This is a fundamental assumption of the Old Testament. They are set in the heavens for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years.<sup>1</sup> How marvellous to the writer of Psalm 104 is the going forth of the lion from the forest for food and of man to perform his daily toil, (19-24)! Man's destiny is fixed by time. Time was loaned to give man a season in which to work. Each day is a new opportunity to serve God. Give us this day our daily bread. A time to be born, a time to die, a time to build, and a time to destroy, such is the greatness of man. One may say the Bible presents the "seasonal" aspect of time. If we may look upon the world as the "workshop" of man, we may look upon time as the "workshift". Time is given man to fill moments with usefulness.

From that point of view time is no limitation imposed upon personality. Without time there would be no development at all. Time is the sine qua non of all human personality. Moments are the rungs in the ladder of progress.

Time per se is neutral. Moments are hurled into the irrevocable past. But that is not wicked. The question is: What do we do with our time? This makes time ethical. There are two possibilities: (1) We fill

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1. Genesis 1:14.

these temporal moments with eternal death, or (2) we fill them with eternal life. Hence the true antithesis is not "time vs. eternity", but "life vs. death". Time is only the scaffold work, the framework upon which the eternal Jerusalem is built. If we fail to build the living city of God we are building the city of death.

Because of this dual possibility of time, time may be looked upon as detrimental to the cause of God. The powers of this world are using the God-given moments to destroy the Church. That may account for the desire of the apostles for the end of time. Time in the hands of the unrestrained world may become synonymous in thought with afflictions, persecutions, tribulations. Romans 8: 36ff. seems to be constructed upon this desire. But it does not follow that time as such is sinful, for time is a necessary concomitant of the solar and astral system prior to the fall of man. Time is like all creation, neutral. Man puts the ethical impress upon it.

What follows? As there is a season for a man so there is for the world. At the same time the world does not deplete man's task. While developing in time, he was preparing himself for eternity. There are two worlds co-operating for the same end. Time becomes the servant of eternity.

To speak of time and eternity may be misleading. We would prefer to speak of the relation of time and eternity more in the spirit of the late Dr. Bavinck who pictures time as the artery through which eternity

flows.<sup>1</sup> This seems to be truer to the New Testament.<sup>2</sup> The Second Advent is not the origin, the beginning of the new life, but the revelation thereof. Then shall the eternal life throw off the temporal shackles through which the individual has been enriched.

This seasonal and ethical conception of time enriches life. Although both Christian and Greek may relate time to the movements of the sun and stars, there is the fundamental difference that remains. To a Christian time is a crisis. The neutral moments gliding unnoticeably into the mysterious past calls forth a decision: Christ or Adam. In Christ the same life that adorns heaven fills the present believer. Time is the acre in which we sow flowers or weeds that shall bloom in eternity's garden.

#### Conclusions.

(1) Paul could not be tainted with Greek humanism. The humanism could not supply him with fit categories for this heavenly, eternal life. There is no earthly analogy that completely exemplifies it. The Old Testament teaching forms a more natural background for Paul, accounting for the meaning of terms that may, when taken by themselves, suggest Greek connotations. (2) Paul's con-

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1. Bavinck, H. "In elk moment des tijds klopt de polslag der eeuwigheid", Wijsbegeerte der Openbaring, p. 23.

2. Karl Heim, op. cit., p. 566.

ception of the eschatos may safeguard our theological thinking in making Systematic Theology segmentary. It teaches us a higher synthesis. Eschatology is both the end of the road and the road itself. (3) Besides, it may enrich the Reformation teaching by complementing the antithetical development to Rome. Most of all, and this is anticipating: (4) It should teach us to discover in the Epistle to the Romans a question of life and death. There are moments to be filled with religious and ethical significance. Christ arose from the dead to give us His Spirit, the life-giving Spirit of the new world, to fill time with holiness. This new life is the same life essentially as in the new physical creation. (5) That Paul is incurably eschatological is clear: (a) from the age in which Paul lived; and (b) from the verdict of history.

PART II

T H E M E S S A G E

CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE  
to  
THE ROMANS

A. Times and Constituency

1. Date and Times

As our approach is not primarily a work of exegesis, we shall pass by much that would otherwise be very relevant. For our purpose the dating of the Epistle from 51 A.D. to 59 A.D. will suffice. To the best of our knowledge these two dates mark the two extremes. At any rate, no later than thirty years after the crucifixion of our Lord we see a well-formulated approach to the great truth of death, resurrection, and return of our Saviour.

The time may have some bearing on our problem. According to Romans 16:1 Paul seems to be writing from Cenchreae, a few miles from Corinth. At Corinth he found Aquila and Priscilla who had come very recently from Rome in consequence of the edict of Claudius.<sup>1</sup> We are not too positive in the extent of application. Most commentators follow Suetonius' description that thousands of Jews had to migrate. Sanday-Headlam are more cautious. Our attention is called to the remark of Dio Cassius that no wholesale expulsion took place, only the holding

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1. Acts 18:2.

of meetings was forbidden.<sup>1</sup> This commentary ventures the probability that Aquila and Priscilla preached the gospel making themselves liable to arrest and expulsion.<sup>2</sup> We know from the Acts of the Apostles that Paul abode with them because of the same manual interests.<sup>3</sup> They were tentmakers. If such be the case there are at least two things that interest us. (1) Paul did not write in vacuo. He had an objective. He knew how the church felt toward him. (2) The Epistle to the Romans may show the need of comfort and consolation. Although anticipating we may assert that it may be advisable, at least, to lend a sympathetic ear to those who claim that Romans 5:1-11 is consolatory in character rather than dogmatic. Such disturbances that force an Aquila and a Priscilla from home do not indicate a calm religious and ecclesiastical life. This is equally applicable to the ethical message of our Epistle. How else could Paul write such stern remarks about "them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned".<sup>4</sup> Of necessity this Epistle could not answer definite questions as the First Epistle to the Corinthians, nor engage in a bitter controversy as the Epistle to the Galatians. We must move very cautiously before we assert

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1. Epistle to the Romans, XIX.
2. Ibidem,
3. Acts 18: 3.
4. Romans 16: 17.



that the Romans is the objective quintessence of the Gospel irrespective of any local coloring.

At this time the great Stoic moralist, Seneca, caused his influence to be felt in the city of Rome. Although we find no reason for believing that Seneca and Paul mutually influenced each other, we feel, however, that this Epistle, because of his presence, becomes dramatic. Stoicism the universalism of physis, and Christianity, the universalism of hamartia and charis are to be pitted against each other. Already at Rome this Epistle was bound to come into conflict not only with legal religious humanism, but also with philosophical and ethical humanism.

## 2. Constituency

There seem to have been three congregations at Rome- Hausgemeinden. The first one mentioned held its services at the home of Prisca and Aquila.<sup>1</sup> The nucleus of the second group centers itself around Asyncritus, Hermes, Patrobas, and Hermas.<sup>2</sup> The third congregation has among its members Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas.<sup>3</sup> This letter, therefore, must be read to all at Rome. The constituency of these three Hausgemeinden respectively must remain conjecture. At any rate, the fact that this letter must be read to all

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1. "And salute the church that is in their house", Romans 16:5.
2. Romans 16:14.
3. Romans 16:15, Cf. also Th. Zahn, op. cit., p. 17f.

indicates that some relationship existed.

Their meetings seem to have been of a very informal character. No one in particular seems to have been in charge. In fact, they were "able also to admonish one another".<sup>1</sup> Nor does Paul make any suggestions that his mission was to bring about a better organization. This he may have done,<sup>2</sup> but that would remain secondary.

Another relevant question for painstaking exegesis would be to discuss the problem, "who were in the majority, the Gentiles or the Jews?". According to Denny the problem rests upon the difficulty that Paul addresses his readers as Gentiles and discusses with them as if they were Jews.<sup>3</sup> This question has scholars of note to defend both positions. One of the outstanding exegetes to maintain that the Jewish constituency was predominant is no one less than Zahn. Another great exegete, although little known, Greijdanus, has ably answered the selected seventeen reasons of the former in his defense of a Gentile majority.<sup>4</sup> At the same time we may follow Denny, "it can be dated, of course, but no writing in the New Testament is less casual; none more catholic and eternal".<sup>5</sup> The reason for this catholicity

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1. Romans 15:4, cf. also Denny, "Romans" in the New Testament Greek Expositors, p. 558.
2. Sanday-Headlam, p. xxxv.
3. P. 561, cf. Romans 1:5; 1:13; 11:13.
4. S. Greijdanus, Romeinen I, pp. 8-20
5. Op. cit., p. 574.

lies in the fact that Romans applies to all, "to the Jew first and also the Greek". This may even account for the reason why in some MSS "in Rome" is missing in 1:7 and 1:15.<sup>1</sup> This Epistle is as universal as the gospel for at the very kernel of its message the great antithesis is made between "in Adam" and "in Christ".<sup>2</sup> The question is not whether a man is a Jew or a Gentile. The ultimate and only question is: Is a man "in Adam" or "in Christ"?. Upon this fundamental warp, the whole Pauline texture is woven.

#### B. Integrity of the Epistle.

The integrity of the Epistle need not detain us. We can concur with the exegetes that this question needs no serious consideration. The only pertinent question for us is Chapter XVI. The possibility is suggested that the chapter in question belongs to a letter written to Ephesus. The long list of names, the presence of Aquila and Priscilla, the peculiar admonition, the insertion of the Doxology of Chapter 16:26-27, at the end of the fourteenth chapter has forced some to call this chapter into question. However, the opposite can well be defended. Of the three hundred MSS not one leaves it out.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Handley Dunelm, "Romans", in I.S.B.E., Vol. IV, pp. 2614ff.
2. Romans 5: 12-21.
3. Handley Dunelm, op. cit., in loco, F.A.W. Spitta, Zur Geschichte und Literatur des Urchristentums, Vol. III, First Half p.6. Dodds, Romans, p. xxvii.

If such is the case, internal grounds must decide.<sup>1</sup> Although Spitta dichotomizes this letter into two, a smaller and a larger letter, his internal evidence does not lead him to reject this chapter. It would be easier if Romans 15 were an appropriate end,<sup>2</sup> but without Chapter 16 this Epistle would be a sentence without a period or ending. The internal evidence makes Spitta to relate 16: 25-27 to the beginning of the Epistle. He finds, then, that the Doxology belongs to the whole of the letter.<sup>3</sup> From beginning to end Paul emphasizes "revelation". His gospel is the revelation of a mystery. His task is the preaching of that very mystery revealed. If such is the relation between Romans 1: 16,17 and 16: 25-27 we have a reason to suspect that revelation is a fundamental concept, and that its very repetition shows the importance placed upon it. This we shall attempt to explain when we seek to discover the message. Our purpose here is to indicate that we do not feel this assumption invalidated because the chapter in which it is found has been called in question.

### C. History and Purpose

#### 1. History

In one of his classroom lectures, Dr. Karl Heim of Tübingen made a statement something to this effect,

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1. Spitta, op. cit., p. 7.
2. Ibidem, p. 28.
3. Ibidem, pp. 7f.

"The History of the Church is the History of the Epistle to the Romans", that is, if one knows the history of the reception the Epistle to the Romans has enjoyed one will know the inner and spiritual life of the Church since Paul's day.

This Epistle was not understood by the ancient church. There were certain things in Paul's epistles that even his contemporaries found very hard to understand.<sup>1</sup> Paul soars high into the atmosphere of "grace alone", an atmosphere in which, should one wish to enter, one must leave behind all forms of legalistic religion, pantheism, or any form of worship catering to the natural man.

This may account for the fact that our early Greek Church Fathers never caught the ecstatic vision of grace and the central position of the atoning death of the cross as Paul did. In speaking of Chrystostom, Theodoret, Oecumenius and Theophylact, Olshausen remarks "their commentaries, however, contain but little of their own. But the Greek Fathers altogether have, in consequence of their Pelagianizing tendency, been very far from successful in the exposition of the Epistle to the Romans; the whole purport of the Epistle was too remote from them to admit of their mastering it".<sup>2</sup>

One may go a step farther. The Greek interest

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1. II Peter 3:16.  
2. Op. cit., p. 57.

was diametrically opposed to the message of this Epistle. According to our Epistle law is a fundamental category, a category which God Himself recognized. He does not set the law aside, He fulfils it. This was not the Greek's interest at all. Paul desired to be right with God. The Greek desired to be immortalized. Paul desired to be delivered from sin and transgression, the Greek from the world of sense and ignorance. Plato's great desire was to raise men out of the den of shadows. If men could only rise to a higher level of knowledge, the former world of shadows and ignorance would disappear.<sup>1</sup> Stoicism desired to live sequi naturam.<sup>2</sup> The evils came from not following the course nature prescribed. Sin was "illogical" not "lawless". The mystery religions brought with them a more pronounced mystical tendency. This tendency was not lacking in Platonic philosophy. In some of the greatest problems Plato resorts to a myth. He even attributes insight to madness, "we owe our greatest blessings to madness, if only it be granted by Heaven's bounty".<sup>3</sup> But the mystery religions emphasized more the idea of oneness with God. They sought more for union than reconciliation.<sup>4</sup> Hence the tendency among the Greeks

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1. Plato, Republic, Book VI.
2. Weber, History of Philosophy, p. 146.
3. Phaedrus, Paragraph 244. ΜΑΥΙΚΗ and the prophet ΜΑΥΤΙΚΟΣ
4. Kennedy, St. Paul and the Mystery Religions, pp.90-95.

was to be, (1) free from the sensuous world incarcerating the soul in the prison-house of the body, (2) "by raising himself with all his thinking and striving out of the limits of the senses into the eternal world of thoughts".<sup>1</sup> The other avenue of the soul for union with the world beyond besides that of the logical approach and that of the desensualized will was that of the ecstasy of feeling, or the mystical approach.<sup>2</sup> This the mystery religions with Neo-Platonism supplied in particular.

We are not surprised, therefore, to find the Greek approach bitten by Platonism, Neo-Platonism, and mystery religions. This changed the emphasis from the cross and resurrection to the incarnation. The death of Jesus was requisite to the end that we might become partakers of the divine nature.<sup>3</sup> This is evidenced as early as the times of Ignatius. Although he does not represent his readers as deified, he uses such expressions as 'partaking of God', and 'full of God', 'attain to God'.<sup>4</sup> Neither is this tendency absent in Athanasius.<sup>5</sup> How different from St. Paul's emphasis. He thought of law and guilt. Over against these ethical monsters, Paul's only

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1. Otto Pflleiderer, Philosophy and Development of Religion Vol. I, pp. 339f.
2. Ibidem, pp. 240f.
3. George Park Fisher, History of Christian Doctrine, pp. 161f. Cf. also in our age, Paul Elmer More, described in Part III.
4. McGiffert, A History of Christian Thought Early and Eastern, pp. 36-44. The author shows a great eagerness to put Ignatius in the same category with St. John to the disadvantage of the latter.
5. Ibidem, p. 252.

solution was the prophetic note of preaching. Paul had grace, a grace to be proclaimed.<sup>1</sup> This justifies Schweitzer's remark that in spite of possible verbal similarities, Paul was everything but a Greek. He was a conundrum for the Fathers because their philosophies were antipodes.<sup>2</sup>

Although Augustine never wrote a commentary on the Romans, he uses it extensively in his reply to Pelagius. This, however, did not guarantee a safe exegesis through the ritualistic seas of the Middle Ages. As we shall indicate presently, in the religious stream of the Middle Ages too much sediment was flowing in, damming the proper understanding of the doctrine of grace as a personal relation between God and the sinner. The Middle Ages is but the recrudescence of the claims of the Pharisees at the Council of Jerusalem. The Catholic Church "thing-ized" faith, making it dependent upon "media". "Romans" insists that grace is immediate, a personal relation not conditioned by the sacraments. Besides this we see Melanchthon's complaint that in this Church there was too much of Plato and Aristotle instead of Christ.<sup>3</sup> Three tendencies, therefore, sealed Romans for the Middle Ages. (1) Semi-Pelagianism; (2) the necessity of the sacraments; and (3) the importance attached to reason, or rather Plato

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1. Romans 10: 11-21.

2. Op. cit., pp. 81f.

3. Cf. Karl Heim, "Zur Geschichte des Satzes von der doppelten Wahrheit", in Glaube und Leben, pp. 79-103.



and later on to Aristotle- a synonym for reason.

The Reformation breaks fallow ground, for Luther is the embodiment of the bankruptcy of the three mentioned factors. Luther is Paul's best interpreter.<sup>1</sup> We may label these experiences as those of "twice-born souls" for without them Romans will mean nothing to us.<sup>2</sup> It does not follow, however, that every soul must have such a volcanic eruption as Paul, Augustine, and Luther did in order to become a competent exegete. Such upheavals were unknown to both Calvin and Melancthon. These two show a more gradual change.<sup>3</sup> At the same time two of our best exegetes are Calvin and Melancthon.

Melancthon was a literary humanist. His aim was to produce a true copy of Aristotle. But life is stranger than fiction. This Greek prodigy accepted an appointment at Wittenberg to teach Greek. Under the influence of Luther new vistas opened before him. In March, 1519, he refused to give a reading in Aristotle's Physics, but instead taught the Epistle to the Romans. He soon distinguished between the true and the false Aristotelian theology. In 1521 he taught Romans again. He found three foci: sin, law and grace, or justification, predestination, and sanctification. "Primus de Justificatione, secundus de Praedestinatione et vocatione

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1. Denny, op. cit., p. 575.
2. Olshausen, Epistle to the Romans, pp. 55ff.
3. Jean Moura et Paul Louvet, "La Conversion", in Calvin, pp. 77-84.

gentium, tertius mores format."<sup>1</sup> He spoke chiefly on justification. These courses on the Romans became basic to his Loci Communes. That the issue was keenly felt on the side of Rome is very evident. At first one expected a reply from Melanchthon to Peter Lombard's Sentences. The worried papal legate, Alexander of Worms, wrote that Philipp is going to write against the Master of Sentences, this scoundrel who employs such a beautiful talent for such a bad cause.<sup>2</sup> When the embodiment of the Romans-Loci Communes- did appear a certain Cochlaeus is said to have spoken, "O Deutschland, wie bist du unglücklich durch die neue Missgeburt geworden, wenn sie nicht sogleich als ein schädliches Ungeheuer und verderbliche Sirene hinweggethan wird. In Wahrheit kann man davon sagen, durch den neid des Teufels ist der Tod in die Welt gedrungen. O hättest du besser gesorgt für deine Seele und unser ganzes Vaterland! Das wäre aber geschehen, wenn du das Buch nicht veröffentlicht hättest, ohne es vorher nach den Gesetzen prüfen zu lassen. . . O, dass niemand ihn hätte denn ich allein! Dann würde ich es für meinen höchsten Ruhm halten, nicht das Buch herauszugeben, sondern es in aller Eile dem Vulkan zu übergeben, um so die Erde, ja die Seelen der Menschen vor diesem Verderben zu bewahren".<sup>3</sup>

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1. We are indebted to the excellent "Introduction" of Th. Kolde, in Die Loci Communes Philipp Melanchthon in ihrer Urgestalt. Quotations from 3rd Edition, 1920, p.43.
2. Op. cit., p. 32.
3. Op. cit., p. 34f.

Paul does not philosophize, says Melancthon.<sup>1</sup> Instead he speaks of the certainty of law, sin and grace.<sup>2</sup> Through Aristotle instead of the full-orbed Christ, and, in the early church, through Platonic philosophy, Christian doctrine had fallen.<sup>3</sup> Such was the caustic indictment of this rather compromising savant.

That this has influenced Reformation theology is certain. Sin, redemption, gratitude, the three great divisions of the Epistle to the Romans is re-echoed in the monumental document, "The Heidelberg Catechism".<sup>4</sup> The Reformation becomes Pauline, and by understanding Paul it becomes Christian.

We feel that the Reformation is the true interpreter of Paul. At the same time we must guard ourselves against extremes. In spite of themselves, our reformers are sons of Scholasticism. There would be a tendency therefore to approach the Epistle to the Romans in search of a systematic, dogmatological treatment of the text. This may not be so. The second caution is the emphasis upon the doctrine of justification. Undoubtedly this doctrine has a focal place in Pauline theology.<sup>5</sup> We should not do as Melancthon did, spend practically all of our time at this doctrine.

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1. Op. cit., p. 63.
2. Op. cit., p. 64.
3. Op. cit., p. 65f., 85ff.
4. Question Three - Lord's Day I.
5. Cf. Heidelberg Catechism, Question 60, Lord's Day XXIII.

As we have indicated before, there is a growing interest in the eschatological aspect of Paul. If such is the case, and if this modern position is correct, our duty is to read Romans in the light of these findings. Godet thinks Melanchthon is right when he asserts that there is little of eschatology in Romans.<sup>1</sup> At the surface this seems correct. But we too must be careful not to dissect the doctrine of salvation at the expense of an underlying unity possibly present. This is still to be determined. Probably the mediaeval way of thinking, and post-Reformation Scholasticism may have unconsciously chopped things into little bits which are so organically related that to sever the minutest part is to kill this unity. If Schweitzer, Vos, and Barth are correct then the duty devolves upon any student of Romans to discover this new eschatological unity that underlies this Epistle. In this respect our modern age has a different challenge from the Reformation. We must fill in the gap left open by the reformers. They faced the question: Can Aristotle canonized through Thomas Aquinas help us to God? We must ask: If eschatology is a fact, can humanism help us?

## 2. Purpose of the Epistle.

The specific purpose of the Epistle is still a questionable subject. The absence of a clearcut answer,

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1. Godet - Epistle to the Romans, p. 55.

however, does not becloud the message. This letter is more than an occasional letter, although an occasion is not wanting. Spitta claims that this Epistle is not an outline of Dogmatics.<sup>1</sup> There is no indication of a concrete situation.<sup>2</sup> There is no reason to suppose that Paul's work is finished in the east, and that he is forced to go west.<sup>3</sup> Besides there is no evidence that Paul is trying to prevent the Judaizing influences from making any headway at Rome.<sup>4</sup>

We do believe Romans is very systematic in its treatment of the material at hand. It is the flower of all previous thinking.<sup>5</sup> But it does not follow that a systematic treatment is a dogmatological discourse.<sup>6</sup> We believe with Luther, that this Epistle is the quintessence of both the Old and New Testament.<sup>7</sup> At the same time if Melanchthon can rejoice because of the absence of christological discourses, and eschatological teachings, as well as that of the Trinity, we cannot consider it a compendium of the Christian religion. Paul undoubtedly

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1. Op. cit., p. 153.

2. Ibidem, p. 104.

3. Ibidem, p. 156.

4. Ibidem, pp. 156f.

5. Sanday-Headlam, p. xliii.

6. Denny, op.cit., p. 571.

7. Says Luther, "dass nichts mehr hier zu wünnen ist. Darum es auch scheint, als habe St. Paulus in dieser Epistel wollen einmal in die Kürze verfassen die gantze Christliche und Evangelische lehre, und einen Eingang bereiten in das gantze Alte Testament", in his "Vorrede auf die Epistle St. Pauli an die Römer, found in Dr. Martin Luther's Werke, Vol. X, p. 83.

had a series of lectures. Godet points out that teaching in the school of the rhetorician, Tyrannus, every day for two whole years at Ephesus presupposes a body of truth put in a systematic form.<sup>1</sup> The law of comparison would function instructively. If the whole body of Christian truth were present we could call this possibly the first work on Dogmatics. But it is admitted that such is not the case. Why are certain truths then selected? The answer to this question would reveal the uniqueness of the Epistle. It would reveal, undoubtedly, this, Paul is not writing Sentences. Paul is facing a situation. If "revelation" plays such a prominent role, it must be contrasted with something, and that something is man's approach to God. No congregation would feel particularly edified in receiving a copy of Dogmatics.

Although everything that is said is of an inferential character, we do believe that Paul, intoxicated with the highest idealism, kept his eyes on Rome. There he wanted to go several times. He knew their faith. He prayed for them. Aquila and Priscilla told him a good deal about this church. Although Spitta may be correct in his remark that Paul's work was not finished, we must indicate another tendency in Paul's work to organize nuclei in large cities. These nuclei must grow. The little cell must propagate itself. This would apply also

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1. Godet, op. cit., p. 56.

to Rome. Paul writes to them that he desires to go to Rome, from there to Spain. In the meantime, however, he has the uncertainties of the hazardous journey to Jerusalem and its possibly baleful consequences.<sup>1</sup> He is seeking to make Rome a new center. There the holiest of dreams can come true- Christ the King of the World. He solicits their support. What Antioch was for the orient, Rome should become for the occident.<sup>2</sup> This may be more than conjecture. At the same time it does not explain why in a missionary letter doctrinal subjects were discussed, nor why references are made to the relation between the weaker and the stronger, nor why the great theme of Romans 1: 16,17 was given to the Epistle. There is a missionary motif present but there must be something more. Why the theme is given will be discussed in the message proper. Why certain subjects were touched upon lies in the fact that writing of Romans had an occasion. This, says Zahn, was the value of Baur who called our attention to it, but did not happen to be the man to discover it.<sup>3</sup>

We shall follow the Dutch theologian, Greijdanus, in defining the possible purpose of Romans and allow subsequent remarks to substantiate it. Says Greijdanus, the purpose could be summarized as follows: "To the Church of Rome, a brief exposition of the gospel, accord-

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1. Cf. Romans 15: 17-29.
2. Zahn, op. cit., pp. 20,22.
3. Ibidem, p. 6.

ing to its true essence, universal character, and practical application".<sup>1</sup> Our position therefore is (1) that Paul seeks to make Rome a missionary center. (2) Paul cannot go in person for he must go to Jerusalem. (3) This journey may cause his death. (4) Still Paul feels that the Romans must have his gospel which he taught elsewhere. Instead of preaching, he is writing his gospel. (5) Paul makes definite comments as he goes along, knowing the situation in the Church. (6) Paul wishes to remove certain misunderstandings of a far reaching character.

Hence the Epistle to the Romans becomes dramatic. As the history of the reception of the Epistle shows, God alone must give grace, give salvation. The cross brings that eternal salvation unto man. The metropolis of the world, the city where all the ways converge, must become the city of Christ, to evangelize Spain and all the parts of the world. The message to pierce the heart is the cry of man's absolute inability and God's power. The haughty Roman, the self-satisfied Jew, the cultured Greek are the embodiment of tendencies in every soul. It is the first commandment repeated, whether or not we shall have another God before us, the god of law, of culture, of mundane power. It is not the idolatry of the grotesque figures of paganism that will cause our downfall, but the

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1. "Aan de gemeente te Rome, eene beknopte uiteenzetting te geven van het Evangelie naar zijn eigenlijke wezen, universeele karakter, en praktische strekking." op.cit. p. 38.



god of human endeavors standing before the God of grace,  
and of salvation.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Fr. W. Schmidt, "Die Frage nach Gott als Frage der Reformation", in Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, Heft 1, 1934. Says he of Luther's attitude toward Roman Catholicism, "dass sie von Gott redet, ohne zu wissen, was sie damit eigentlich tut. Luther's Realitäts- hunger aber will nicht einen gemalten sondern den wirklichen Gott", p. 5. Luther would equate the first commandment and true religion.

CHAPTER II  
THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

The Epistle to the Romans may be divided into two parts: A. The Doctrinal, chapters 1 to 11, and B. The Ethical, chapters 12 to 16.

A. The Doctrinal

In making this division we realize our main outline suffers from generalities for there is much in the first eleven chapters that is ethical and much in the last five chapters that is doctrinal. Besides, the mutual interdependence is so intricate that to take away the former would be to mutilate the latter. Romans 16:25-27 is in a sense a repetition of Romans 1:17. The hidden mystery is revealed. This mystery "hath been kept in silence through times eternal, but now is manifested, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God is made known unto all the nations unto obedience of faith: to the only wise God through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever. Amen".<sup>1</sup> In short, we see that the teachings of Romans 1: 5,16,17 are exalted to the position of a concluding doxology. Secondly, in the beginning and in the end of this document we notice that the great theme is a mystery

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1. Romans 16: 25-27.

that was hidden, but is now being revealed. The revelation of God is a dominant note.<sup>1</sup> The same is true of the body of the letter. We are called according to a divine pretemporal purpose.<sup>2</sup> Paul further instructs his readers that the hardening of Israel's heart and future reingrafting are a mystery, hidden from the readers' present comprehension. But this mystery shall be unveiled when the fullness of the Gentiles is come in.<sup>3</sup> In Romans, therefore, we are dealing with something concealed, but by God's own fiat revealed through sage, prophet, and apostle. Christ is the great revelation of God. From beginning to end, therefore, our greatest concept is "revelation". This revelation must be preached<sup>4</sup> everywhere. It is not the discovery of the human mind, nor can it be. It is the precious gift of God's grace. It is the revelation of a life foreign to our sinful, depraved selves.

This emphasis in Romans fits in beautifully with the tendency of considering Paul as eschatologically-minded. The eschatology resulting from the resurrection is absolutely alien to our mind in its mundane functions. Unless this new life in Christ Jesus were revealed, we would remain absolutely ignorant of its very existence.

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1. Cf. Spitta, op. cit., pp. 9f.
2. Romans 8: 28.
3. Romans 11: 25.
4. Romans 10: 9,14,15.

Revelation and eschatology belong together as discovery and the self-sufficiency of man. The cross, the resurrection and the ascension are the necessary facts for the new life, unfolding for us the plan hidden from eternity.

We shall further subdivide the first section as follows, bearing in mind the concepts revelation and eternal life, depending upon subsequent exegesis to substantiate:

1. Eternal Life and Justification by Faith.
2. Eternal Life and Law.
3. Eternal Life and the Universality of the Gospel.

Chapters twelve to sixteen inclusive we shall describe as:

4. Eternal Life and Daily Conduct.

In our exegesis, we are interested in the technicalities of the science only in so far as we think they will clarify the main issues of this Epistle. Hence we may confess, although many exegetes, under the influence of Luther's mighty experience, and the subsequent Reformation interpretation, would condemn this broad outline, the essential message of the Epistle to the Romans will remain unimpaired- "the gospel 'is a power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek'".<sup>1</sup>

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1. Romans 1: 16.

1. Chapters One to Five,  
Eternal Life and Justification by Faith.

a. Chapter One, Verses 18-32, The Test of Practising.

Paul begins his letter in the usual manner of a salutation. The salutation, however, is very heavy doctrinally. Paul describes himself as a servant of Jesus Christ. Servant ( δούλος ) means a slave. This translation would be inadequate today for the connotation of a slave is that of painful, involuntary servitude. In Paul's time it meant: (1) ownership, and (2) obligatory service. It was not uncommon in Paul's day to find the slave the master of his Lord in culture and usefulness. His back would not wear down the edge of the scourge as long as ownership and compliance to the master's demands were esteemed binding. Paul says he is Christ's possession, and is in duty bound to render service unto his Lord.<sup>1</sup> As every servant has his task, the duty devolves upon Paul to be an apostle. Although the term apostle does not necessarily imply an office, it does seem, however, that Paul has this in mind.<sup>2</sup> In verse four Paul acknowledges that he has received grace and apostleship from the risen Lord. If such be the case, we are mindful of the words of Jesus, "All power is given unto me, go ye into all the world". Further, says Paul, I was set aside unto the gospel of God, that is, my life's

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1. Godet, op. cit., p. 24.

2. In Acts 14: 14, Barnabas is called an apostle.

task is the preaching of the good news of God. My whole life was a preparation for the task, in order that when the time should come I should have one mission to proclaim- the good news. It seems as if Paul looks upon his task and calling as Jeremiah did long ago. "Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee: I have appointed thee a prophet unto the nations."<sup>1</sup>

This good news of redemption is not as a meteor flashing through the dark nocturnal sky. It was predicted by the prophets. Hence it is not surprising that even in an Epistle to the Gentiles quotations from the Old Testament abound. The Old Testament pictured unto us the Christ. As one sends a passport picture before him in order that a friend in a foreign port may recognize the one to arrive, so God sent the picture in the Old Testament in order that both Jew and Gentile would surely identify the person from His likeness. Paul remains true to this thought. The Church is not a surprise to Paul, neither the cross. There is only one picture in the Old Testament of Christ for both Jew and Gentile. Without this presupposition of Paul, chapters 5: 11f and 9 to 11 are entirely inexplicable. The good news was proclaimed. This good news all men need. The significance of predictions and adumbrations is the disclosure of the unity

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1. Jeremiah 1: 5.

of the plan of God. The Old Testament becomes "gospel", good news. The New Testament is the fuller light burning from the oil of hope and faith flowing in the writings of long ago. There are no intimations that there are different kinds of "good news". The good news for all- the Old Testament saints as well as the New Testament saints- is the one death and the one resurrection of Christ. The New Testament rose did not bloom on a wild bush, but developed the fragrance of its own roots, for rose, branches, and roots constitute the same bush.

Our interest, however, is in the Son whose coming was foretold centuries before His birth. We notice an interesting parallel between verses three and four:

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|-----------------------|---|
| 1. Born               | 1. Appointed, declared.                               |
| 2. According to Flesh | 2. According to Spirit of Holiness                    |
| 3. From Seed of David | 3. From the Resurrection of<br>the dead. <sup>1</sup> |

The two prepositions (according to the flesh and according to the spirit) have adverbial force. The emphasis is upon the result primarily, not upon the initial act. We may paraphrase this section in the words of Dr. Vos, "Christ came into being as to his sarkic existence, and he was introduced by *ἐπισημῶς* into his pneumatic existence".<sup>2</sup> This means more than that the resurrection

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1. G. Vos, "Eschatology and the Spirit in St. Paul" in Biblical and Theological Studies, of the Princeton Seminary Faculty, p. 228. Also Greijdanus, Vol. I, p. 59.
2. Ibidem, p. 229.

proves to the world that Jesus is the Son of God.<sup>1</sup> Then "in power" would mean that God gave His seal to the claims of Jesus.<sup>2</sup> But this is more than a declaration. "The *ὀπίγειν*", says Vos, "is not an abstract determination but an effectual appointment."<sup>3</sup> Christ is appointed to be Son-of-God-in-power. "That our Saviour happens to be God's only, eternal and natural Son is, taken by itself, no more a message of good tidings than that God exists and that He is the Eternal and Unchangeable One."<sup>4</sup> This is good news that the Eternal Son who tasted the most abject pain and sorrow, who drank from the cup of woe and ignominy, should be exalted on high to perform and to execute the work of redemption. Christ has been effectually appointed to bring about the consummation of the ages.

The way these two successive stages are introduced is plain from the preposition "out of" (*ἐκ*). The body for suffering is through birth. The glorified body and Saviour-in-power is through resurrection. It is resurrection that introduces a new order of events. As birth ushers a human being into the natural order, it is resurrection that introduces him into the final glory and salvation. Eschatology as consummation is unthinkable apart from a physical resurrection.

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1. So Robertson, Word Studies, IV, p. 324.

2. Ibidem, p. 324.

3. Op. cit., p. 229. Cf. Sanday-Headlam, in loco.

4. Greijdanus, S., Vol. I, p. 59, (our translation).



The final parallel is, "according to the flesh" and "according to the spirit of holiness". If "flesh" refers to Christ's human nature, then "spirit of holiness" must refer to His divine nature. At the same time it must mean more than that. This latter phrase refers to the phrase "in power". Then *ΚΑΤΑ* retains its original idea of standard. It is the "Christ-in-power" according to the spirit of holiness. The standard of power is the spirit of holiness. At the resurrection and through the resurrection Christ is appointed to show forth His power and glory of salvation in holiness.<sup>1</sup>

The risen Christ appoints and gives the apostleship unto Paul to go to the Gentiles to proclaim the glad tidings. The purpose is the obedience of the Gentiles, or the obedience of faith. Jesus Christ sends His apostles that the heathen may believe upon Him, and, consequently, may submit to His yoke. The Romans belong also to a class called Gentiles. A remarkable change has taken place. The latter have accepted Him and are called of Jesus Christ, beloved of God, called saints. Then Paul ends with the salutation reminiscent of Numbers 6:25,26,

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1. Karl Barth says, "Neben diese Stelle darf Röm. 1:1-4 gestellet werden, wo das Evangelium bezeichnet wird nach seinem Urheber als das *εὐαγγέλιον Θεοῦ* nach seinem Inhalt als handelnd von dem *υἱὸς Θεοῦ* während das *πνεῦμα ἁγίου ὑνῆς* bezeichnet wird als der Faktor, durch den dieser "Sohn Gottes" in seiner Auferstehung als solcher 'abgegrenzt' und insofern (für die, denen er offenbar wird und die an ihn glauben) als solcher 'eingesetzt' (*ἐπισθεῖς*) ist." Dogmatik, p. 330.

"grace and peace". As there can ultimately be only one grace, and one peace, this salutation is the embodiment of the Old Testament love of God toward His people. The inappropriateness of this salutation is evident unless the New Testament people of God are the recipients of the same blessings given to God's people of long ago.

These saints at Rome are beloved of the Triune God. As beloved of God, the opening words of the Epistle are very appropriate: Grace to you and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. God through Christ has become also our Father. As a father to his children, so God our Father gives us, who by nature are unworthy, the grace to enter His fellowship, and the peace to enjoy His communion.<sup>1</sup>

This introduction is veritably startling. The very first words open up for the readers a new world - the world in which Christ now is. The necessary atmosphere of life has already been created. The life that is unattainable by the natural man has been reached by the Son of Man, for God has appointed Him for this life. The task of the apostle is to bring this new life to Jew and Gentile alike. Those who have this new life are beloved of God, are called saints. What else can be anticipated but grace and peace?

In the second paragraph (vrs. 8-12) we read of

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1. Greijdanus, op. cit., in loco.

Paul's strong desire to come to Rome but that he was hindered hereto. He does not come to call them back to the faith, for their faith was spoken of throughout the Christian world. This shows that the Roman Church was not tucked away in an obscure corner. In fact, Rome seems to have enjoyed an enviable popularity. This would lend additional support to the belief that Paul was not writing in vacuo. Paul's purpose was to have fruit. He desires to be strengthened by them, as well as they by him. But through the various difficulties of his plans (15: 23ff.) he was hindered.

The third paragraph begins with verse thirteen. We think we are justified in making a new paragraph here, although neither the "Revised Version", nor the "Nestle Edition of the New Testament Greek" has done so. Says Godet: "I would not have you ignorant, has something slightly mysterious about it".<sup>1</sup> Zahn puts it thus: "οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀφροεῖν pflegt er entweder zu einer neuen Sachen über zugeben, über welche er seine Leser nicht in Unkenntnis lassen will (I Th. 4:13, I Cor. 12:1, *gap* II Cor. 1: 8; Phil. 1:12; II Cor. 8:1; I Cor. 15:1) oder einen Gegenstand, in dessen Erörterung er bereits begriffen ist, unter einen neuen Gesichtspunkt zu stellen, eine neue desselben hervorzukehren, welche die Leser nicht ausser acht lassen

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1. Godet, op. cit., p. 89

sollen".<sup>1</sup> According to this scholar the last seems to be the case. According to Greijdanus,  $\delta\epsilon$  indicates a transition to something new.<sup>2\*</sup>

From a critical source we can arrive at the same conclusion. When Spitta dichotomized Romans into a longer and shorter letter he thought that vs. 8-12 belonged to the shorter letter and 13-15 to the longer. This was erroneous he admits because of the similarities between 1: 1-16 and other parts of Romans.<sup>3</sup> At the same time we note that this tireless document-hunter felt that a difference was there. Besides, the tender touch the word "brethren" gives, adds to something burning. It seems to be an accusation addressed to Paul, which Paul intends to wipe away.

Dr. Karl Heim, to whom we are indebted for this observation,<sup>4</sup> believes that there were some at Rome who believed that Paul did not dare to come to the metropolis, the center of culture and philosophy. All these excuses about not coming to Rome were subterfuges. Paul did not dare. Rome was the city of the world- the capitol of learning and power. Dr. Heim suggests that we compare the Epistle to the Romans with that to the Corinthians. This comparison is not far-fetched. First

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1. Zahn, op. cit., p. 63.

2. Op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 82f.

3. Op. cit., p. 58.

4. Class notes, unpublished, cf. also Greijdanus, and Calvin, in loco.

of all, the geographical relation may be illuminating. There would be, of necessity, a good deal of social and cultural intercourse, as well as financial dealing between the two cities. At Corinth Paul had to contend with various groups, including those with philosophic inclinations. He had to contend with the same difficulty of faith or reason in that city. If such be the case, then these words become clearer. In chapters 12 to 16 we notice other similarities between Corinthians and Romans. The question then becomes: Will Paul bring the cross and the resurrection- the new life- into the very capitol of the world? He is always intending, but will intentions ever materialize?

Then verse fourteen is self evident. "I do not care who the nations are. I do not care whether a man is learned or unlearned. All men- Greek and Barbarian, learned or unlearned- are the goal of my endeavors. I am a debtor to all. If such be the case, then why should I fear Rome? If I am debtor, and I am conscious of it, it necessarily follows that I purpose as much as possible to come to that city." According to Paul's wish (το κατ' ἐξὲ προθυμον, (κατ' η̅ is standard) he was ready to come.

Note that the contrast is between Greeks and Barbarians and not between Jews and Gentiles. This would lend support to the contention that Paul's battle is between reason and revelation. Paul's religion will not bow down in disgrace before the culture of his

age. Paul's reply is a challenge. This they must know.

Why should Paul not come? Can philosophy or learning put him to shame as a messenger of good tidings? The "for" (*gap*) gives the reason why he dares to come to Rome. He is not ashamed. There must have been the occasion that demanded such an answer. Paul is not ashamed of the greatest shame, a Saviour nailed to the cross for sinners. The gospel is first of all an event. There must be an announcement of something. "Botschaft gibt es nicht von allgemeinen Wahrheiten oder von Wesensnotwendigkeiten. Von ihnen gibt es Erkenntnis. Und zwar die Erkenntnis der Vernunft."<sup>1</sup> The gospel is inextricably associated with a person, a death, and a resurrection that stands out uniquely among persons, deaths, and resurrections. This great difference has too often been forgotten. Too often we try to reduce the death and resurrection to general truths and concepts, but the moment we try to do this the very birth certificate of the attempt is its death certificate. This event is not reason or agreement with reason of a mathematical nature. To look upon the good news in the death and resurrection of our Lord as symbols of sacrifice or new life is to repudiate the entire Old Testament revelation. The Jews knew God only in deeds. This is the result of their conception of the Personality of God. A person is

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1. Friedrich Gogarten, Ich Glaube an den Dreieinigen Gott  
p. 1.

known by his deeds. This applies also to God. "I am the Lord who brought thee out of the land of Egypt." That Exodus-salvation was no symbol but an event. The God of their salvation redeemed them from Babylon. Redemption stood for events, not symbols. As in the past, so also in the future. The return of Jesus Christ will be a "fact", a deed. It will not be a "parable" of Christ's returning to us.<sup>1</sup> Salvation implies an intimate relation through personal faith to Christ. The word itself was a current Messianic idea.<sup>2</sup> It was not a deliverance merely from mortality, or an attempt to be identified with the gods as in the mystery religions. How one can seriously doubt the difference between Paul and the mystery religions, bearing this in mind, is beyond our comprehension. Paul will clarify his position presently, but here he anticipates, not forms, not laws, not any activity of man, not deification, but only rectification, through Calvary, appropriated by faith, will give man the power of God unto salvation.<sup>3</sup> Man needs redemption. As in I Corinthians 1:17,18; 24,25, we find Paul here also taking issue with

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1. Eth. Stauffer, op. cit., pp. 180f. Cf. Konrad Velte, "Wort, Geschichte und Mythos" in Z. Th. u. K., Heft 4,5, 1931, pp. 286-298, also Richard Kroner, "Religion und Philosophie" in Z. Th. u. K., Heft 1, 1932, pp. 58f. The recent theological developments in Germany have faced the question seriously: Wherein lies the difference between Christianity and Idealism? The events of Christianity are not symbols of general truths. The cross, e.g., is unique. It is the once-for-all. Likewise the resurrection of Christ, and His return.
2. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 227.
3. Ibidem, pp. 229, 298.

any form of humanism seeking to put the gospel on a supposedly more sure basis of philosophy or culture. For all, Jew or Greek, irrespective of age, or dispensation, need the one and only power unto salvation through faith.

"For the righteousness of God is revealed therein from faith unto faith, as it is written, but the righteous shall live by faith." This righteousness is not the righteousness subjectively appropriated. We have

three genitives in verses 16,17,18- *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ; ἰσχυρὸς θεοῦ; ὁπφὴ θεοῦ;*

All these genitives have the same construction. Especially in 17 and 18. There we find the parallelism

*δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ and ὁπφὴ θεοῦ*

governed as it were, by the same verbal parallelism-

"revealed". Whatever construction we give to the one we must give to the other. Verse 17 substantiates verse 16.

Why is the gospel the power of God? Because Christ is the righteousness of God.<sup>1</sup> Christ makes a sinner right with God.<sup>2</sup>

The only possible way of appropriation is faith. "From faith to faith" in our daily parlance means "from A. to Z", "from beginning to end" faith. Nothing but faith. Trust and obedience are the only ways in which we find this righteousness. Over against faith or reliance, humanism has many forms as in 1:18 to 3:31. Paul, however,

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1. I Cor. 1:30.  
2. Greijdanus, Vol. I, p. 96.



not necessarily to substantiate what he says, makes his point clearer by quoting Habakkuk 2:4, "But the righteous shall live by faith" (or out of, from,  $\epsilon\kappa$  faith). In fact, "the righteous by faith shall live". They shall live. How? By faith! It seems to us that the expression "shall live" received more emphasis than the phrase "by faith". Paul is more interested in what shall be accomplished than how it shall be accomplished. At the same time the "what" determines the "how". This emphasis upon "shall live" fits snugly into the concept "salvation" which the gospel as the power of God gives. The gospel brings life. Then Habakkuk becomes a telling quotation. Habakkuk was confronted with knotty problems of life. It seems as if no outcome was forthcoming. "O Jehovah, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear? I cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save."<sup>1</sup> In his perplexity Habakkuk stands upon his watchtower looking "forth to see what he will speak with me, and what I shall answer concerning my complaint".<sup>2</sup> The whole context is one of uncertainty, of death. What Habakkuk is interested in is life! There shall be plundering, blood, and death. Breaking down the Old Testament form Paul retains the essential message. Life! How? By faith! Only faith can appropriate the righteousness of God. Only the righteousness of God can bring salvation. Only salvation

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1. Habakkuk 1:2.
2. Habakkuk 2:1.

reveals the power of God. But all bring life!

In systematic theology we are apt to dissect the term salvation too much. What Paul means by salvation here is evidently the entire work of redemption. It is the renewed life in its entirety. It is the same life as of the hereafter. It is life from the Christ who through the resurrection has entered the eschatological sphere. Whenever we ask the question: Is the gospel an event, or are the so-called events but symbols embodying for the masses the same truths the philosophers can discover by pure reason? We shall discover that Paul's challenge is just as vital today as it was in 60 A.D. Paul is repudiating Greek Idealism, that is, Paul is informing the learned and the unlearned, the rationalist and the mysticist, that reason cannot lift us up into the sphere of salvation. The only way we can find life is trust. We must have faith. Faith presupposes:

(1) A call or a summons; (2) An obedience on the part of the one hearing the call; and (3) a gracious reward for the obedience. This was the faith of Abraham: (1) A call to Palestine; (2) a challenge to trust and to obey God; (3) a promise of a gracious reward.

Verses 18 to 32, The Test of Practising.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven  
(ὁ ἄποκαλύπτει τὴν ὀργὴν τοῦ θεοῦ) being revealed, present tense,  
i. e., not a definite revelation in the past, but a  
constant revelation upon disobedience. As the righteous-

ness of God is being revealed from faith to faith, a present revelation, so the wrath of God is being revealed). The connection between this section and the preceding is difficult. " f a p " is logical. The gospel of God seems to be contrasted with the wrath of God. The gospel brings life, the wrath brings death. Paul's chief interest is to show that the gospel is power, and that its power consists in the righteousness appropriated by faith. This he seeks to prove. He is not seeking first of all to picture the urban bestiality as a Rembrandt background for the glorious light of righteousness. We can follow Karl Barth's caption "Die Nacht"<sup>1</sup> for this section, for the writer's pen leaves behind it one thought only-darker than midnight in an endless cavern. That the darkness is there has another cause. Paul is putting deeds in the crucible, and is asking: Can the natural man's deeds as sinner bring him anywhere? What can men expect who hinder the truth, who do not glorify God, who become vain in their reasonings, who change the glory of the incorruptible God, who refuse to hold God in remembrance, who practise such things and consent with those practising although they know this merits death? It is not simply a contrast. It is a positive proof that we need the righteousness of God from faith unto faith in order to live.

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1. Der Römerbrief, p. 18

What is this wrath of God? Because the general interpretation of this section seems to be that it refers to the Gentiles, "wrath" has lost its eschatological significance. Wrath in the New Testament is usually eschatological. There are reasons to suppose that Paul has this in mind even in the verse in question. Romans 2:5 combines both wrath and revelation, "treasurest up for thyself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God". In 5:9 we are to be redeemed from the wrath to come. In 9:22 some are vessels of wrath, that is, vessels in which wrath has been stored up for manifestation in the future.<sup>1</sup> Says Dr. Vos, "These religious and moral monstrosities are characteristic of the end, as may be seen from the Pastorals."<sup>2</sup> As the righteous have life, including the present and the future, so the wrath includes the present providential punishments of God as first installments of the wrath in the day of wrath. In this respect Paul is in the company of Jesus Christ. In the Divine mind there is a relation between the scattered earthquakes, the wars, and the pestilences, and the end. This is not a haphazard hit and miss affair. They are all related to the end somehow.<sup>3</sup> Hence the great contrast is life and death, righteousness and disobedience, gospel or wrath.

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1. G. Vos, Pauline Eschatology, pp. 262f.
2. Ibidem, footnote p. 262.
3. cf. Matthew 24.

Upon whom is this righteousness revealed? The usual answer is the pagan world.<sup>1</sup> If such be the case, the second chapter refers to the Jews. In chapter three both Jew and Gentile are combined as sharing the common need of righteousness. We do not care to press this point as we are not primarily engaged in exegesis. However, it is a revelation which is revealed upon all irreverence and hostile attitude toward God and all unrighteousness of whatever nature it may be. The apostle is interested in showing that this revelation is revealed upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. He is interested in any man, Jew or Gentile, who shows this ungodliness. "Der Abschnitt 1, 18-32 redet nicht von der Sünde der ἑθνη, sondern von der ἁνθρωπότης, und 2, 1, richtet sich nicht an den Ἰουδαῖος die Anrede lautet vielmehr ganz allgemein: ὅ ἄνθρωπτε τὰς ὁ κρινω".<sup>2</sup> That this applies to Jew as well as to Gentile follows from three considerations. The Jew is as human as the Gentile. Nothing human is foreign to a Jew. Secondly, Paul quotes the Old Testament to substantiate his position. That is, Paul finds in the Old Testament these sins revealed.<sup>3</sup> The apostasies of

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1. Cf. The caption above chapter in Revised Version "The Gentiles' need of Righteousness, also of Calvin, Godet, Greijdanus, Hodge, Meyer and Vos. This shows the influence of the Reformation.

2. Spitta, op. cit., p. 124.

3. Cf. Romans 1:23 with Psalm 106: 20, Dt. 4:15-19; Romans 1:27 with Leviticus 18:22; 20:13.

the Old Testament ought to convince anyone that the Jew is no better than the Gentile. Finally, (and this must be taken for what it is worth), Spitta quotes many Jewish writers who give us a clear picture of the same moral filth among their own. In citing Delitzsch he says: "'In Sifra zu Lev. 18,3 heisst es in ziemlich nahem Zusammenklang mit unsrer Stella: 'Der Mann heiratet den Mann und das Weib das Weib, der Mann heiratet Mutter und Tochter zusammen und Ein Weib wird geheiratet von zweien- dies die Satzungen von denen gesagt wird: ihr sollt nicht darin wandeln'".<sup>1</sup>

The reason why this came upon all men is clearly indicated in the activity of the godless. They hindered the truth in unrighteousness, knowing God, glorified Him not nor gave Him thanks, but they, to the contrary, became vain in their reasonings. They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of man and beast. They refused to hold God in knowledge. These deeds are put in the balance and the only verdict is wrath.

Verse twenty does not militate against this position. It is a thought expressed in Psalm 19:1 and Job 12: 7-9. Earth and heaven bears the imprint of God. What could be more appropriate for Paul to use? Both Jew and Greek would concur. The Jew knew this was the Father's world, and the Stoic and Platonic philosopher

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1. Spitta, op. cit., p. 127.

knew that God could not live in temples made with human hands. This is the common denominator between Athens and Jerusalem. No man, Greek, Barbarian, or Jew had any reason for making idols. Again, the Jew was not immune to this religious corruption for this could fitly describe the results of the Golden Calf and Baal worship. There is no reason, in short, for any man who believes in God to resort to gross idolatry.

This wrath manifests itself in the evil results of sin. We find a repetition of the same withdrawal in the phrase- "God gave them up".<sup>1</sup> Says Robertson: "The words sound to us like clods on a coffin as God leaves men to work their own wicked will".<sup>2</sup> By exchanging God for the wicked reasonings of idolatry God gave them up to sin. He surrendered them to their own hardened, reprobate mind. God punishes them by leaving them alone.

Romans 1: 18-32 puts us face to face with the problem of evil. This is the greatest problem of humanity and the most difficult for Christianity to solve satisfactorily. There is no such thing as an answer to the question of evil that will satisfy a logician. Sin is anti-rational as far as man is concerned. Sin is foolishness, is empty. If sin were rational, then for man it would have to conform to the laws of reason. The creator of the laws of reason is God. Then God would be

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1. Romans 1: 24,26,28.  
2. Op. cit., p. 330.

the author of sin. But sin is pictured as anti-reason. It is the foolishness of the prodigal son who for no rational reasons left the Father's home. The greatness of the Merciful Father is clearly seen in receiving back the boy who did something foolish, anti-rational. Besides, sin is a relation between person and person, hence sin cannot be fitted into any rational form. Christianity must face the great difficulty of not being able to solve this problem as an idealistic philosopher. To solve it rationally would be to kill Christianity. William James rightfully criticises idealistic philosophers for the feeble grasp on reality. He takes issue especially with Leibnitz' Theodicy. For James it is too far removed from reality.<sup>1</sup> Again, he quotes Bradley, 'The Absolute is the richer for every discord and for all diversity which it embraces'.<sup>2</sup> That this is not exactly Christian is clear from the Apostle's own words: "but if the truth of God through my lie abounded unto his glory, why am I also judged as a sinner?"<sup>3</sup> Although all things will ultimately untangle themselves in such a way that God is glorified it does not follow that the discords are necessary metaphysically speaking. Why not emphasize the discords then? This is true of Stoicism but not of Christianity. We feel much for the quotation of James

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1. William James, Pragmatism, p. 27.
2. Appearance and Reality, p. 204, cf. p. 29.
3. Romans 3:7 cf. also Eduard Geismar, Søren Kierkegaard, p. 8.



from "Human Submission by Morrison I. Swift. This newspaper reporter sees too many starvations, too many suicides and deaths to have the unshaken confidence that all is well with the universe. What good is the starvation for those facing death? It can have no educational value for them because death is the great dividing line. Idealistic philosophy, on the whole, is the best philosophy for prosperity and wealth. It fails in the trenches, in the workshop, in the hospital to grip man. Besides, the great danger exists that suffering becomes necessary for the universe. Evil is but an essential discord that brings about the harmony. Why then am I judged a sinner? God is responsible.<sup>1</sup>

There are, therefore, two possibilities: (1) If sin is taken seriously, we cannot reduce reality to a rational system. We must either belittle sin or give up a system. (2) Considering that God is the Ultimate Reality, there is a system which pretends to be a higher synthesis. This system is possible because sin is not a metaphysical necessity. Christianity offers the world a system including evil. The higher synthesis is: the cross, the resurrection, and faith in Christ.

Another voice heard from the realm of suffering is the pitiful cry from Russia. Subjected to untold anguish one of the greatest novelists who has influenced

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1. Emil Brunner, Der Mittler, pp. 99f.

Karl Barth, Dostoyevski,<sup>1</sup> in the section "Pro and Contra" in The Brothers Karamazov,<sup>2</sup> enumerates all the untold suffering imaginable. The question arises, what benefit is suffering? Adults may eat the apple of their own sins, but how about children? What value is suffering for the child? What value is suffering for the child upon whom the bloodhounds of the lord feasted for having wounded a valuable dog of the owner? There can be no educational value for the child as such. Men, moreover, soon become discouraged in suffering vicariously for generations still unborn. That a child's death may stir the hearts of others no one doubts, but its heart will remain cold as the very death enthralling it. Suffering has not necessarily an educational value for its victim.

Neither can Pragmatism help us out of this dilemma. Pragmatism usually results in the denial of God from age to age the same.<sup>3</sup> In fact, in its surrender of eternal truth it must take the alternative position, "chance". What guarantee have we that by chance evil will be removed. There is no one, there is no surety that there will be an outcome of all this suffering. Pragmatism must lead us into pessimism. All that Pragmatism can say

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1. Spelled Dostoyevski, Dostoievski and Dostojeffski.
2. Cf. chapters 3 and 4, pp. 281ff. Also his novel Crime and Punishment pp. 461, 467. On pp. 519ff. his discussion on suffering over against the various theories advanced. Although a novelist, Dostojevski is one of the best writers on the subject of suffering. Cf. also Geismar, op. cit., p. 10.
3. William James, op. cit., pp. 127-160.

is: "maybe" or "maybe not".

Nor can, what Dr. Heim calls "the Romantic God of love" help us out of the difficulty. Romanticism has divorced love from righteousness. This Being who embodies the one at the expense of the other is fictitious. If this divorce is a fact then God does not exist. We agree with those who enumerate examples of war, pestilence, workshop, homelife, suicides that the God of love cannot be responsible for all these. But they exist, so we must conclude, the God of love does not. The fault lies in the divorce of righteousness and love. The modern refusal to proclaim this message (the union of love and righteousness) is the deathblow to Christianity.

Romans 1:18-32 teaches us unambiguously that the sorrows of life, the miseries are punishments. That does not exclude the possibility that they may become educational and character formative powers. Later on we shall see that in Christianity this may take place. To approach this gruesome problem of suffering, therefore, we must posit certain truths: (1) God is righteous; (2) Humanity is responsible. They can accept His righteousness or the righteousness of their deeds. The former they have refused to do. Could their righteousness bring deliverance? It brought death and destruction. It brought suffering. It brought the revelation of wrath. The deeds of men in the crucible of God show that man was weighed and found wanting. Man without justification

is potentially dead.<sup>1</sup>

It is instructive to compare this chapter with Romans 8: 28, "For we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose". This first chapter refers to those whom Paul later on shall style "in Adam". To those evil may make one more courageous, may help one to form character, but it cannot work for ultimate good. It works for death. This presupposes the Fall of Man. Although the modern man may consider this foolish, this still remains the most satisfactory way of accounting for evil. In the Fall Adam was responsible. Personality had that quality to say "yes" or to say "no" to God. In order that this quality of personality be not a farce, man must bear the responsibility of his deeds. Because of personality, sin could be introduced into the world. If such is the case, then man is responsible. We can then account for the introduction of sin, and for the righteousness of God. The question, therefore, resolves itself into the dignity and responsibility of personality. Was Paul correct when he said we are "in Adam", in the responsible representative of the human race? God Himself recognizes the beauty of the personality He created.

b. Chapter Two - The Test of Teachers.

This chapter may be divided into two sections:

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1. Romans 8:6.

First, verses 1 to 16; secondly, verses 17 to 29. In verse one the one addressed is "O man!". Hence there is no transition, as far as readers are concerned, between the first and second chapters. There is an explicit reference to the Jews in the seventeenth verse. We may infer, therefore, that this section has reference to those of the first chapter: Gentiles and Jews. Again the emphasis is "upon practising the same things".<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly, in this class of Gentiles and Jews, Paul refers to teachers whether Stoics who walk from place to place, or Jews who were trained in the law. The test is: deeds. Can their deeds as teachers and moralists stand the day of wrath? Then there will be the righteous revelation. Paul negates this possibility. The tribulation resulting from unrighteousness works upon Jew and Gentile. The Jew has the written law, the Gentile the unwritten law. Both have something. This section includes both Jew and Gentile therefore. This the interjection "O man!" would seem to substantiate. The natural meaning seems to be, any man who wishes to set forth principles of conduct, will your principles and your conduct satisfy the high demands of the God who will be revealed in the day of wrath? A critical attitude is no guarantee of a life sanctioned by God. Critics, moralists can despise the goodness and the longsuffering of God as well as those wallowing in

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1. Romans 2: 1,2,3.

the overt acts of sin described in the previous chapter. Judges will meet The Judge who will employ the standards that shall be fair to all men.

The second section deals only with the Jew. He is singled out of the class of teachers, "But if thou".<sup>1</sup> This singling out of the Jew indicates to what extremes wickedness has crept in. They are well instructed. They know their Old Testament. They are haughtily confident that they are experts in imparting knowledge, but this impartation is simply academic.<sup>2</sup> There is the divorce between teaching and conduct, the inconsistency between a Jew at heart and a Jew in the flesh. If they knew the Old Testament as they boasted, why do they not then take the cream of the cream of the Old Testament. The circumcision of the Spirit is the circumcision that can stand the test of God's wrath. They are men who know the letter of the law. They have, however, not caught the true significance, that the Spirit of God would give them a new heart, and those having a new heart would be the true children of God.<sup>3</sup> That would be serving God according to the spirit and not according to the letter. The test of teaching fails. Setting forth precepts cannot justify one

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1. Romans 2:17.
2. Robertson calls our attention to Acts 19:37 where the town clerk frees Paul and companions of the charge of robbing the temple. To him this is a proof that the charge was sometimes made against the Jews. Op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 339.
3. Jeremiah 31: 31-34.

before the throne of God. A second proof that justification cannot be granted to man apart from Christ, the risen One.

c. Chapter Three - the Test of Nationalism.

If the foregoing is true, a Jew is no better off than a Gentile. The Jew was under the impression that circumcision precluded the possibility of one going to hell. Abraham sits at the gate of hell, and allows no circumcised person to enter.<sup>1</sup> It is the old cry of the Pharisees at the Council of Jerusalem. We need circumcision or we perish. Paul, however, looks upon circumcision as an obsolete rite when unaccompanied by the exercise of love. A pagan will stand in God's favor before a circumcised Jew who is disobedient. If such is the case, what advantage is there in being a Jew? If the heart alone counts, this is true of pagan and Jew alike. The heart is human not national. It is the workshop of man for good or for evil.

The first part, therefore, faces an objection. Paul says, indeed, there is a great advantage in being a Jew. The oracles of God were entrusted unto them. The very circumcision sealed the promise unto them that God would remain true to His promise. God has promised to be their Covenant Head. This, to be effective, must be a matter of faith. If the faith is absent shall that force

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1. Hodge, op. cit., on Romans 2:25.

God to annul His promises? If it does, then one can come to the conclusion that man can thwart the work of God. Unbelief would curtail the Almighty Jehovah in the execution of the covenant promises in relation to the individual as well as the nation. As a matter of fact the opposite takes place. The promises still remain valid. Israel may despise by their deeds the entrusted oracles, still the Christ has come. The very disobedience of Israel and the unshakable covenant in spite of the disobedience shows that Israel was also raised up to teach the world that the covenant is not of man but of God. Does the covenant depend upon man or upon God? A modern analogy may be found in the strong emphasis in Reformed Theology on the covenant. The whole system of infant baptism rests upon the promises of God, and the biblical teaching that the New Testament is the Old Testament in bloom. But every child receiving the baptism does not turn out to be the child of the parents' expectation. He breaks the covenant through disobedience. Did God? By breaking the covenant does he invalidate the promises of God?

God forbid. Let it not be so. No fair inference! Paul does not argue the case. He merely asserts the fact, and shows that the opposite leads to an absurdity.<sup>1</sup> Whatever the cost, truth in God must be maintained. One may say logic demands it, religion would

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1. Hodge, op. cit., in loco.



wither away without it, and all that is sacred and noble in life would evaporate if we believe that man can annul the promises of God. But the responsibility rests upon man. Man is the liar. Man breaks the promises. He is the covenant breaker. This passage is in a sense, another application of the personal relation between God and the sinner. God is sovereign, holy, and just, else the very universe would collapse. Man is a responsible agent, and the fault does not lie with God but with man. This is true also in the case of David, a man after God's own heart. He too had to testify that God would be acquitted in judgment. Man could never find fault with God. A sinner would never find any cause for suspecting God.<sup>1</sup>

But Paul pushes the objection farther. If the foregoing is true,<sup>2</sup> that in spite of our unrighteousness God remains righteous, and that our very unrighteousness then brings home, exemplifies God's righteousness, is it necessary for the Almighty to use sin in order to reveal this righteousness? Paul then replies, if God is in need of my unrighteousness to exemplify His righteousness, the unrighteousness becomes a necessity. And a necessity places the responsibility upon the one for whom it is

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1. If we accept  $\kappa\alpha\theta\omega\varsigma$  in 3:4, Ps. 51:4 becomes normative, if  $\kappa\alpha\theta\alpha\upsilon\tau\epsilon\rho$  then a similarity, according to Greijdanus. If the former than Ps. 51 is the interpreter of this passage. David knows that his very sin brings out the righteousness of God as sin always does. Then 3:5 becomes a real question.

2.  $\epsilon\iota\ \delta\epsilon$  shows continuation.

necessary. Then if this is necessary for God, then God cannot punish. There are two ways of looking at this. We can take the world in verse six as the Gentile world. If so, we can interpret this passage to mean that if the sin of the Jews brings praise to God, so will the sin of the Gentiles. In this respect there can be no difference between Jew and Gentile. But the Jew nurtured in the Old Testament loved to daydream on the punishment to be administered to the Gentiles. But if the sin of Jew and Gentile are alike in showing forth the righteousness of God, and if that constitutes the very condition of denying the possibility of punishment, then God cannot judge the world anymore than He can the Jew. The second possible meaning would follow naturally from making unrighteousness a necessity. If unrighteousness is necessary, God made the unrighteousness. He had to use it. Then where would judgment come in? Or in terms of Idealistic and Stoic philosophy, if the disharmony is necessary for the harmony of the Absolute, no judgment is possible. God would then be unrighteous. God would be as unrighteous as a judge who employs a racketeer to murder for wealth and then executes the culprit. Such a world order is unthinkable. Logically, Paul does not make but evades the reply. To Paul the position is too ridiculous. Anyone trusting such a philosophy knows his house is built upon the foundation of absurd subterfuges.<sup>1</sup> This type of

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1. Greijdanus, S., op. cit., p. 169. "Argumenten brengt de apostel nu niet bij. De verkeerdheid is te duidelijk en te gruwelijk.

rejoinder is not built upon ignorance but upon wickedness.

Verse nine opens a somewhat new approach, although the same question must be kept in mind: "Are we any better than they?". The answer is: "no!" The Old Testament charges the Jew as well as the Greek with all possible cruelties. In short, Paul teaches the Old Testament has a universal conception of sin. If the Old Testament teaches that, it follows that every mouth must be stopped. The law, or the Old Testament indicts the Jew as well as the Gentile. If such is the charge, no one will be justified in God's sight. The universality of sin shows that the Jew is in need of justification as well as the Greek.

The final section of this chapter begins with "now". The question is: Is this "now" logical, temporal, or both? If we consider Romans 1:18, 3:20 merely the darkness of night, then 3:21 is logical. Paul would then say, I have shown how the unregenerated man had to, sooner or later, become a reprobate mind. Then I demonstrated from experience and sacred Writ that the Jews were under condemnation and that the law brought only the knowledge of sin. "Now", therefore, without the endeavors of the law, God must bring the ransom. We have fallen short, (3:24) but we were justified,<sup>1</sup> by that ransom. Then being justified plays a very prominent role. We are

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1. Robertson, 'now' emphatic logical transition, in loco.

justified by His grace. The difficulty then is twofold. First of all Paul speaks in verse twenty-six of the season that is now, or the present season. This would make the "now" in 3:21 and 3:26 both temporal, at least, it would seem more natural to do so. Instead then of an inference, a new dispensation would be indicated. We are in the age of fulfilment. We are in the dispensation of the death and resurrection of Christ.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, if the old division is correct, then Paul is logically referring in 3:24 to the long line of reasoning from 1:17. But we would not expect such a burden placed on a participle whose grammatical construction is intractable.<sup>2</sup> The emphasis seems to be on this age- that Christ has come. He is God's ransom. And this ransom comes to all both Jew and Greek. Thirdly, the question is still the relation of the Jew to the Gentile. Both are in need of God's sacrifice to man. If such is the case that national prerogatives are meaningless, where then is boasting? The Jew needs faith as well as the Gentile. The Jew needs Christ as well as the Greek. If such is the case, then at the conclusion, (verse 28), we make our inference: Faith in the ransom. Paul says this leveling of the Jew and Gentile proceeds from another basis. The very monism of the Jews would infer that God is God of all men.

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1. Denny, op. cit., in loco. In Paul all time is divided between now and then. The reception of the Gospel means the coming of a new world.
2. Denny, op. cit., in loco.

This chapter therefore answers the question: What advantage has a Jew? First, in verse two; secondly, in verse nine; thirdly, in verse twenty-three; and fourthly, in verse twenty-seven. Verse thirty-one is the final conclusion. In the New Testament the Jew is no better off than anyone else. Oracles, nationalism, promises cannot be put in the scale of God's righteousness.

We are particularly interested in this section in the thought that God supplies the offering, that is, God is sovereign in His grace. Boasting is obnoxious to Paul and prevents one from enjoying the eternal life. This boasting is without foundation since God gave the offering. What follows? Who has been wronged, man or God? Paul would reply "God!" Then God must give the terms of reconciliation. God is the offended party. What He decrees must be accepted or rejected. But all the work in the world, all the sufferings of mankind cannot remove the offence. His way must be known and followed. Says Karl Heim, "Die Schuld hat vielmehr mein Verhältnis zum ewigen Du verändert. Das ist aber eine Beziehung, auf die ich keinen Einfluss ausüben kann und die ich nicht in meiner Gewalt habe. Ich stehe darum meiner Schuld völlig machtlos gegenüber".<sup>1</sup> Our modern quest must be threefold, therefore. (1) To determine whether guilt

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1. Glaube und Denken, p. 348.

resulting from transgression and law is a fundamental category of all human experience, especially in the relation of man to God. (2) If God cannot wrong us, but we God, then our task is to know His way of salvation. As the wronged party, He must determine the terms of reconciliation. All man-made methods are religious dead weights hanging around the shoulders to our destruction. This is an indictment against discovering God in the human soul, in self-proposed enterprises, and especially in the propagation of a vague universal science as proclaimed by Rethinking Missions.<sup>1</sup> Finally, we discover also the ratio of the concept revelation. How can I know that the salvation and the method thereof is God's way? Man's way cannot lead to God, so God's way graciously leads to man. The one sacrifice, His Revelation, is God's way which we accept by faith. This was obnoxious to the Stoic in Paul's day, and always has been in subsequent history.

d. Chapter Four - The Test of History.

This chapter presents a difficulty in relating it to the previous chapter. The question is: Does 3:31 belong to four, or does it conclude the third chapter? Chapter 3:31 is a heavy sentence weighted down with a big

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1. pp. 21, 23, Especially p. 25. "We must maintain the point of view of world-culture, and the common need of mankind." p. 31, pp. 58f. 73, 75.

subject. In a sense we could follow Greijdanus who considers 3:31 as a caption of what follows, not only of chapter four. At the same time we must recognize with him that this verse is a fit close to the preceding.<sup>1</sup> One thing, in passing, is very significant. Paul would never admit for a moment that the law has been annulled. The law is eternal. The law is established but not abrogated. This is very significant in chapters six to eight.

Most likely this chapter is more than an example. The usual introduction presupposes objections raised. Paul does not take Abraham in passing, but relevantly selects the hero of the Jewish race.<sup>2</sup> Both Abraham and David are selected because of the peculiar relationships to Israel. Abraham is the hero of faith, David is the man after God's heart to whom the promise was given that the Messiah should sit upon his throne. There are two points of interest in this chapter. First, the blessing of righteousness preceded the sacrament of circumcision. If circumcision were essential this rite would have to precede the very first act of faith. In fine, circumcision originated as a seal upon faith, not as a source of it. This pre-circumcision faith proves to Paul that

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1. Op. cit., in loco.

2. Karl Barth, paraphrases Paul "Wir wählen als Paradigma für den Satz (3:31) das der Glaube der Sinn des Gesetzes ist, eine möglichst entlehnte und möglichst klassische Gestalt aus dem Gebiet des Gesetzes". Der Römerbrief, p. 92.

circumcision is not essential. If not circumcision, but faith, Abraham appears as a universal figure. If it depended upon circumcision, Abraham's religion would be Jewish. Faith applies to all men. This is urgent in order that Abraham's seed may include Gentiles who believe. The hero of faith of the Old Testament is a father of all believers. The Old Testament is universal.<sup>1</sup>

Not only is the universal aspect emphasized. There is a close relation between Abraham expecting against hope the son of promise from the womb which was comparable to a grave, and our faith in the resurrection of Christ. Both were in the sphere of grace and promise. As his belief in the Old Testament resurrection was counted to him for righteousness, so shall our belief in the New Testament resurrection be counted for our justification. Essentially the faith is the same. Hence Abraham in no way differs from us. We all must believe in the resurrection.

Christ was raised for our "justification". Justification in Protestant theology has been considered usually as a legal term. This word has many Old Testament antecedents to substantiate this.<sup>2</sup> This thought is consonant with Romans 8: 31-39. God justifies, who condemns? There the contrast is between justification and condemnation. Besides, Paul's emphasis upon the law

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1. Romans 4: 16f.

2. Hermann Bavinck, Gereformeerde Dogmatiek, IV, pp.190ff.



presupposes the legal character of sin. If the legal character of sin is a fact, then justification must be primarily legal.

Catholic theology blends justification and sanctification.<sup>1</sup> It includes regeneration as well as a legal pronouncement of acquittal. It is "infused" grace. The catholic scholar, Karl Adams, gives four characteristics: (1) The acquittal involved in the new life.<sup>2</sup> (2) Mediated through the sacraments of the church.<sup>3</sup> (3) Subject to growth. He who is righteous let him be righteous still. Hence through the breath of Christ's love that vibrates in it justification is meritorious.<sup>4</sup> (4) This new love can be lost.<sup>5</sup> How this can fit into the Pauline scheme is difficult to see. It was reckoned to Abraham not infused. Infusion and reckoning are concepts epitomizing different conceptions of life. Reckoning presupposes the emphasis upon the legal and infusion upon the sacramental. Reckoning presupposes the possibility of the subject to be far from the goal of perfection which is still reckoned unto him, infusion that man is as just as the measure of grace granted to him in the sacraments and other avenues of mediation. Reckoning keeps relation between God and man personal, infusion

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1. Ibidem, quotes Thomas Aquinas and the Council of Trent, pp. 194f.
2. Das Wezen des Katholizismus, p. 223.
3. Ibidem, pp. 216, 224.
4. Ibidem, p. 221.
5. Ibidem, pp. 221f.

pharmaceutical. With all due respect for the pretentious system of thought that held the mediaeval mind in captivity, we fail to see in infusion, the Church's doctrine of justification and sanctification, anything but the recrudescence of the Christian pharisaism of the Council of Jerusalem. Both "thing-ized" grace. This conception of infusion bears the earmarks of the mystery religions. Only through sacraments could the life of the gods be imparted. This is not denied by Catholic divines. In fact, this inclusiveness fits in beautifully with the Roman Church's conception of "Catholic". To become catholic, however, demands compromise. In compromise one may lose what is distinctive. The Catholics pride themselves on this type of universality. Dr. Heim borrows a quotation from Heiler who quotes a great Catholic modernist, George Tyrrell. "'Es scheint uns das, was das, was der katholischen Kirche so oft zum Vorwurf gemacht wird, ihre mannigfache Berührung mit nichtchristlichen Religionen, mit dem Judentum, dem griechisch-römischen und ägyptischen Heidentum und allen von ihnen abhängigen Bildungen - gerade einer ihrer grössten Ruhmestitel und Vorzüge zu sein.'"<sup>1</sup> This may, however, disqualify the Catholic Church from understanding justification. This texture is so interwoven with mystery religions that one must exercise the greatest skill in distinguishing between Christianity

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1. Karl Heim, Das Wesen des Evangelischen Christentums, p. 15.

and the mysteries.<sup>1</sup> Infusion and its consequences seem to be a mixture of humanism and revelation, which fits in the semi-Pelagian system of free-grace of God and meritorious works. Reckoning is anti-humanism. God does the reckoning.

There is one element, however, that contemporary theology can emphasize. To the legal character must be added the eschatological. Christ arose for our justification. That is a new sphere of existence, the eschatological existence.<sup>2</sup> That implies, that justification is related to the new world, the new life. It is the legal right to consider one's self a citizen of the new kingdom and new world. Besides, justification means acquittal. What shall take place on the Judgment Day has already taken place in the moment of justification. Both are acquittals, one is the acquittal of the sinner privately the other publicly.<sup>3</sup> Who can expect to hear a stronger acquittal on a Pauline basis than Romans 8: 33,34? Is there anything different a Christian expects to hear? Justification presupposes an acquittal, whether now by faith, or in the Judgment Day publicly by Christ Himself. The acquittal is essentially the same. Hence in Christ's resurrection we notice that all legal impediments are taken away for this acquittal. Through the resurrection we become heirs

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1. Franz Cumont, Les Religions Orientales dans le Paganisme Romain, pp. 61f. For a nature-panteism, cf. p. 73.
2. Romans 1: 4.
3. Vos, Pauline Eschatology, pp. 55ff; p. 153.

to sonship.<sup>1</sup> When Christ arose we who are in Christ are legally transferred to this new resurrection sphere of existence.

e. Chapter Five - The True Test.

We shall not discuss 5: 1-11 at length. In passing we may say that in harmony with the best MSS. we believe this is a message of encouragement and consolation.<sup>2</sup> Barth, Calvin, Godet, Hodge, Vos, and Greijdanus based their arguments on internal evidence. This section, we take it, refers to consolation. Paul does insert consolations in the midst of his doctrine.<sup>3</sup> In this section Paul is not interested in certainty of faith and justification. He will reserve that for chapter eight. That we are justified with God does not mean that we are conscious of the peace of justification. Paul is discussing that objective peace flowing from justification. He desires to make it a subjective, conscious possession. If we are conscious of that peace, that we belong to Christ and His resurrection life, we have the greatest foundation for hope in all suffering. Again, we should bear in mind

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1. Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day XXIII.
2. Robertson, "It is curious how perverse many real scholars have been on this word and phrase here", op.cit. IV, p. 355. Also Sanday-Headlam, p. 118f. Greijdanus says, "Ook de moeilijkheid pleit voor  $\epsilon\chi\omega\mu\epsilon\upsilon$  also oorspronkelijk", but believes the intention of the writer is contrary to the thought that we could disturb the peace of God through Christ Jesus. p. 255.
3. Cf. Sanday-Headlam, in op.cit., p. 118f. refers us to Romans 6: 1,12,15; 8:12.

that Paul knew from Aquila and Priscilla the sufferings in Rome. As Christianity was waxing bolder, it had to face more temptations. We have hope, and the hope is on a firm basis- the death of Christ for us while we were yet sinners. So now being justified we rejoice in Christ. For the darkest hour, true justification gives us the greatest consolation.

Verse twelve is a continuation of verse eleven as well as 4:25. The interesting part is, however, the contrast "in Adam" and "in Christ". "In Christ" means to be in the resurrected life. Christ is the free gift that came for many trespasses unto justification.<sup>1</sup> In Christ we have eternal life.<sup>2</sup> "In Christ" as such we find no more mysticism than in the expression "in Adam". This "in Christ" is best understood eschatologically. As those who are in Adam are under a peculiar relationship and responsibility so are they for whom Christ arose unto justification. That this does not imply any physical identification is clear from the fact that Paul expects to meet a person.<sup>3</sup> The law magnified the sin, but grace did abound. Through fulfilling the law, satisfying its

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1. Romans 5:16.
2. Romans 5:21.
3. Robert Winkler, "Eschatologie und Mystik", in Z.Th.u.K. Heft 2, 1931, pp. 147-163. Those who wish to make Paul a founder of a Christian mystery find in these words a proof for their contention. The contrast between "in Christ" and "in Adam" ought to preclude this. cf. The beginning of this thesis, pp. 16ff; 61f; 69ff.

claims, Christ is the gift of God graciously given unto us for eternal life. Hence, "in Adam" is death through sin; "in Christ" is eternal life by grace through righteousness.

This is a stupendous contrast. Here the natural and the eschatological is contrasted. Paul is a universalist of the clearest hue. Why could he classify all the Jews and Gentiles together as sinners? Why could he say only the pure heart constitutes the Jew? Why could he say that both Jew and Gentile were in need of the same redemption? The two great issues are "in Adam" or "in Christ".

We have said much about Paul the eschatologist. This does not imply that Paul would have recognized the various dispensations of the premillennarians. A dogmatic statement that Paul could not would be questionable. But, if he did, all dispensations must be secondary. When Paul thought of being "in Christ", it was the mystical union of fellowship in death and resurrection. Not mundane thrones or crowded streets of Jerusalem satisfied the ardent Apostle, nor did a Jewish epoch mean very much, for Paul the universalist could see only one glory. All are either in Christ, or in Adam. That is the supreme test. Premillennarians may teach that Christ began new dispensations<sup>1</sup> and as such may constitute the unity

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1. W. H. Rutgers, Premillennialism in America, pp.174ff.

underlying all dispensations, but their interest is usually in showing radical differences. There lies the danger. The same salvation comes in every age. These dispensations, if they exist, must be fundamentally the same. If not this is our dilemma: either they are fundamentally the same and then we cannot speak of rounded out aions, or they are different, then we break the great contrast of "in Adam" or "in Christ". Besides, what shall we then do with the cross of Calvary? If the cross unites all the saints of all the ages there is a unity, a oneness that completely breaks down dispensational barriers. If the cross is only for the Church, and came for this dispensation, then the death of Christ was not necessary. If in other dispensations people could be saved by conscience, human government, promise, and law, then the death of Christ is superfluous.<sup>1</sup> This is especially true in their doctrine of the relation of Christ to the Church and Christ to Israel. In commenting on the position of the Premillennarians, Rutgers says, "Again it is asserted that whereas Christ and the church are organically one, this is not true of Christ and Israel, since such organic relation does not exist between a king and his subjects".<sup>2</sup> If such twofold relationship exists, the contrast of Paul falls flat. There should then be three contrasts. But Paul has only two, "in Adam" and "in Christ". Paul did

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1. Ibidem, p. 175.  
2. Ibidem, p. 281.

not add "in Abraham" nor "in David", for especially the former was saved before circumcision through a faith tantamount to a belief in the resurrection of the dead.

Neither can one plead that Romans applies only to the dispensation of grace, or the church. If such could be the case the contrast would remain unintelligible. "In Adam" includes all men, also the Jews apart from faith in Christ. It includes all of the so-called dispensations. Paul is interested in showing that the Saviour was found in the Old Testament, that the Jews as well as the Greeks were found to be sinners in the book of law. Paul relentlessly eradicates any semblance of good in a Jew which would make it possible for him to be saved by a legal relation of a servant to a king. Paul's eschatology is so thoroughly anti-humanistic that to understand it we must live in the resurrection sphere of the Christ.

## 2. Relation of the Eternal Life to Law.

Paul in the previous chapter made a bold, dangerous, but true and consoling statement. In this respect Paul was no bolder than our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul asserts unequivocally, "and the law came in besides, that the trespass might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly: that as sin reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord".<sup>1</sup>

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1. Romans 5:20,21. Cf. also Luke 7: 40ff.



This sounds very paradoxical: when one sins grace abounds. This paradox disappears, however, the moment one realizes that sin abounds unto grace when sin is put to nought. Only when we die unto sin, can grace abound. Every paradox must have two universes of discourse compressed into one sentence. But in this case the one universe of discourse is destroyed- sin. Grace is sufficient to destroy that universe.

This is true in everyday life. A convert from heathendom or vice seems more grateful than a Christian from babyhood. But it does not follow that to enjoy grace we must become drunkards, for instead of destroying the universe of discourse, sin, we are capitalizing it. We are destroying the universe of grace.

Chapter three has indicated that law is not annulled but established. Even in the Christian system the question must arise: What is the relation of law to grace? A universe without law, even a moral universe, is a fiction. At the same time we have received grace, a grace that comes to us apart from the law. What then is the relation? In chapters six to eight we must deal with this problem. Shall we transgress the law, shall we sin against God in order that grace may abound?

That this cannot be done is clear from the sacrament of baptism. Baptism means bidding the world of transgression adieu. It means "Amen" on the part of the one baptized that Christ died for his sins. Baptism

is a recognition on the part of the one baptized that his personal sins nailed Jesus to the cross. We have, so to speak, destroyed the one universe in the paradox—let us sin! Grace came to destroy it. If such is the case, it follows that if sin nailed Christ to the cross we cannot keep on sinning. Such a contradiction is too absurd for Paul. But it means more than that. Baptism means that as Christ was raised from the dead we are raised to newness of life.<sup>1</sup>

Paul's argument seemed more cogent for his contemporaries than for us today. The same situation would hold true on the mission field. The convert would understand the radical change that has taken place, creating an unbridgeable gulf between the present and the past. To the early church it meant a transition from sin unto life.<sup>2</sup>

If we bear in mind these two qualities, a moral and an eschatological, we shall not fall into the error of Rietzenstein who evaporates the beauty of this chapter by attributing to it all the occult ceremonies of the mystery religions. According to this writer baptism entered Palestine through the Persians who settled in the Jordan Valley. This settlement must have influenced John the Baptist. Not only Jews, but also soldiers, publicans came to John to be baptized. This would not be expected

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1. Charles Hodge, Systematic Theology, Vol. III, pp. 526-542.  
2. Hermann Bavinck, op. cit., IV, p. 28.

if this were only a proselyte baptism.<sup>1</sup> Direct proof is wanting, however. This is based upon inference which we believe is far-fetched. In this Persian religion we read much about the "one sent", says Reitzenstein. But Malachi 3:1 would be the true place to find the origin of this concept. If it is argued that this concept "The Sent One" dates from 500 B.C. we may make the reply that the Messenger of the Covenant dates to the very days of Abraham in the theophanies. The Christ, or the Sent One, the "Malachi" is the personal appearance of the covenant angel of the Old Testament.<sup>2</sup> There seems to be no reason at all for assuming that John the Baptist owes his theology and rites to the Persians. Undoubtedly there was a good deal of "washings" going on. Lustrations were common among the Egyptians and Persians.<sup>3</sup> But why could John the Baptist not take a form and connote thereby something original? Non-christian systems have no monopoly on originality.

To continue with Reitzenstein, in Romans six we have a clear case of Christianity being betwixt two influences, the Persian and the Greek. Now Christianity must have been influenced by both for it lay in between. Still we are perplexed.<sup>4</sup> This scholar makes the bold statement that it is possible that Paul as a Jew was

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1. Die Vorgeschichte der Christlichen Taufe, pp. 218ff.
2. Abraham Kuyper, De Engelen Gods, pp. 192-199.
3. Hermann Bavinck, op. cit., IV, p. 544.
4. Reitzenstein, Mysterienreligion, p. 217.

initiated into two or three mystery religions.<sup>1</sup> The only reason for such a statement is the supposition that philological similarities presuppose identical origins. This is begging the question,

We could follow Brandt, Cumont, Kennedy, Machen, and Schweitzer<sup>2</sup> in showing that we know less of the mysteries than we do of Christianity. Also, Christianity antedates the reliable sources we have of the mysteries that became world-wide. We could also show that many similarities are far-fetched, as, for example, the likeness between the Taurobolium and baptism. Our great interest is, however, that philosophically and theologically Paul was inherently immune to any such influence. A philological loan does not make a man a pagan. The question is, what did Paul put into it? The strangest thing of all is that Reitzenstein notices this. He notices three great differences: In the Persian, oriental mysteries (1) the Anthropos did not die. For Paul Christ was the center. (2) The Anthropos bore no relation to our death. For Paul sin makes His death necessary. (3) The Anthropos worked on the earth and returned, but Christ arose from the dead. That was the content of Paul's message.<sup>3</sup>

This is strange indeed. For before Paul's con-

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1. Ibidem, p. 417.
2. Cf. above, pp. 61ff.
3. Ibidem, p. 423.

version he was recognized a strict Jew. The supposition must be then, that the Jews were bitten beyond recognition by the mystery religions. If not, they would have recognized it. Possibly Paul received it from the Christians at Damascus. That would imply within a few years after the resurrection of Christ the Christians of Damascus had adjusted themselves to both Christ and the mysteries. But strangest of all, scholars recognize that mysteries have a natural-religion-sub-soil, a nature pantheism. The gods of the orient suffer and weep. They revive again. They weep for their spouses or a loved one. When a god is revived there is a great celebration.<sup>1</sup> The festivals are held in the spring, after the seige of a long deadly winter. These resemble the death in nature revived again by the coming out of life in spring. There are many forms adapted to various climates, but inherently this is a pantheistic nature worship.<sup>2</sup>

As times rolled on rites were instituted symbolizing the union with the god. Rites were to insure the initiated immortality.<sup>3</sup> Washing had a spiritual disinfection. The water drove the spirits away which caused pollution. The blood of the slain animal was capable of communicating a new existence. Rites were the magical means of renewing the initiated into an immaculate and

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1. Cumont, op. cit., p. 86, p. 50.

2. Cf. Kennedy, op. cit., pp. 90-95. Schweitzer, op. cit., p. 182.

3. Cumont, op. cit., pp. 61f.

incorruptible life.<sup>1</sup> How could Paul find this inane attitude, anti-Christian philosophy suitable for his Christianity? It was pantheistic, pagan, and hopeless. It could not answer the question of sin. Above all it had to be repeated. In Romans 6: 1-11 we find the greatest difference between Paul and the mysteries. Christ died once for all (  $\epsilon \phi \alpha \pi \alpha \xi$  ). Christ's death had a "once-ness" about it. It could not be repeated. This death is unto sin. There is no need of a new sacrifice. It is a resurrection once-for-all. This implies that Christianity has a center. It has a hub. This hub is the cross and the resurrection. All the events of the world are related to this center. No more fear of sin, no fear of death, no fear of mortality- "once-for-all", not to be repeated. In short, Paul has a center which is not repeatable. Mystery religion is a constant renewal by purification, it is a constant appropriation of the god to become deified. As Christianity has a center, life has meaning. It is not a hopeless continuation of sorrow or search for immortality. The center will radiate its influence, power, and grace to the very periphery. It promises a once-ness to all Christians that there will be no repetition of death, no new apostasy in the hereafter. Once-for-all! The same conclusion may be reached in Paul's doctrine of justification and "in Christ". The

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1. Ibidem, p. 62.

legal relationship issues in a new sphere of the resurrection life which knows no summer nor winter. There is the eternal spring. As one cannot be born twice in this world, so we in Christ share this once-ness.

We made a digression in this section for two reasons: To show that Paul may have used words which later on we know were employed by the mysteries. But similarity of words does not imply dependence. Paul was in need of revelation to show him the risen Christ on the way to Damascus who as the center of the universe was directing the world to a final goal, the eternal life of holiness, love and righteousness. (2) If Christianity is nothing more than a revised mystery, it is humanism pure and simple with baffling terminology to beguile the unlearned. But according to Paul, it is not a rite, but a Person at the center of the universe who has revealed Himself and will finish the task He has begun. Baptism is the recognition that such a task is the final one, and such a life is inconsonant with sin.

The second objection Paul faces is, shall we sin because we are under grace and not under law? In speaking of being "under", connotes a servile association. Then under whom are we servants? The very fact that we sin shows we are servants of sin. The very fact that we love the life of Jesus Christ shows that we are under grace. (6: 15-23.) The results will tell the king we worship. One pays wages as in an army- for the wages of

sin is death. The other freely gives the gift of grace-  
for the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ  
our Lord.

The second reply is based on the marriage law  
recognized the world over. Death breaks the claims of  
either party of the covenant to exercise a right over the  
one living. (7: 1-6.) So we also are dead unto the law.  
The law has no claim on us. So being dead to the law of  
the husband we have a perfect right to remarry. In  
accepting Christ, parabolically speaking, this has taken  
place. If so, we serve in newness of spirit, and not in  
oldness of the letter. That is, grace dictates and  
directs our life. We do not follow precept upon precept.  
That is but the oldness of the letter. The Holy Spirit  
is the author of our new life.

Then follows naturally: "Is law sin"? If we  
welcome this death to the law, is the law an evil? (7:7-25.)  
But law cannot teach one sin if it is sin. Black cannot  
demonstrate black to me. Night cannot make clear what  
night is. Day explains the night, white reveals the  
black, holiness teaches what is sinful. If the law  
teaches me sin then itself must be good. So the law is  
good. It adds, in fact, for it teaches the horror of sin.  
The law is spiritual, I am carnal. The law is holy,  
divine, for it is expressive of His eternal will, but I am  
the sinner. Whenever I sin and confess my hatred for  
that sin, my sorrow, I confirm the justice and the beauty



of the law. This is a present struggle in every Christian. Paul can say, therefore, after the inward man, the renewed man, Paul delights in the law. So the law is not abrogated, it is established. Paul has done two things: He has kept the law. Paul could not think of a lawless universe. Paul has kept grace. He could not contaminate grace. In his religious experience, he confirms this position every time he sins. But he does something more. He puts law on the spiritual basis. Because renewed by grace, not meritoriously, his will seeks to agree with God's eternal will. Paul does not love the law to be saved, but because he is saved. His life as a son through love seeks to obey the loving Father.

These two chapters reveal that Paul was not primarily fighting Jews who sought to substitute circumcision for grace. Paul had his antinomian reader in mind. Paul could not be an antinomian for the law of God is too basic in ethics, in sanctification, to be destroyed. It must be filled in regenerative love. Sanctification is the necessary outcome of the new life. This sanctification cannot annul the law, for God is the author of both.

#### b. Chapter Eight - The Chapter of Victory.

This chapter forms a unit. It brings the public justification of the judgment-seat to us now. "Now" there is no condemnation. First, instead of condemnation we walk after the spirit (8: 1-11.) Secondly, instead of condemnation we cry out Abba Father (12-17). We shall be

heirs with Him. Instead of condemnation we in patience hope and wait for the adoption of sonship (18-25). We know the sufferings of life are no longer a condemnation as in Romans 1: 18ff, but know that those who are called are being formed for His glory (26-30). This gives us the greatest courage for God will give us all things. No one can lay any charge against the elect. Christ is for us so the trials of life cannot separate us from His love. No tribulation is too great for God's love to accomplish the plans of salvation. No devil can overwhelm the Almighty making Him powerless to love us, or to exercise that love upon us.

Our interest in this chapter is chiefly the contrast between flesh and spirit. The concept flesh may have several meanings. It may mean: (1) In a physical sense, flesh means meat.<sup>1</sup> (2) In a neutral sense it may connote the natural in contrast with the things spiritual.<sup>2</sup> (3) It may denote human beings, as in the expression "all flesh".<sup>3</sup> It may denote enmity against God.<sup>4</sup> These terms, however, do not lie unrelated in the pages of Sacred Writ. There seems to be an underlying unity. Flesh, man, who is frail<sup>5</sup> capitalizes this frailty and calls it God.

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1. In Genesis 2:23, "Bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh".
2. John 3:6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit".  
Cf. Job 10:4, Matth. 16:17.
3. Isaiah 40: 5,6,; Luke 3:6.
4. Romans 8: 5,6, Hermann Bavinck, Religieuze Psychologie, pp. 127 f.
5. Psalm 103: 14.

Instead of recognizing the frailty man becomes perfectly satisfied. Man lifts himself to the place of God. He is a city enclosed by the walls of self in which center is the temple to the idol- self! Frailty, destruction, weakness, natural life becomes the standard. If such is the case, then natural man's findings as philosophy, culture, good works, charity, and sacrifice are called "flesh". Flesh, although the indictment is very severe, becomes an equivalent to humanism, for the source is man, the method is man, and the goal is man. Man's eschatology is death for the source is the death of man. Man's method is death, for man is "in Adam".

Spirit, to the contrary, has another connotation. It agrees with "flesh" in several ways: (1) It lays hold on the entire personality of man: (2) It has a source, a method and a goal; (3) It has an object of worship. The differences are striking. The whole of personality is devoted to a new task. It breaks through the confines of the natural. It seeks to serve a God not of its own choosing. It has the audacity to call its opposite "enmity against God" and to credit it with death. It has no scruples in designating its eschatology as genuine and eternal. This new existence is a present possession. At the same time the spirit indicates through the Holy Spirit that we have the earnest of a new life.<sup>1</sup> Through the

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1. II Cor. 5: 5.

spirit we know that the Holy Spirit witnesses with us that we are heirs.<sup>1</sup> How can we account for this concept? It must include: (1) the entire personality of man; (2) the present possession of life; (3) the new life in the future; (4) the Holy Spirit; (5) and Christ. The Holy Spirit comes to us through Pentecost. We know that Christ came to us in the Spirit at that time.<sup>2</sup> This, records John, was promised to us. Not only will He be with us, but He will also be in us.<sup>3</sup> That is, Christ has returned to us through the Spirit. To combine all these thoughts, we may describe the spirit of man as follows: The mind of spirit is the heart of man renewed by the Pentecostal Spirit which the resurrected Lord sent upon His Church to protect us in this life against sin and unholiness, as well as to cause us to militate against the works of flesh, and thus to prepare us to enjoy the full eternal bliss when He shall come to judge the living and the dead. Hence the mind of spirit includes (1) the risen Lord; (2) a present task; (3) a glorious future.

This precludes any attempt to fit Paul into Greek philosophy. Paul's spirit is determined by his eschatology. It is the spiritual life of the time when nature shall no more groan transferred into this life and situation.

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1. Romans 8: 16.

2. Acts 2: 33,47.

3. John 14: 16-26; 16: 7,13,14.

This mind of the spirit solves the problem of law. In the flesh, that is without renewal, no man can do good. He still remains in the human circle. The law of love absolutely cannot be lived while the flesh is idolized. This is logically necessary. Flesh is, as we have described above, "from man unto man". The law requires "Thou shalt have no other gods before me". Flesh remains the debtor who helplessly increases his debt. The spirit is different. Grace having put a new urge in the man, causes him to love and to delight in the law. In the eternal life we do not care to have other gods before us. We do not care to take His name in vain. We do not care for, in fact, we abhor that which is unspiritual. Even today, in so far as we are Christians, we abhor adultery, stealing, coveteousness. Our one concern is to fulfil the law of God. Spirit, renewal, upholds the moral universe without making us Pharisees.

A kindred thought is expressed in the idea of sonship. We are adopted, therefore we are heirs. Paul's emphasis upon adoption is unique. Adoption as a common practise due to levirate marriage was very uncommon in Old Testament days. Adoption implies the absolute breaking away from the past parent, and a new and absolute relation of filial obedience to the adoptive parent. We are adopted, at the same time we are joint-heirs with the natural son of God- Christ. If so, we shall be glorified with Him. Hence the indwelling of the Spirit causes us

to be glorified with Christ Jesus. As sons of God the concept requiring an eternity to realize, we shall show the excellences of our Father. We shall be sons of love whose meat is to do the will of the Father.

This, of course, should bring patience. Even in our infirmities the Spirit prays for us. There is no reason at all for doubting God's love for us. All things work for good. This is not reckless optimism, nor simply a mysterious blending of discords in an absolute. This cannot be because all things do not work for good. Only in the eschatological hope will all afflictions throw off their evil masks. Only to those who are called of God will the disharmonies be blended into an eternal harmony. Only those whom He foreknew, (that is, loved with His elective love, as in Amos 3: 2,) did He ordain to become conformed to the image of His Son. Paul is, of necessity an optimist. His is a philosophy of victory. This victory must come because: (1) God is; and (2) God loves. The whole process beginning with eternal love, passes through foreordination, calling, justification, glory. Paul is incurably eschatological. No wonder Paul ends with the great doxology of faith. This yearning for the final glory of Christ, this present possession of that life, this jealous guarding against unholiness in thinking and in doing, is the mind of the spirit, is "in Christ", is the once-for-all of the death of our Lord. No Stoic cycles, one final glory is sung in praise, for Calvary is

once-for-all. No new condemnation, for justification is once. A humanist can never understand Paul, for Paul has a new sphere of existence in which we exist or do not exist.

### 3. Universality of This Eternal Life, or Jewish-Gentile Problem.

In this section we are dealing with the relation of the Jew to the Gentile. The importance of this section for our purpose is the antithesis of grace and sin throughout history. God gives His grace. All things rest upon the grace of God.

In the beginning of our thesis we have followed the suggestion for what it was worth to compare Paul and IV Esdras. It does not follow because both have the same problem that they represent a school of thought within Pharisaism. Paul is interested in the Jew of the time before the Destruction of Jerusalem, the devastated city, the destroyed temple, and the crumbled walls. Paul is thinking of the Old Testament promises and the seemingly unfulfilled present situations. At the same time there were burning questions involving the future glory and hope of the people of God. These questions for Paul had to be related to the Christ- the once-for-all. If the Jews had the oracles, why did they not believe? Did God's promise fail? Was there a future for the chosen race? Who constitute the people of God? Such questions were surging in the soul of a compatriot who was, at the

same time, intoxicated with a love for the despised Jesus.<sup>1</sup>

a. Chapter Nine - True Israel of God.

Chapter nine is an epitome of the Book of Genesis. Paul says that God's promises did not come to nought. God always moved along the lines of sovereign grace rather than natural ties. Only Isaac was Abraham's seed of promise. Some one may reply in true rabbinical fashion, God could not do otherwise, for He was the only son of Sarah. Paul replies to this question that while Esau and Jacob were still unborn, it was predicted the older would serve the younger. It is to him that calleth, not of works, not primogeniture, but the grace of God.<sup>2</sup>

Then Paul makes an excursion which is very difficult for the natural man to endure. It either makes him as humble as the dust or as adamant as the heart of stone. Paul does not relate the process through which Pharaoh went. He merely states the fact. Even the wicked are in the service of God, for it is the divine prerogative to over-rule the evil of kings for His cause.<sup>3</sup>

There is no reply to this. We are His creatures.

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1. In relating chapters nine to eleven with IV Esdras one must always bear in mind Romans three. Sin taught Paul that the Jew was human. One must also remember Romans 5:12ff. "In Adam" is more fundamental than "in Abraham".
2. The writer of Genesis devotes the major part of his book to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is not accidental. The covenant dealings of God with the three Patriarchs are always in the foreground.
3. Possibly allusions to Genesis bring Pharaoh to mind.



He is sovereign. This deep mystery Paul leaves with God. But if God is free, and all depends upon His sovereign grace, He calls the Gentile as well as the Jew. In short, election teaches us that the work of God cannot fail for it is based upon the will of God. Secondly, election shows that through it we have only one people of grace, (again one in Christ). Thirdly, that election's purpose is for all tongues and tribes, not for the Jews only. This is predicted by both Hosea and Isaiah. The Church is not a week in the prophecy of Daniel that is unaccounted for. Our age is not a mystery or a parenthesis, but an event forespoken and heralded.<sup>1</sup>

But the great mystery still remains, Israel stumbled. The Gentiles received the glory of the cross. The reason is indicated simply as the absence of faith. Here lies human responsibility. Paul does not mean to say we are elected but if our faith grows cold our election has come to nought. It is an election unto eternal life, a new sphere of existence, and no one would expect that this new sphere of existence has failed. If we are fore-ordained, we are called, if called justified, if justified we shall be glorified.<sup>2</sup> This is one process. The relation between the human and the divine remains inexplicable. Paul without warning moves into the sphere

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1. W. Rutgers, op. cit., p. 176f.  
2. Romans 8: 30.

of human responsibility. This would be true of any preacher who wishes to assure his flock that God's grace is eternal and sovereign, and, at the same time that we must believe. For faith is the "A to Z" condition for appropriating this new life.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter is the greatest deathblow to all humanism. Grace presupposes sovereign election. God shall receive all glory. This is the inevitable result of the sovereignty of God. At the same time a proper conception of Paul's eschatology makes it impossible to accept any form of Pelagianism. The new life is not of man. How then can man in any way reach out for it, for to reach out presupposes this life already.

b. Chapter Ten - Universal Method.

In this chapter Paul reiterates his concern for Israel. They were sincere in their foolish and idolatrous law-worship. They had a zeal not according to genuine knowledge. ( οὐ κατ' ἐπιγνώσιν ) They could not see that Christ was the end of the law unto righteousness, unto everyone that believes.<sup>2</sup> If we do not follow Christ we must follow Moses' warning- we must fulfil the law perfectly. This decision, this choice- law or Christ, works or faith- is still pertinent in "religion" or

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1. Romans 1: 17.

2. Romans 10:4, The emphasis is upon γέλος. For the end of the Law is Christ unto righteousness. That is, if the Jew actually lived his law, and most likely here the Old Testament, he would find the fulfilment in Christ only, through faith.

"Christianity", "good man polished by self-righteousness" or "the sinner saved by grace". (10: 4-8.) The essential thing is trust, faith in the good news. It is the word of faith. This word is nigh unto us. Christ is not far off in heaven, or hidden in the realms of death,<sup>1</sup> but Christ is in the heart. Self-righteousness puts Christ far away, faith says Christ is near. Paul is quoting this Old Testament passage without any Messianic references. Rightly, Hodge takes issue with Calvin, Meyer, Olshausen, for does not a writer often quote a passage injecting his own peculiar point of view? Paul wishes to show the simplicity of the method of salvation, which requires only faith and confession "in opposition to the strict demands of the law, which it is as impossible for us to satisfy as it is to scale the heavens".<sup>2</sup>

Salvation then is this intimate religion of the heart. We must confess with our mouth, and believe with our heart. But this is something definite. We must believe that God raised Jesus from the dead(9). Salvation is not as in the mystery religions, a matter to be freed from fate or the limitations of the earthly life,<sup>3</sup> nor is it to rebuild civilization along the lines of a universal test tube science, or a final product of human experience, as in Rethinking Missions.<sup>4</sup> Salvation is to

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1. Cf. Deut. 30: 12ff.

2. Hodge, op. cit., p. 535.

3. Kennedy, op. cit., pp. 215 ff.

4. Cf. chapters III and IV, pp. 49ff.

be freed from sin, and to be heirs of full-orbed redemption in Christ Jesus, that is, true eternal life. A dead Jesus could not lift us in that sphere. Besides, if God did not raise up Jesus, He would not raise up those who call upon His name. The resurrection as an historical event is central in one's faith. It gives us, as Kierkegaard would say, Christ, our Contemporary. Christ is the personal contemporary of every age.<sup>1</sup> This resurrection is more than an experience of renewal and change as seems to be the case in Dostojevski's conception.<sup>2</sup> A resurrection that is tantamount to a renewed determination on the part of a broken down personality to allow a new life to burst forth could not help at all to save us. We still would be in the realm of man. We need Christ's resurrection. Salvation is new life, a new sphere, and the resurrection of Christ is the only power that can bring it about. In short, without resurrection no eschatology, and without eschatology, no salvation. This is universal, for both Jew and Greek, (12). Paul argues on the basis of lordship. One Lord over all. Besides, Joel (2:32) has proclaimed centuries ago, anyone, whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

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1. Walter Lowrie, Our Concern with the Theology of Crisis. pp. 156f.
2. Crime and Punishment, (for contrast between Individualism and Environmental influence,) pp. 260ff., 329, 331, 465, 522, 553. As far as we can determine, resurrection means nothing more than an ethical renewal.

This situation cannot change even when the fullness of the Gentiles shall be ushered in. If there is a dispensation for the Jews this promise shall hold for the Jew and the Gentile; (1) You must believe in the resurrection. (2) Because Christ is Lord of all, all are privileged to hear His word. (3) This word of Christ in the words of the Old Testament promise is belief unto salvation. (4) This salvation is alike unto all because the need is alike. There is no such thing as a Jewish salvation and a Gentile salvation. Salvation is salvation.

It naturally follows, then, that there is only one method if there is only one salvation. This one method is preaching. As every science dictates its method, every sphere of activity follows its own course, the very nature of this new life, because it is not of man, demands proclamation. Only the foolishness of the cross can save. Only preaching can set the world on fire.

Proclaim the word in season and out of season. Proclaim the great events of death and resurrection. Nowhere are we told that this method shall be changed. And we have all the reason in the world to suspect that it cannot change for this method follows naturally from the concept of salvation as acceptance from the heart God who raised Christ from the dead. It is a natural consequence of the concept revelation. Hence it is not discovery but proclamation, (10:11-15).

This chapter ends with the prediction of Isaiah

and Moses, being fulfilled in Paul's and in our day. God spread out his arms in love, but Israel refused. The Gentiles, however, who knew not God, now follow after Him. Is Paul dismayed? No, this apostasy is a fulfilment. Its fulfilment implies that there is a wise purpose underlying this very falling away (10: 18-21). This section becomes propaedeutic to chapter eleven. If this part of prophecy has been fulfilled, why should not the promises which Paul will discuss in the chapter to follow?

c. Chapter Eleven - Universal Election.

In this chapter we have a renewed identification of the Old Testament people with the New Testament people of God. New Testament life is eternal life, and there is no higher form of life conceivable. Any lesser form for God's covenant people would be tantamount to a casting off to some degree at least. This identification rests upon election. The doctrine of election is to prove that God did not reject Israel. Paul was a Jew, still he believed (11:1). If God had cast off Israel entirely, how could there be Jewish Christians? God did not cast off the people He foreknew. This does not mean only those God knew before would accept Him. This is very unsatisfactory. Paul does not add this explanation anywhere. It is a logical helpout. Besides, why should anybody accept God? If they did it of their own accord, which God foresaw, God would be dependent upon man. In fact, it would resolve to this that God chose them because they chose God. Then the

work of redemption would be ultimately to man's glory. If so, that is, if man is the foundation of our hope in the stability of the Kingdom of God, we are helpless. Besides, what natural man could know and love the things prepared from eternity? He would have to be potentially in the eternal sphere to accept this eternal love when revealed. This solution does not help us out of the insoluble doctrine of election, but adds difficulty to the overwhelming perplexity already beclouding the human mind. "Knowledge" in the Old Testament is love. The entire Book of Exodus shows how love and knowledge are intimately related. Amos 3:2 has the same purport. And we may add, a mother knows a child because she loves. We should not inject rationalistic notions into an Old Testament term. There is the elective love manifested in the time of Elijah (11: 2-4). So today, and so throughout history. But this is not that man appropriated it by some mysterious non-meritoriousness, and still non-divine, semi-Pelagian activity on the part of man. It is only grace. The others were hardened (11: 7-10). In these words Paul summarizes what in the Old Testament is a process. The relation between election, hardening and human responsibility lies in another realm too far removed from our present approach to truth. At the same time, any true knowledge of the Romans forces this doctrine of sovereign election upon us. Here lies humanism of the finest, subtlest form, even in its very semi-Pelagian form, exposed

and ruined. The safety, the stability of the church of all ages depends only upon God.

In the second paragraph, (11: 11-24) the purpose is indicated. Paul says their fall brought about salvation to the Gentiles. He does not mean in their rejecting the Christ a new, unlooked for dispensation was ushered in. That such is impossible is clear from the analogy of grafting wild branches into the olive tree of the Old Testament. If the metaphor has any point to it at all, it must mean that there is one people of God. If there would be a new church, a new bride of Christ, (in distinction from the bridal relation of the Old Testament which would imply two brides) there could be no creation of jealousy for there would be something new, and as an historical interpolation, of a temporary character. A lesser form could not on this basis stir the desired jealousy. What Paul means to say is that in the divine economy the rejection of Christ by Israel broke down the national barrier. The world accepted the Christ, that is, nations heard the call. They did not hear the call of a national religion in a revised form.<sup>1</sup> They heard the call of that which was always essentially "supernational", the gospel, for the gospel could now be proclaimed.

If the rejection of the Jews means the recon-

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1. That this interpretation is the conception of Primitive Christianity, cf. above, "Paul at the Council of Jerusalem," pp. 35ff.



ciliation of the world, the return of the Jews means life from the dead. When the Jews accept Jesus what shall take place (11:15)? Life from the dead. This expression may mean (1) that the acceptance of the Jews will have a revivifying effect upon a dormant Gentile Church. This expression, says Godet, "must be applied to a powerful spiritual revolution which will be wrought in the heart of Gentile christendom by the fact of the conversion of the Jews".<sup>1</sup> This position is not essentially different from that of Calvin who interprets Paul to say, "For Paul ever insists on this, that the Gentiles have no cause for envy, as though the restoration of the Jews to favour were to render their condition worse".<sup>2</sup> Hence a Jewish conversion en masse is tantamount to bringing life into a dead church. But this seems so distant from the context. Paul in this chapter is thinking primarily of the Jews' position in the history of the world. Barth interprets these words in his dialectical fashion of the interplay of time and eternity.<sup>3</sup> It is the hearing of the word of God existentially. This position again seems to agree with Calvin and Godet, cast in a dialectical framework.

There are two other possibilities. (1) A spiritual renewal of Jewry. This expression would be reduced to a metaphor, and anyone maintaining such a posi-

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1. Godet, in loco.  
2. Op. cit., p. 424.  
3. Op. cit., p. 392.

tion would have to justify one's right to force a renewal of the Jews into the concept so weighty as life from death. At the same time, it is not exactly against the context. Paul will presently speak of the olive tree whose natural branches have been cut off, but are ready to be grafted in again. Then it follows that this re-ingrafting would entitle Israel to all the benefits. Besides, Paul is arguing in this chapter as prophecy foretold the rejection of the Jews and the acceptance of the Gentiles, so prophecy teaches their re-acceptance by God when they shall accept the Christ in faith, (11:25ff).<sup>1</sup> The second position is the interpretation that life from death means the resurrection. Hodge reacts against Meyer and De Wette, for says he; "But nowhere else in Scripture is the literal resurrection expressed by the words ζωὴ ἐκ νεκρῶν. Had Paul intended a reference to the resurrection, no reason can be assigned why he did not employ the established and familiar words ἀνάστασις ἐκ νεκρῶν".<sup>2</sup> At the same time, one can see that this does not preclude the possibility of using the term in the sense of resurrection. Zahn and Greijdanus observe: First, it cannot mean a mass conversion on the part of the heathen because the acceptance, (πρὸς ἁλιψίς) according to verse twenty-five comes after the fullness of the Gentiles. Secondly, it cannot mean a soteriological change in the Jew for that

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1. Hodge, Epistle to the Romans, in loco.  
2. Ibidem, p. 575.

is implied in the very acceptance. So there remains by the process of elimination nothing except the interpretation "the resurrection of the dead".<sup>1</sup> For Dr. Vos this expression "'Life from the dead', must refer to the resurrection specifically so named, and so understood it presupposes the beginning of the closing act of the eschatological drama".<sup>2</sup> This, according to Dr. Vos, would agree with twenty-five and twenty-six, and so ( οὐτως ) all Israel shall be saved.<sup>3</sup> In these chapters, nine to eleven, we have the history of the people of God. When both Gentile and Jew will be preached unto, the great plan of God is finished. There is nothing for Christ to do but to return. If so, the very conversion of the Jew en masse is the beginning of the end.

That all Israel shall be saved can mean two things. It may mean: (1) The entire redeemed race which has become the true Israel of God. This is not far-fetched if one bears in mind that Abraham is the father of all faithful. Or, secondly, it may mean Israel en masse. This seems to be the better of the two. Israel was compared with the Gentiles. The question was: Did God reject His people? The answer is, No! for there is a future for Israel! And so, according to this principle of election, shall Israel be saved. There is a future for the Jew because of

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1. Greijdanus, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 501.
2. Pauline Eschatology, pp. 87f.
2. Ibidem, p. 88.

election. Naturally, there is nothing here that would remind one of an exodus to a promised land. This may be so, but that would be very secondary. There would be no special purpose in view if the interpretation that the conversion of the Jews is a sign of the coming of Christ. Possibly the Jews may return before this great revival, but Paul does not seem to wax eloquent on that subject. We must also bear in mind that in Paul's day the Jews were still in the homeland. The mystery which is revealed is that Israel shall accept the Christ. This, that both Gentile and Jew shall hear the gospel, and shall have a rich entrance into the Kingdom, causes Paul to sing one of the greatest doxologies in the Epistle to the Romans.

Specifically, we see in chapters nine to eleven a philosophy of history whose goal is salvation of Jew and Gentile. In our endeavor to contrast Romans with humanism we shall be forced to point out that the eschatology of humanism falls flat in beauty and in extent to that of the Romans. Which shall we capitalize- time or eternity? Shall we consider time but an element to help us to a better time? Or shall we look upon time as temporal, and fill it with that which changes the moments into eternal significance? All the hopes and dreams of the humanist are the former. All those of New Testament Christians are the latter. The very structure work of Socialism, Communism, and the utopian schemes are all to be realized

in time.<sup>1</sup> For Paul time is extended to all not for the sake of time, but for Gentile and Jew to accept the Christ. Time is the scaffold upon which election constructs the new temple of God from Jewish and Gentile materials. When the temple is complete, Christ shall come to place it in the Jerusalem above as the eternal tabernacle of God with man.

In these chapters a new category has been introduced which is more fundamental than any form of nationalism- "election". Election knits the Old and the New Testament. Any abrogation of the underlying unity of these testaments is virtually the repudiation of the doctrine Paul unequivocally advocates. Election is an anti-humanistic doctrine, to be sure, but it is also eschatological in import. If God's work were limited to the powers man potentially possesses no election would be necessary. Because man through Christ has the home of many mansions, not even potentially present in man created for this world, man must be invited, he must be admitted.

B. Eternal Life in its Mundane Manifestation.  
Chapters 12 to 16.

We shall not exegete this section. The only importance from our point of view is this, that the new life

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1. Karl Heim, "Zeit und Ewigkeit, die Hauptfrage der heutigen Eschatologie," pp. 539-568 in Glaube und Leben. Cf. also Bavinck, Gereformeerde Dogmatiek, Vol. IV, p. 714, who speaks of "Chilistic Socialists".

has a present manifestation. We may reasonably expect (Romans 8: 18-25), according to Paul the new world will present a new order. Christ teaches the very same truth when He emphasizes the abrogation of sexual life, as well as the catastrophies necessary to bring about a new change. We believe that the eschatology handed down to us is more than a form of the age. According to the Old Testament conception of creation man was the king of the universe, and when he was defeated creation showed all the results of his downfall. If man is to be restored, especially in Christ, which means a new type of existence, this world will have become obsolete. The man we know today is fitted to cope with this environment. A new man, the spiritual man implies a new environment. Such will come about through the catastrophic change at the return of Christ.

At the same time the fundamental aspect of that eternal life is unchangeable. Love, faith, sympathy, understanding, obedience will always remain. The mode of expression depends upon the situations of life, but the one power is the new life. That is what Paul means by the mercies of God (12:1). These mercies of God are justification and sanctification, and these are inseparable from the new life. The basis of Christian ethics is love toward God, and toward one another, and this love can be only through the mercies of God. We may go a step farther. A specific system of ethics may be useful but not essential.

True love will, as a motivating power, prove itself a reliable force in daily life if allowed to operate uncontaminated. What God requires of us, therefore, is a living sacrifice of our entire self. Not as the animals who lie lifeless on the altar, consumed by the flames, nor a partial sacrifice, but a sacrifice without blemish. That is spiritual. Not the ceremonial sacrifices and external sacrifices, but the internal, rational, spiritual. This is what Paul means by the renewing of the mind. Love will cause us not to prefer one above another, (12:3-8) but to the contrary, to be tenderly-affectioned one to another; diligent and patient (9-21). Love will be as irresistible as hot coals upon the heads of recalcitrant, obdurate slaves.

Love will cause us to be obedient to authority for God's sake. We shall not cherish foolish notions about the superfluity of earthly governments, nor shall we resist them when they may even seek our harm. Even when persecutions come, we shall still be true to these servants of God as long as we can (13:1-7).

We shall love God in being a debtor to all. True love fulfils the law. There is no trace of antinomianism in Paul at all. Let love flow forth; what change will take place? If I love one could I commit adultery with such a one? Could I steal his property? Could I deprive him of his life? Selfishness is responsible for sins against neighbors (13: 8-10).

If we love Christ and His return, we know that His return is nearer. This should make us careful and watchful. How near we do not know. This world is the world of night. Christ is the light of the world, and His resurrection brings light. There is the eternal day. "In Christ" means in His resurrection, or in His light. We as children of the day have been snatched out of the darkness of night. The contrast can best be explained as the old life and the new life. The new life is light. The old life is darkness, night. We live in the daytime of God's grace. As resurrection children in principle our ethics should show a love for such conduct as will be within the city of the new Jerusalem. The old life is the life outside of the city gates, the life of drunkenness and revelling. Instead of that life, although its powers may still tempt us, we must put on Christ. It seems that Paul encourages his readers by telling them that their salvation is nearer. This may mean their salvation through death, or the return of Jesus. The main issue, however, remains the same. Keep that resurrected life aglow in this night of sin. Put on Christ. If the heavenly life is a reality, live it in the present aion. Sanctification must be evident now. The eschatological fervor, rightly understood, brings with it ethical changes. True Christianity is not static (13:11-14). If Christians would put on Christ there would be less legislation and more sanctification (chapters 14 and 15).



In non essentials, (14:1 - 15:13) we shall be very tolerant. Our religion should not revert to Pharisaism of meat, drink, and the festive days of former Jewry and paganism. "Put on Christ" is the only essential. The advanced in learning should not despise the weaker brother. The narrow-minded should not be censorious. Love should dictate to us that the greatest sorrow of a devout believer is the stumbling brother. Let the Gentiles and the Jews hope in the root of Jesse that will rule over the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, in love. The fact that this universal character is re-impressed upon the minds of Paul's readers shows Paul's deep concern in solidifying the Jews and the Gentiles.

The conclusion of this Epistle concerns itself with Paul's desire to make Rome a new center for mission work in the west. He explains why he was hindered from coming (15: 14-28). He beseeches them to pray for him to be delivered from the enemies at Jerusalem (15: 30-33), for he wishes to come unto them.

The last chapter is the commendation of the sister Phoebe. It is also a list of greetings (3-16). It also instructs them to be careful of those who teach false doctrines, seemingly already present in the Church (17-20). It affixes the salutation of Paul's companions (21-23), and finally summarizes the whole epistle, that Jesus Christ is the revelation of mystery, manifested now, predicted in the Old Testament, made known unto the obedience of the nations.

What then does eschatology mean for Paul? By anticipating the heavenly life when sin shall be no more in this mundane existence, Christians must show love, hospitality, a helpful hand, a courageous stand in the battle against all social, and political unrighteousness. A Christian must fight evil in high places and in low places. Has a Christian a program? Does Christianity seek the welfare of man? In so far as it does not, it ceases to be Christian. If humanism will seek to overwhelm us with its pretentious reforms, its delineations of utopias still to be born, Christianity comes with the rejoinder that it has something vital for it does not place the onus on environment but upon the individual having the love of Christ pulsating in his heart.

Why should a Christian not be interested in man? If Christ died on the cross to salvage the wreckage of sin, a Christian of all men should seek the welfare of those in pain, misery, and moral darkness.

This Epistle blends three experiences. Damascus was the revelation of a person who will return. He has commissioned Paul to go to the Gentiles and Jews. Paul felt himself called to bring men to the knowledge of the revelation of this Christ. It blends also Jerusalem for Paul would never materialize grace in a sacrament or in a form. It sets forth the unity of all believers in all ages, without requiring Gentiles to become Jews. At the same time it shows that the law is fundamental and shall remain so. Grace puts a different attitude in the heart,

one that changes a sinner into a son, instead of a debtor and servant. Finally, Athens reveals itself in this Epistle as a total failure of philosophy to find the redeemer. This revelation is not the reversed side of human reason but a fact, an event. It is the power of God unto salvation. The entire Epistle then is from God unto God and in God through Christ Jesus our Lord.

SUMMARY

1. First God

1. We soon discover that God is knowable. Although not explicitly stated, this results from the image of God in man. But we are interested in the God of salvation. This salvation is not of man, nor in the ken of man. Hence God is knowable because He reveals Himself. God is known in so far as He reveals Himself.

2. God is eternal. The mysteries which Paul reveals indicate an eternal and an unchangeable plan. Christianity pure and uncontaminated, cannot have a "limited God" and be true to the teachings of Romans.

3. God is righteous. His will shall be the final standard of all conduct. God must set the standard of conduct, and in case of failure on the part of man, must determine the ways of reconciliation.

4. God is gracious. The eternal and elective purpose of God brings salvation and eternal life to those who love Him.

5. God is absolute. As the potter he may form the clay. He is absolute in all things: (1) Standard of conduct, (2) Dispenser of grace, (3) As revealer of truth.

6. God is Holy. A God who can sin, or a God who can show injustice is incompetent to rule the universe. Moral anarchy of the Supreme Being is unthinkable.

## 2. Secondly, Christ

1. Appointed to bring about all things to the new goal - the resurrected life.

2. Christ's death becomes the "once-for-all". This cannot be repeated.

3. As the hub of all history, all things in life must be related to the cross, resurrection, and return of Christ.

4. Life does not become a repetition of trial and error of man, but an identification in the death and resurrection of Christ, or a rejection of this new life.

5. Christ is the great revelation of God, not as an abstract concept, but as the sacrifice for sin.

## 3. Thirdly, Man

1. Man as thinker.

(a) Man must have the absolute God to think the truth.

(b) This absolute God is the one revealed through the new center - the Christ.

(c) In his thoughts, therefore, he must include sin, grace, redemption, return of Jesus.

(d) In so far as he thinks on man, humanitarian projects, he must do so from God's point of view through the revelation and love of Christ.

2. Man as a moral being.

(a) His life is not a code of experimentation but a loving obedience to the moral law of God, not as a code, but as an urge.

(b) This law he cannot obey according to the wishes of his heart, for he is a responsible person, who must observe this law according to God's will.

(c) The responsibility of man is far reaching.

We notice two types of morality. One is determined by flesh, the other is determined by spirit. One is from man unto man, the other is from God unto God.

### 3. Man as a Citizen of Kingdoms.

The Christian's goal must be life. He is in duty bound to seek the return of Christ. The hope of this return will give him the love to take the future standards of holiness and righteousness resulting from the resurrection of Christ and inject them into the present life. In so far as he is a citizen of the Kingdom of heaven is he of service to mankind.

PART III  
HUMANISM

CHAPTER I  
DEFINITIONS AND DESCRIPTIONS

In the absence of any pontifical authority no school of thought has a monopoly on the term "humanism". Humanists exclude humanists by the various definitions employed.

A humanist, according to Irving Babbitt, is one whose aim is "proportionateness through a cultivation of the law of measure".<sup>1</sup> In common English this simply means "nothing in excess". This constitutes a "decorum" necessary for any one who wishes to be included in this class. Says Babbitt, "Decorum is supreme for the humanist even as humility takes precedence over all other virtues in the eyes of the Christian".<sup>2</sup> This definition may be described briefly, therefore, as "Nemesis punishes all forms of excess".<sup>3</sup>

C. W. Reese and C. F. Potter supply us with a different definition. "Humanism is the conviction that human life is of supreme worth."<sup>4</sup> Again, "Humanism is faith in the supreme value of self-perfectibility of human personality".<sup>5</sup> This would also fit in snugly with

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1. In Humanism and America, p. 30.
2. In Living Philosophies, p. 125.
3. L.J.A. Mercier, Le mouvement humaniste aux 'Etats-Unis, p. 52.
4. C. W. Reese, Humanism, p. viii.
5. C. F. Potter, Humanism, a New Religion, p. 14.



the definition of the Dutch humanist, Just Havelaar, "Humanism indicates the faith in the dignity of being human".<sup>1</sup>

The various applications of the concept humanism add to the confusion. Some employ it in an historical sense and think of the humanists of the sixteenth century among whom were some who were both evangelical and humanistic. This interpretation encourages a serious effort to be benefited by the past and to seek for man in this world a legitimate outlet for any God-given talents. In spite of J.A.C.F. Auer's surprise that even Calvinism must seek human interests and has done so in Geneva,<sup>2</sup> we must confess any proper interpretation of this system of thought, both in the past and in the present, demands of its adherents an appreciation for that which is good in this world. Over against the Catholic system of thought which believes that asceticism is a higher order of perfection than the natural, Calvin taught us that there are two ways that lead to the knowledge of God. We know God through the Scriptures and through nature.<sup>3</sup> This accounts for the founding of a University at Geneva. When Calvinism came to its own again in the last century the Dutch, under the inspiration of the late Dr. A. Kuyper, laid the plans for a new university which would do justice by every

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1. Humanisme, "Humanisme beteekent het geloof in de waardigheid van het mensch-zijn", pp. 46f.
2. Humanism States Its Case, p. 95.
3. A. Kuyper, Calvinism, p. 158.

uplifting science and by all the ennobling arts. The University of Leyden remains a monument to Calvinism properly understood. In spite of the devastating powers of war and famine the citizens of that heroic city took a university for their medal of distinction although the wake of ruin left many material advantages to be desired. In spite of all the superficial equations of Calvinism and predestination, it remains a blot upon scholarship not to understand the contribution Calvinism has made in its doctrine of "Common Grace". We heartily agree with one of the recent outstanding Calvinists, the Dr. A. Kuyper, when he says, "In as far as Humanism endeavored to substitute life in this world for the eternal, every Calvinist opposed the Humanist. But in as much as the Humanist contented himself with a plea for a proper acknowledgment of secular life, the Calvinist was his ally".<sup>1</sup>

There are others who speak of evangelical humanism, of scientific humanism, technical humanism, political humanism, and, as in America, democracy. This adds many more stones to Babel's tower of confusion.<sup>2</sup>

Although Schiller and James use this term to connote the difference between their system and that of Idealism, humanism to T. E. Hulme,<sup>3</sup> J. S. Mackenzie,<sup>4</sup>

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1. Ibid., p. 158.

2. Cf. Lynn Harold Hough, Evangelical Humanism, also pp.99, 101, Cassius Jackson Keyser, Humanism and Science; "Pour un Humanisme Nouveau" in Cahiers de Foi et Vie, edited by M. Paul Arbousse-Bastide.

3. Speculations, p. 54

4. Lectures on Humanism, p.53

Barth and Brunner<sup>1</sup> when used theologically implies any effort of man to reach out to God, or to the apotheosized human society apart from the working of the Holy Spirit through His Word. This then includes pantheism, idealism, pragmatism, and any system of thought not founded on the Word of God.

At first glance it seems utterly hopeless to form a workable definition. As a provisory guide we shall follow J. Baillie in combining Comte and Erasmus, or the scientific and the literary, and style a humanist as one "who refuses to allow any kind of absorption in the Divine to interfere with his frank and hearty and in some sense separate appreciation and enjoyment of our finite human life as lived in and for itself".<sup>2</sup> L. H. Hough's definition comes down to the same thing. "Humanism is human experience becoming conscious of itself and of its possibilities, believing in itself and going forth on a great adventure of achievement."<sup>3</sup> These definitions apply more to present day humanists than to those of the former centuries, although they establish a link between the past and the present in defending the rights and the interests of man as man. We prefer these very general definitions for they do not answer the question whether the

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1. "Die Grenzen der Humanität", in Sammlung Gemeinverständlicher Vorträge, p. 2.
2. "The Predicament of Humanism", in reprint of the Canadian Journal of Religious Thought, March-April, 1931, pp. 109f.
3. Evangelical Humanism, p. 119.

existence of God is a requisite or a defect, or, whether the individual or the universal man is the measure of all things, that is, whether Protagoras or Socrates is the leader of the old but revised faith. For our present interest a general definition is more important because to pin ourselves down too closely is to prejudice our search. This must be borne in mind, the domain of man is to be honored. We may not trespass upon his property, possibly, not even with the permission of the powers that rule us. Within the castle of man literature, drama, and art receive the places of distinction. Theology must either be thrown out as the guest without a wedding garment, or must be told, there is another room in this citadel for you. When others fail you may come. The various possibilities and derivatives of this statement of the value of man leave room for diversity of opinion. Although humanists, one may say, and strangely so on their own suppositions, that they are not any too tolerant at times. If such is the case, we can expect different schools of thought which may be grouped under five headings:

- A. Philosophical Humanism- James, Dewey, and Schiller.
- B. Academic and Literary Humanism- Babbitt and More.
- C. Moral Humanism- Lippmann and Krutch.
- D. Religious Humanism- Reese, Potter, and Left-Wing Unitarians.
- E. Melange, or Antithetical School.

## CHAPTER II

### VARIOUS SCHOOLS OF HUMANISM

#### A. Philosophical Humanism

Idealism and Absolutism may be characterized by its simplicity. Learn the vocabulary, practise its dialectics and all the secrets of the universe will somehow be related to the Absolute. The question now arises: Are these assumptions of human thought which are neglected because they seem so simple, which are discovered by the use of logic, based upon reality, or are they nothing but verbiage? This leads us to the ultimate question: What shall govern human experience, the Absolute the Idealist finds, or man himself? Is life thinkable apart from the Absolute, or is the underlying unity of thought that unites and explains our individual thoughts, the product of our "self" without any metaphysical reality to substantiate the activity of the ego? In reference to the first possibility there are two positions one can take. First, the Absolute is a mere word, and in consequence thereof has no value for human conduct. Secondly, to think of the Absolute may be logically permissible, but if it does exist, how can the Absolute be a vital power in the life of the non-Absolute?

The position of the humanist is that at the present stage of philosophy the concept Absolute is obsolete. William James in his Pragmatism, in which he

equates pragmatism and humanism, says that human experience is the highest form of experience extant.<sup>1</sup> The limit of our knowledge is man. If this is true, how can we break through the walls hemming in man? It would be better to seek peace and safety within our enclosure by that which seems to work.

Schiller, likewise, opposes all forms of absolutism. Man is his only concern, and human knowledge is adequate to cope with the exigencies of life.<sup>2</sup> Man is the creator of the sciences and the engineer of his destiny. All man can do is to begin with common sense, and only where common sense fails us must we bridge the shortcomings and openings with our intellectual trestlework. We have no other to start from than man, "and that it is, e.g., grotesque extravagance to imagine that we can put ourselves at the standpoint of the Absolute."<sup>3</sup> If metaphysicians had the absolute truth there would be more harmony among them, but this harmony is singularly lacking.<sup>4</sup> Disharmony seems to be the rule rather than the fictitious underlying truth of truths.

Neither does humanism seek refuge under the wings of positivism. Positivism is too dogmatical and presupposes a system too fixed.<sup>5</sup>

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1. p. 299. Cf. F.C.S. Schiller in Hastings's Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. VI, pp.830f. This we shall designate by E.R.E.
2. Humanism, xxi f.
3. Ibid., p. xxiii.
4. "Humanism" in E.R.E., Vol. VI, pp. 830f.
5. Ibid.,

Naturalism of all systems is too far removed from this type of humanism. Naturalism subjects man to the inferior in life. This is no explanation of man for man is man.<sup>1</sup> Humanism would prefer to flirt with absolutism rather than with this system. Sometime in the future humanism may realize that absolutism may have a distinctive contribution for our human needs. If it can be exhibited that this latter system really contains something for genuine needs, by the very principles of humanism it must be sought after.<sup>2</sup> Schiller does not explain what he means by exhibited, really containing, and genuine needs. Exhibited would lead us to the question of logic and reason, really to the concept reality, and genuine to the concept appearance. Thus a humanist has his appearance and reality as well as an idealist.

J.A.C. Fagginger Auer presents a formidable brief in behalf of this position. He takes Webster's definition of the term and upon this he constructs his plea. From this he distils the thought that metaphysics delights in that which is independent of the human, unchangeable, and beyond the vicissitudes of life. Metaphysics dwells in the realm of thought apart from things and events. It is pure thought beyond contradictions. It is a science of pure thought which seeks to link, (although unsuccessful) together the various individual thoughts of man. If such

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1. Humanism, p. xxviii.

2. Article quoted, E.R.E. Vol. VI, p.830f, (underscoring ours).

is the case, this is the difference: Metaphysics results in a science not interested in man but in the universal. Humanism, on the contrary, is the philosophy of man and for man.<sup>1</sup>

Armed with this definition and its derivatives Auer proceeds to attack his opponent. First of all, he notices that the two champions of idealism, Plato and Hegel, could not give us a pure philosophy, i.e., truth as truth, as they boast. Of what value would it be? Possibly one may say, a philosophy of the absolute could make the world more intelligible.<sup>2</sup> Metaphysically and historically such does not prove to be the case. Plato is a dualist, and how can a dualist explain reality monistically? Hegel could not find any unity in the middle ages no matter how dexterously he sought for it.<sup>3</sup> Then too, suppose we could discover truth apart from man's concern or its concern for man, of what benefit would it be to us? The questions arise in the human sphere and that sphere must receive the answer.<sup>4</sup> The absolute cannot help the non-absolute. Its intrusion would be conducive to mystification instead of explanation.<sup>5</sup> Philosophy, in order to remain philosophy, must remain close to the source from which it sprang.<sup>6</sup> But one may retort that there must be room for growth. This

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1. Humanism States Its Case, p. 30.
2. Ibid., p. 30
3. Ibid., p. 34.
4. Ibid., pp.34f.
5. Ibid., p. 35.
6. Ibid., p. 36.



cannot be denied. In fact it is desirable that such takes place. The growth, however, should remain true to its source.<sup>1</sup> If the final product is logically at variance with the beginning, its death warrant is assured. Such has taken place in idealism. It grew from man and brought us into no-man's land. Then Auer gives the final stroke to his reasoning. Subsuming particulars under universals may solve a perplexing question, an idealist might retort. Rightly considered, this leads us nowhere practically. Would, for example, the knowledge that all colors belong to the concept color solve the problem of two people which color to put on the walls of their house?<sup>2</sup> Such argumentation makes a pretentious showing in print, but a mere game of words for everyday life. Words, nothing but words!

In passing we should note certain weaknesses in the thoughts presented. Auer takes advantage of a definition. As a humanist he ought to recognize that idealism is a human product which stands for a human need. He must account for this human need. According to his position this would be an abnormality. Again he must account for abnormalities. That is, can a humanist account for error? What right has he to say that any one is wrong? There is for him no such existence as universal truth, and consequently there cannot be error. A humanist defeats his own logic. This to him may be mere verbiage, but the fact

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1. Ibid., p. 36.  
2. Ibid., p. 37.

remains his whole system logically may be mere words. Moreover, if man is the measure of all things, then Auer believes something because man says so. Whether there are many men or whether there is only one man who says so, the whole logic of a humanist is a clear case of begging the question. Auer believes what he does because he does. He either says so as an individual or as a member of a group of kindred opinions, but he says what he believes is true is true. If that is logically the case, he may rightly criticise an idealist, but he should also study the implications of his own system. How can he who can say I believe what I do because I do, overthrow another man's position except he subtly deify himself?

This applies equally well to the remarks made by Schiller. When he employs such words as really containing and genuine experience he forgets that this difference between appearance and reality is the beginning of a human need. It is of importance for anyone to know whether his experience is only phenomenal. It is still more important for any one to know whether the activities of a Plato and Hegel have been a sham battle in the conflict for truth. More than that, it is of utmost significance for the human race to see its intellectual heroes condemned by men who by necessity are always begging the question. Whatever our attitude toward idealism may be, it does connote a fundamental human experience. The soul searches for the eternal to guarantee the validity of the temporal. Christianity

has a better solution to offer, by facing the need resident in the heart of man, evinced by the cry for the eternal.

What is the future of this school of thought in relation to the deeper things of life? The denial of the Absolute does not necessarily mean the denial of God. The opposite is also true. The logical necessity for the Absolute to guarantee the individual experience does not prove there is a God. Somewhere there may have been a subtle transfer of labels. While putting a philosophical content in a container we may have fallaciously put on a theological label.

To say that an eternal God and Person is impossible is begging the question. For man is the measure of all things. If so, how can he deny this possibility without stepping out of his enclosure into the eternal spheres either of reality or of fiction? But still there remains the human need to know whether there is a God, for if there is, we surely must serve Him. To say that we have not felt that need may be a reflection more upon our need than on the truth of the existence of God. All we say is that we have not felt that need as yet, and we cannot say that this need is merely the product of our heated imagination. Then, again, we are in another realm.

William James has a compromise between the monist and the pluralist that will satisfy neither. In his Pragmatism<sup>1</sup> he tells us that in his Variety of Religious

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1. p. 299.

Experience he has convinced many of the reality of God. This, therefore, implies that he cannot be an atheist. Still, upon closer scrutiny his absolute reminds us of the "Self", the "Stream of Thought" and "The Consciousness of Self" in his Principles of Psychology.<sup>1</sup> The self may be described as the mysterious "A", symbol of our first experience, in contact with "B". This "AB" meets and encounters "C". This "ABC" likewise reacts against "D". Likewise that which we call the absolute. It is that subtle chain of the manifold experiences of life. All the experiences are somehow woven into a unity. This does justice by both a pluralist and a monist without becoming guilty of believing in a fixed universe. But this cannot help the Christian at all, for he is in search of an unchangeable God. Auer, on the contrary, believes that God is not even necessary for religion.<sup>2</sup> All that he can do is to posit the self. That this should lead to stupid idolatry of the self, tantamount to the ridiculous practices of the French Revolution, does not seem to enter his mind. God for all practical purposes is shelved.

What then becomes of man? Man, mysteriously enough, is a free agent. Thus he can create or ruin his future. He has no reason to be an optimist nor a pessimist. There is a possibility of a better world. He must take the mid-position of pessimism and optimism-- meliorism.

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1. Vol. I, pp. 224-290, and pp. 291-401.  
2. Op. cit., p. 80.

The future may bring about radical changes. Dewey is more optimistic since the advancement of sciences. The millenium of mankind may be procured through the laboratories rather than by a catastrophic act of the returning Lord. His hope lies in the development of technology and science.<sup>1</sup> Of course, the burden of proof rests upon Dewey's shoulders to prove that a better science will of necessity make a better race, and better equipment will make for better people. Thus far this has not taken place for there is a deeper urge than accuracy that consumes the human heart, it is, to put it forcefully, the individual's brand of humanism. Pride and anger, selfishness and revenge abide even though a man may possess the best instrument in the world. There is no reason, judging from past experience, to follow Dewey in his utopia.

And strange to say, all men depend upon the future to accomplish what is going on in their minds now. This is strange indeed. But why? If human experience is the limit of our knowledge, and there is no absolute truth, then it follows that all our hopes and our milleniums may fail. The opposite of eternal truth is chance. If chance is the necessary antithesis how can one build upon this sinking sand? Here humanism and Christianity meet in mortal combat. For Paul there is no such thing as chance. God knows and no power, not even an unknown twist of events,

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1. Living Philosophies, p. 31.

can separate us from His love. And only where there is a God who is truly God, that is, unchangeable, can there be any future bliss. The hopes of meliorism based on a Pelagian conception of the will cannot supply it. Neither can technology usher in a satisfying era. We are confronted with the dilemma of the Heidelberg Catechism that we live "not by chance, but by his fatherly hand".<sup>1</sup> This chance in an optimistic soul becomes the idol of adventure. But if chance is the very foundation of all thinking we destroy the very conception of truth. In fact, there can be no truth, no error, no criticism, no logic, for all is chance, and sometime we may be surprised to find a new universe, a new science. Fortunately humanism is guided by an optimism that covers a multitude of sins. The belief in God, the Eternal One, on the contrary, will assure us that there are eternal laws. We may not understand them for we are comprehending them with a finite apparatus, but we know that in so far as there is truth in our thinking it is eternal. This philosophical humanism therefore sets forth:

- (1) The Absolute of the idealist brings about a closed and a static universe.
- (2) All we know, philosophically, is man and his needs. The Absolute is merely a fiction.
- (3) The Absolute would not be of any help. For how can the Absolute help the non-Absolute without ceasing to be the Absolute?

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1. Lord's Day X, Question 27.

- (4) Man has lived fairly successful without knowing anything about the Absolute.
- (5) Man's needs are paramount. The method must be human.

#### B. Literary and Academic Humanists

The second school of humanism may fitly be styled as the Literary and Academic School of Humanism for its two protagonists are none other than Irving Babbitt, of Harvard, and Paul Elmer More, of Princeton. Both are primarily interested in literature. Although these inclinations intertwine with the philosophies that have given rise to the literature taught, the literary aspects seem to be more accentuated than the philosophical.

To differentiate and to appreciate the contributions from these literary critics, one must assume that there are three discontinuous levels of experience. By that we mean that life in its complexity cannot be considered as three manifestations of one level. The three levels are the naturalistic, the humanistic, and the religious. Neither is a derivative of the other. How these distinct levels came into being is not criticised, in the Kantian sense, so we may call them also the uncritical school of Humanism. The fact is that all three levels are there, and common sense would tell us to recognize the fact rather than to decipher its reality with the aid of a fictitious code.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Norman Foerster, Humanism and America, p. vi.

Although there are three levels, man is king only in the human. He has connections with the other two levels, but they should not be made supreme. Man's sovereignty can be maintained only through the law of measure. Man's task, dignity, and victory is keeping the proper balance between these three spheres.<sup>1</sup> The denial or the over-emphasis of any sphere excommunicates one from the temple of humanism.

This implies that a humanist can work with a Christian. His emphasis will always be determined from his humanistic "windows" through which he will look upon and interpret reality, but his ideals will not necessarily conflict with the Ideals of a Christian. Irving Babbitt places himself in the regiment of the believers in God. "For my own part, I range myself unhesitatingly on the side of the supernaturalists".<sup>2</sup> It is an error to hold that humanism is a substitute for religion. Religion is more important than humanism and man would be safer with religion without humanism than humanism without religion.<sup>3</sup> This is consonant with what the Anglo-Catholic T.S. Eliot sets forth. "I have already said what I think of humanism without religion; I respect it, but I believe it to be sterile".<sup>4</sup> The humanist, therefore, stands midway between the religious and the natural level, having close connections with both.

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1. Ibid. p. vi.

2. Irving Babbitt, in Humanism and America, p. 112.

3. Ibid., p. 43.

4. T.S. Eliot, in Humanism and America, p. 112.



In this position the humanist will have to maintain balance for both spheres will seek to encroach upon the center position.<sup>1</sup> At the same time if he posits three spheres, he will feel himself drawn, possibly unwillingly, into the debate between the naturalists and the supernaturalists although "he may deplore the frequent failure of both of these fell antagonists to do justice to the immense range of human experience that is subject primarily to the law of measure".<sup>2</sup> Paul Elmer More has taken up this religious phase of the subject. Irving Babbitt, however, has contented himself more than the former with the humanistic aspects of life.

    Holding the religious question in abeyance for the time being, we see that the human plane is the plane of the law of measure. Nothing too much in any of its relationships. This explains Mr. Babbitt's cold shoulder to both Rousseau and Bacon, the two fountains heads of our modern faults.<sup>3</sup> Rousseau has created for us an idyllic land of imagination which he has thrust upon us as a sugar-coated pill of naturalism. Babbitt's objections to the Rousseauistic philosophy are: 1. The substitution of the Kingdom of Man for the Kingdom of God.<sup>4</sup> This, of course, is the denial of the three spheres. But what is the Kingdom of Man? This elicits the second objection.

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1. Norman Foerster, op. cit., p. vi.

2. Op. cit., p. 38f.

3. In Living Philosophies, p. 124.

4. Ibid., p. 125.

The Kingdom of Man is by nature good.<sup>1</sup> To maintain this, one feels that much has been silenced in the soul of man when he looks upon the petty jealousies of life flamed into devastating wars. The fact is that, thirdly, Rousseau has a superficial conception of sin.<sup>2</sup> If such is the case then the cure will also be superficial. The blame rests, therefore, upon society and not primarily upon man. Hence the emphasis upon a reform within is lacking. The transformation of society will miraculously produce a new person. Besides these objections, Mr. Babbitt finds fault with both Rousseau and Bacon in exalting the material over the spiritual comfort, and the glorification of man's increasing control over the forces of nature under the name of progress. This is the annulment of the two positions named above. First, it places the law for things, the naturalistic realm, on the same plane as the law for man, and, secondly, it is destroying the law of measure in man's delight for the physical comforts of life at the expense of the spiritual.<sup>3</sup> The rigid application of this law of measure can be appreciated still more if we bear in mind what Mercier considers the fundamental problem in both More and Babbitt: What will happen to culture in a democracy?<sup>4</sup> If we go to excess in science, in theology

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1. Ibid., p. 128.

2. Ibid., p. 132.

3. Op. cit., p. 125.

4. L.J.A. Mercier, "En somme, la question fondamentale qui intéresse également MM. Babbitt, More et Brownell c'est celle de la culture dans une démocratie", op. cit., p. ix.

in physical comforts, in the pride of man nursed by recent achievements, then the nobler and refining powers of life will atrophy. Our task is not to disturb the irate Nemesis with our pantheon of science, technocracy, and, in morals, license in disregarding the necessary rules of conduct.

Mercier has enumerated twenty-one corollaries from this one rule of proportionateness in all things as the law of all human conduct.<sup>1</sup> Irving Babbitt considers all pseudo-liberals:

1. Those who confound work on a naturalistic plane and a humanistic. These plead for the superiority of material efficiency over moral efficacy. These may be humanitarians, but they cannot be humanists.
2. Those who are apostles of a laissez-faire type of ethics, who do not distinguish between the laissez-faire of appetites and the ethical will.
3. Those who are sentimental humanists in not distinguishing between comforts and civilization, in believing in laws and organizations to arrive at moral progress for both the individual and the nation.
4. Those who wish to substitute the state of nature for the state of grace. This is the substitution of the natural emotions of man for the ethical struggle and the grace of God.
5. Those who attack inequality. Justice demands that a man ought to be recompensed not only according to quantity, but also according to quality.
6. Those who attack the principle of property necessary to assure individual independence to permit the moral development and necessary leisure.
7. Those who attack the principle of competition. Competition stimulates man to break down his indolence.

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1. Ibid., pp. 111 ff.

8. Those who attack capital. Their desire would be confiscation by force rather than justice. Capital is composed in part of those who have directed it.
9. Those who through precept and example encourage sexual indulgence without producing natural consequences. It is necessary to accept the chastity of Christianity and moderation of humanism.
10. Those who believe that "efficiency" suffices to assure progress. Their salvation consists in the multiplication of machines and the discovery of newer methods.
11. Those who substitute the material for the moral task of man, who seek to obtain by naturalism, (that is, Rousseauism and Baconianism) the practical results and ideals that the humanist obtains.
12. Those who submit truth to utility instead of utility to truth, (James).
13. Those who with the determinists attempt to analyze with finite capacities factors which are infinite.
14. Those who are partisans of a spontaneous romanticism, Rousseau to Bergson. For them civilization surges forth from the domain of the sub-conscious.
15. Those who as Freud corrupt morality and insinuate that the suppression of desire is pernicious.
16. Those sceptics who find it difficult to arrive at a metaphysical notion which has been associated with certain phenomena in time and space, (e.g., as form and life, life as a dream).
17. Those reformers who cast out the individual in the attempt to cure society. True individuality is too precious to be sacrificed to the mob.
18. Those who follow the chimera of social and economic equality.
19. Those who believe that man is able to fraternize upon a platform they have concocted when they cannot make one obey humbly those precepts that come from above man.
20. Those who say the only convention one ought to have is not to have any. Civilization is based on many conventions.

21. Those, to conclude, who follow the humanitarian sentimentalists of Rousseau and the humanitarian utilitarians of Bacon.

Some of the foregoing may seem to overlap, but still this summary brings out in bold relief what this school of humanism stands for. In contrast with others this school flourishes in an aristocracy. It presupposes leisure, classical interests, culture, and civilization. This will safeguard our democracy from ruin. There are many things that may meet with a vociferous disapproval, but this in itself may be a criticism against the man criticising, for in criticising another one is placing one's self under the keen blade of criticism. Our chief concern is, can we look through the windows of "the law of measure" to explain reality for everyday affairs?

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The religious aspect of this brand of humanism is best presented by Paul Elmer More, of Princeton. As we have noticed above, Irving Babbitt asserts that a humanist sooner or later will be drawn in the struggle between a naturalist and a supernaturalist. It seems that Paul Elmer More had more steel for this religious magnetism than the professor of Harvard.

If we could look with Mr. More through his windows we would discover, according to Mercier,<sup>1</sup> an underlying problem that regulated his search for certainty. In the

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1. Op. cit., pp. 126 f.

overthrow of the somber Calvinism which More knows, where could certainty be found? If this could not be obtained anywhere, morals would soon be trampled under unholy feet. After leaving Harvard in 1893 he set out to study the thoughts of India.<sup>1</sup> There he found that the idea of renunciation, native, it seems, to the Hindu soil, was founded upon the distinction between the fugitive character of flesh and pleasures and the definite good through the intuition of the existence of the soul which alone could exist if the exterior world was illusory. In this philosophy, More found the long searched for dualism. He knew that fundamental to this philosophy was the painful perception of the double nature of man and the world. According to More the spiritual value of any system of philosophy or religion depends upon the apprehension of this dualism.

To understand the relation of the foregoing to More's conception of religion, one must bear in mind that as a literary critic More sought to discover this problem of the double nature of man in all literature. He finds that Plato gives the most adequate expression to this truth. Hence More's love for Plato! This love for Plato becomes a "window" which must be reckoned with.

With this background we can appreciate More's definition of religion. "That, I take it, is the heart,

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1. Ibid., pp. 127f. For these biographical notes we are dependent entirely upon Mercier.

the inmost shrine of religion, that union of otherworldliness and morality which received its typical expression in the Ideal Philosophy of Plato."<sup>1</sup> This is religion's last refuge of assurance; "it carries, Plato would say, its own irrefragable conviction to the open and seeing mind, and requires no testimony in revelation".<sup>2</sup> That is, if one should ask a proof, all proof is superfluous. The proof is inherent in the very presentation. If such is the case revelation is not essential to testify as to the validity of the definition. What then becomes of faith? This too, one can anticipate, will be thrown into a Platonic mould. Faith then is "an awakening of the soul to its own birth-right as would render it the master instead of the slave of physical law". This dubious description containing a few practical results which the Biblical conception of faith, the reliance of a child upon its heavenly Father as a child depends upon its earthly father, of necessity brings with it, is blotted by a further remark that "Faith is a living realization, by what may be called the spiritual imagination, of the otherworld everywhere immanent in these opaque bodies on earth".<sup>3</sup> This definition, or description, is glaringly colorless in that it fits practically any system of thought except that of a rank materialist. A spiritist like Sir Oliver Lodge would have no fault to find

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1. In Christ of the New Testament, pp. 17,23; and also in Christ the Word, p. 8.
2. Christ of the New Testament, pp. 18f. Underscoring ours.
3. Ibid., p. 82.

with it. The Hindus and Buddhists would concur. This assertion is so general that it has lost its usefulness for a Christian.

Jesus preached the Kingdom of Heaven. This message was draped in mythical ideas of the time. But the first three centuries brought about a radical change. Gradually we notice the passing away of these mythical elements and the absorption into the philosophical other-worldliness of Plato.<sup>1</sup> The Kingdom of Heaven, because of the failure of Christ to return within the expected time span, became, through the mediation of the early church fathers, a "name for life in the eternal world of ideas".<sup>2</sup> Christ, for that matter, did exactly what Plato did. Christ thought of the new world in "palpable living images". Plato, somewhat different in form, thought of this new world by creating the Ideal Philosophy by the poetry of the Phaedrus and the Symposium.<sup>3</sup> Is then the description of Christ only a symbol? Yes, that is all, "but it is a symbol of power today and always for the reason that behind it lies the reality of an everlasting truth".<sup>4</sup> More supposes that the Parousia will never come.<sup>5</sup>

All religions have their myths. They might be regarded as the groping of men in the darkness, 'if haply

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1. Ibid., p. 86, and cf. pp. 292 f.
2. Ibid., p. 85, cf. also Christ the Word, p. 29.
3. Ibid., pp. 86 f.
4. Ibid., p. 87.
5. Ibid., p. 87.



they might feel after him, and, find him, though he be not far from every one of us . . . ".<sup>1</sup> The uniqueness of Christianity is that the myth has been reduced to its simplest possible terms in the Incarnation.<sup>2</sup> God in Christ appeared among men. One might reinterpret More by considering Christ the personalization of the duality found in Plato and in all the myths of religion. For More as well as for the Greek Fathers the Incarnation is the outstanding redemptive act of Christ.

What then shall we do with the teachings of St. Paul? This Greek savant does not make Paul a Greek. He sees very little, if any, similarity between Plato and Paul. To believe as Paul did in this age would be a superstition. Who can accept the eschatological outlook of the converted Pharisee?<sup>3</sup> This, incidentally, is a by-product that opens a new vista. The eschatology of St. Paul is nothing short of repulsive to More. This proves the contention from the very lips of a Greek savant: (1) that Paul was not a Greek; and (2) that any eschatology from God to man is repulsive to a system that seeks to rise from reason and dualism to God. Why he should tolerate and remould the eschatology of Jesus may be due

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1. Ibid., p. 292.
2. Ibid., p. 292. of. Also Christ the Word, in which the author states that Plato would have accepted the incarnation as the unum necessarium for which he had been searching all his life. p. 8.
3. Ibid., pp. 206, 282f.

to the historical fact that the Greek Fathers may have done so before him, which is in various details still a question, and possibly to a pious devotion to a great leader. This difference between Paul and More may serve as a clue to the position that humanism cannot stand eschatology. More even goes a step further. He minces no words on the bad products of Paul in the works of Luther and Calvin. Of necessity More must take this position for they understood that Paul's eschatology was based on sin and redemption by the cross and not by the reawakening of birthrights of the soul.<sup>1</sup>

Although More denies that the Parousia will come, for he does not seem to have any need of one, he does not in any way see a reason for denying the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The mythical elements clustering around the event should not deceive one as to the truth of the story.<sup>2</sup> According to Paul in Romans 1:4 the resurrection implies a return of Christ in the sense in which it is considered by some as merely the drapery of that age. Not so for More. More believes in immortality. He does not see any objection to this doctrine if one premises the duality of Plato. If there are ideas, independent of our particular ideas, and if these ideas can exist without dependence upon non-being, why should independent psychical life be impossible? Hence, the existence of unbodied minds in

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1. Ibid., p. 284.
2. Ibid., p. 279 f.

that otherworld is very likely.<sup>1</sup> Whether or not this is begging the question is for More to decide. There may be many a logical pitfall between the Ideas of Plato and the unbodied minds of deceased individuals. For More, then, there may be the unbodied existence. This seems to be the extent of any semblance of eschatology, although the author does believe in a resurrection. This resurrection of Jesus, however, must fit in with the general position which More assumes.

What then is atonement? For Paul in Romans 3:24ff., God placed Christ as the ransom for sinners. For More this becomes a process in the duality of man. "The drama of redemption then will be the interaction between the Logos in the Son of God and the logical nature of man, whereby the effects of sin will be cancelled and man shall be restored to the likeness of the image in which he was fashioned."<sup>2</sup> That this is foreign to the sacrificial ideology of St. Paul is proven by the description More gives of a scholar. "The scholar, the logios, in that noble sense of the word, is he who by study and reflection has recovered the birthright of humanity and holds it in fee for generations to come."<sup>3</sup> One may ask the pertinent question is one saved by faith or by philosophy? Was the Gnostic after all right? The moment one starts from Plato

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1. Ibid., p. 18.
2. Christ the Word, p. 300.
3. Ibid., p. 301.

and passes by Paul as superstitious for our age, one may reduce Christianity to a religion for the elite instead of for the children whom Christ blessed. By taking advantage of a historical twist of events, that is, of the Greek Fathers' failure to ask the question whether or no their explanatory suppositions were Biblical or Greek, More takes the Christianity which he reads into their writings through his love for Plato and his own experiences. To do so, he places the Greek Fathers on a higher pedestal than Paul, and the Eastern Church, with its sterility, than the Western. This is to misunderstand Christianity for we are convinced, as we have set forth in the beginning of this thesis, that the Epistle to the Romans is Paul's way of stating what was accepted by the leaders of the church. One would imagine, however, that Primitive Christianity would be in a better position to understand the Lord's teaching. The fact is that Mr. More's conception of religion and of Christianity has puzzled not a few. One can feel the justice of the remark of Allen Tate, "Mr. More's religion is Mr. More's".<sup>1</sup>

In criticising this school we are not very much interested in the remarks made by many who assume a more radical attitude toward life than Babbitt and More. There are, however, certain difficulties that we may notice. More himself points out the difficulty of applying the "Golden Mean", or the law of measure. The "Golden Mean" is

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1. The Critique of Humanism, p. 149.

relative. The problem for the humanist is to determine "what shall be reckoned fair and wise, and to settle the true point of moderation in the sliding scale between two vicious extremes: to decide, for example, just where decency lies between ascetic purity and ugly license, where self-respect descends to humiliation and where it rises into empty pride, what are the boundaries of a self-love; . . .".<sup>1</sup> Although he will seek to mediate between two extremes, there will be no fixed law of compromise, no definite law of mediation.<sup>2</sup>

Still this does not answer the question what constitutes an extreme. To go to the Mediterranean basin for props is no proof. We have no fault to find with this school in finding the law of measure in classical literature. Literature is the written reflection upon life and if literature can reveal to us that unconsciously we at our best are using a certain law we may say that this is a valuable by-product without destroying the independence of literature. To go, first of all, to the Mediterranean, (although Babbitt and More do not limit their search to this historical section,) is to select. The question is on what is this selection based? Ultimately the answer will simmer down to this, More has found in Plato a kindred soul. More found in Plato what he was looking for. There is a communion of saints according to the Apostles

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1. Christ in the New Testament, p. 137.
2. Ibid., p. 139.

Creed, but there are many more communions possible. Whenever one finds in another what he is searching for in himself he is finding himself in the other. If Plato's position did not satisfy him all the reading in the world would not convince. In short, to appeal to the classics may be another instance of the subtle form of begging the question. Only because we identify ourselves with the classics will the Golden Mean mean anything. But this identification causes us, to use legal language, to become members of the same corporation, and as a corporation cannot seek claims against itself, so a corporation cannot consider itself a witness for the defense. A group can be guilty of begging the question as well as an individual. This, of course, is the result of man's premise that reason leads him to Plato, and Plato to Christ, mediated by the Church Fathers.

We have no fault to find with those who seek to do justice by all legitimate spheres of life. This would naturally follow from the doctrine of creation, and also of Common Grace. To isolate any sphere is, of course, a fiction. Babbitt and More would protest against any such isolation, but still they present us with a difficulty not easily dispensed with. What is the relation between the spheres? For Paul a rule for only one plane of existence is fallacious. In Romans 13-16 Paul seeks to have the rule of love, the love of the new life, put into daily use. If Paul is properly understood, there is no independent rule

for the human sphere. It must take its norm from revelation. The human in nowise, as far as ethics is concerned, can be a norm for itself.

To read Plato into Christ, and to dispense with the eschatological in the Lord's teaching with the ceremonious gesture of relegating the obsolete to the age in which Jesus taught leaves many a doubt in the minds of Bible students. Why was More so charitable to Christ and not to Paul? Moreover, can the universals of Plato ever constitute fit categories for such concepts as "Sons of God"? This applies also to such fundamental doctrines as the Incarnation, and redemption. More is totally silent about the different ways of thinking that separate a Jew from a Greek. The Jew must always be interpreted factually. His salvation consisted of deeds. If Christ was to be a Saviour, he had to do something. The Greek would be more willing to delight himself with finding his birthright hidden under the illogical bushel of that precious philosophical candle.

W. H. Johnson in the Stone Lectures of Princeton Seminary welcomed the contributions of Mr. More. To him this was a reasonable way of looking upon Christianity.<sup>1</sup> We could possibly substitute God for the Ideas of Plato, and the Incarnation for the heretofore obscure dualism in the Greek philosopher. And still this method of proving

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1. Humanism and Christian Theism, p. 65 f.

God has its drawbacks. It must prove that the spiritual attributes of man, although ever present in our thinking, are a bridge to the deity without becoming in any way the deity itself. How can we leap from the self to God? How can a dualism which seems to be in the nature of things produce a cogent reason for believing in God, the Absolute One. Besides, how would any one know that which is in Plato's mind is true? To make this a proof, one would have to prove that our "consciousness-filtered-data" correspond to reality. In order to do that one would have to answer the question: How reliable is the mind of man? To prove that there is reality does not necessarily mean that God exists, for we cannot logically equate reality and God. If we do this, we must have another source. To prove God we must first of all prove man. To know who man is, we must compare him with God.<sup>1</sup> To know man we must know God, to prove God we must know man. This is the vicious circle that must be broken through by anyone who begins with man and reason. This is no reflection upon Mr. More's position except for the inherent difficulty of beginning with the human mind and not with revelation.

Mr. More's position shows certain interesting features:

1. Has no use for Paul's eschatology.
2. Belittles the difference between Jesus and the Greek mind.

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1. John Calvin, Institutes, Book One, Chapter One.



3. Find, with Babbitt, the classics of great importance for everyday life. This is no slavish worship of the dead for the classics remain classics because they treasure the permanent in the human race.
4. More spends much time with religion. It seems as if humanism has failed to verify itself. This may lead one to the position that an outstanding humanist had to go out of the human sphere for final support. This would be destructive, unless the religion advocated is essentially humanism. This would repudiate the three levels of Babbitt and Foerster.
5. More must be understood in the Platonic framework. All things seem rational to this Greek savant, and we may wonder: In how far can man lift himself to God by his reason?

### C. Ethical Humanism

After all is said and done, we are different from the animal kingdom. Although there may seem to be many similarities, no one would identify himself with the animal world seriously. But in what? Do the conceptions man plays with have reality apart from the thinking self? That would be for the metaphysician to find out. Are they but the miraculous combination of atoms? Such would be for the domain of science. Whether or not there is a metaphysical world, man has notions, and is different from the animal kingdom.<sup>1</sup>

According to Walter Lippmann, the heavens formerly ruled the hearts of men, but now man has usurped the throne occupied by the celestial dignitaries. This means that man must find morality in man. He can appeal to man only, not to the dethroned monarch of

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1. Living Philosophies, p. 266.

the skies.<sup>1</sup> The humanist must live, "therefore, in the belief that the duty of man is not to make his will conform to the will of God, but to the surest knowledge of the conditions of human happiness".<sup>2</sup> Only time can tell whether man's choice was sagacious.<sup>3</sup> This transition from God to man may cause anarchy in the souls of men, but if, by conscious effort on their part, they find out that they can govern themselves this state of mind will disappear.<sup>4</sup>

Both Lippmann and Krutch follow Freud in the development of the human being from the embryonic stage to maturity.<sup>5</sup> There is no conflict in the uterine stage of a child's life for there is a constant supply of the food desired and the warmth needed. Only after parturition does the conflict arise for the food is not to be had on demand. The nurse seeks to reproduce this maternal environment by the extraordinary comforts of a cradle. When the original satisfactions are approached, crying ceases. As the child grows older, things no longer obey its wishes. A conflict ensues, a conflict which may cause pain and misery. This is a necessary struggle to obtain maturity.<sup>6</sup>

Races as well as individuals travel the road of infancy to maturity. In the child stage of a nation the imagination supplies the requirements for a well-guided life.

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1. Preface to Morals, p. 139.

2. Ibid., p. 137.

3. Ibid., p. 138.

4. Ibid., p. 139.

5. Ibid., pp. 175-178, also Krutch, The Modern Temper, pp. 6ff.

6. Modern Temper, p. 6.

Such lingering illusions of God have spared the race for many years.<sup>1</sup> The belief in the Creator brought with it the belief in a purpose. If the human race is deprived of this illusion, what else can life be but a going out as it came?<sup>2</sup>

In this more mature stage of development science maps out nature for us.<sup>3</sup> It finds no humane force beyond the physical phenomena.<sup>4</sup> This disillusioning science is for the intellect only, for only the intellect can rejoice in it.<sup>5</sup> Science has promised to increase our powers and our happiness.<sup>6</sup> It has increased our control over the physical world, but has not fulfilled its promise in assuring us that increase of power means increase of happiness. "We are disillusioned with the laboratory not because we have lost faith in the truth of its findings, but because we have lost faith in the power of those findings to help us generally as we had once hoped they might help."<sup>7</sup>

If the optimism of Huxley is past,<sup>8</sup> can we build our construction on the foundations of philosophy? Philosophy, as detached mental function, is the breakdown of the race. The wisdom of Socrates and Plato could not help the Athenians in their struggle to maintain the state. Men simply cannot live on that plane for man cannot deviate

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1. Ibid., pp. 9f.
2. Ibid., p. 9.
3. Ibid., p. 12.
4. Ibid., p. 17.
5. Ibid., p. 17.
6. Ibid., p. 61.
7. Ibid., p. 76.
8. Ibid., p. 75.

very far from the animal norm.<sup>1</sup> When man did try to live in the purely intellectual skies, philosophy proved to be but the product of a decadent state of affairs containing the germ of disintegration to hasten the process. History teaches us that barbarians are necessary to supply fresh blood. Barbarians are nature's blood transfusions. When these barbarians are bitten with the detached mental functions of the philosopher, they can see, if they can read, the handwriting on the wall.<sup>2</sup> Philosophy cannot help us any more, in fact, far less, than science.

Shall we then turn to ethics? Here again we meet with disappointments. Science cannot find the soul of man, and with the denial of the soul we discover the overthrow of any pretentious ethical system.<sup>3</sup> Besides, love is simply a biological factor.<sup>4</sup> If such is the case, we cannot laud love to the skies and cannot consider it as the fulfilment of the law and the prophets. Ethics too has failed us.

As Hedonism in the philosophy of Hegesias<sup>5</sup> changes into pessimism, so humanism in the mind of Krutch leads to the same goal. Hedonism found that there is more pain than pleasure in life, humanism finds that there are more failures than successes. Science has failed us in the

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1. Ibid., p. 53.

2. Ibid., p. 53.

3. Ibid., p. 65.

4. Ibid., p. 107.

5. Weber, History of Philosophy, pp. 72f.

ultimate questions of life, philosophy is the sign of decadence, and ethics is only a chimera. In one outstanding feature Krutch differs from the pessimist of antiquity. Hegesias was called the "persuader to die". For him death was sweeter than life. For Krutch, "Leaving the future to those who have faith in it, we may survey our world and, if we bear in mind the facts just stated, we may permit ourselves to exclaim, a little rhetorically perhaps,

Hail, horrors, hail,  
Infernal world! and thou profoundest hell,  
Receive thy new possessor."<sup>1</sup>

At the same time he does not persuade us to commit suicide, "If death for us and our kind is the inevitable result of our stubbornness then we can only say, 'So be it!' Ours is a lost cause and there is no place for us in the natural universe, but we are not, for all that sorry to be human. We should rather die as men than live as animals."<sup>2</sup>

We may summarize Krutch's position:<sup>3</sup>

1. It is not by thought alone that men live.
2. Subtlest intellectual contortions of modern metaphysics do not establish satisfactory aims.
3. Decadent civilizations of the past were not saved by the philosophers.
4. The circle of life begins from the sub-human will to live. There is the primitive credulity of the race, then philosophy supplants it. Philosophy attenuates itself into a mere game "That marks a stage in a progressive enfeeblement".<sup>4</sup> What

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1. Modern Temper, p. 248.
2. Ibid., p. 249.
3. Ibid., pp. 233ff.
4. Ibid., p. 135.

philosophy may consider ultimates turns out to be nothing more than the babbling of "beneficent fictions".<sup>1</sup>

5. Decadent civilizations are apt to think that the collapse of their culture is in reality the end of the human story.
6. Russia has an unformulated philosophy. It is still virile because it is still closer to the source of life. The individual does not play the independent role the philosopher with his mental detached attitude does. Possibly Russia is not a menace but a blood transfusion for our anemic nations.

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Because of this cold way, this intellectual frigidity, Krutch has been ostracized from the commonwealth of humanism. That is, if we should react against the above, we have not overthrown humanism as such. We have only reacted against J. W. Krutch. At the same time it is interesting to note that Walter Lippmann received an advisory seat in the humanistic parliament of the religionists we shall study next.<sup>2</sup> The reason is very simple. Lippmann does not leave us behind in the miry clay of pessimism. After reading Krutch one feels that humanism has a very bad piece of advertising in the book, Modern Temper. As one reads Lippmann, one feels that he is traveling the same highway until the writer unexpectedly changes the scenes. Both seek to reach maturity. When Krutch reaches the coveted maturity he confesses that the human cause is a lost cause. When Lippmann reaches maturity, he by the

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1. Ibid., p. 135.

2. C. F. Potter, Humanism, a New Religion, p. 113.

subtlest legerdemain changes maturity into "high religion".

In the present stage of our existence, there is the conflict between desire and possessions. In short, there is the lack of maturity. Excessive greed, robbery, injustices in high and low places are all characteristic of immaturity, or, the lack of "high religion". What then is this so-called "high religion"? "I venture, at least to suggest that the function of high religion is to reveal to men the quality of mature experience, that high religion is a prophecy and an anticipation of what life is like when desire is in perfect harmony with reality. It announces the discovery that men can enter into the realm of spirit when they have outgrown all childishness."<sup>1</sup>

Every one will not accept this high religion. This should not discourage us, however, for every religious leader felt that only the elect could follow him. These elect constitute "a religious aristocracy".<sup>2</sup> This nucleus will, of course, benefit the herd that lingers at the fence posts of progress.

What then is the evil that causes the principle of maturity not to come to its own in the lives of men and women? We cannot deny evil, we cannot account for it, but we explain it in order that we may deal with it.<sup>3</sup> We realize the evil because we feel it painful. We must

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1. Preface to Morals, p. 193.

2. Ibid., pp. 197 ff.

3. Ibid., p. 217.

"dissociate ourselves from our own feeling about it".<sup>1</sup>  
If such is the case, we may say that Lippmann's brand of humanism produces this doctrine of salvation: "The principle of humanism is detachment, understanding, and disinterestedness in the presence of reality itself".<sup>2</sup>

We may note here that both assume that the King of Heaven is no longer regnant in our lives. Secondly, the burden falls upon man to charter his new kingdom in realms suitable to his needs. Here, however, is a difference. Krutch leads one to pessimism, and Lippmann to Stoicism. Over against Lippmann we agree with J. W. Buckham<sup>3</sup> that the gusto of an inflated joy cannot hide from the religious soul the fact that Lippmann's system could meet with the approval of Zeno, Cleanthes, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius, more than with Paul and Jesus Christ. With Buckham we assert that it is begging the question to christen high morality with high religion. After all, Lippmann has a system of thought. This system of thought he says includes religion. It is his system. By naming a prophetic and an anticipatory phase of that system high religion does not hide the fact that this comes down to this formula, ipse dixit. With Buckham we realize that this passionless type of high religion can have nothing but disillusionments for those who depend upon it. "This is neither

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1. Ibid., p. 219, Our underscoring.
2. Ibid., p. 221, Our underscoring.
3. Humanism, Another Battle Line, pp. 86 ff.



a religious nor a truly human attitude."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, a disinterested attitude toward life is the denial of personality. The various shades of feeling are sensed only by the mother whose personality vibrates with passion for her suffering child. Anxiety for a lost son may carve many wrinkles of care, but may also bring to light secret treasures of character. This disinterested attitude, this ultimate denial of the value of personality, brings with it also a great liability from an intellectual point of view. The one interested can fathom the depths of reality better than the one who has merely a spectator's interest. Personality may prejudice but it may also serve as an indispensable avenue into reality. A soldier can explain the battle sensations better than a newspaper correspondent. The reason is very simple. He was involved. Any disparagement of the value of interest, although we cannot deny that it brings many sorrows, will ultimately impoverish life. Moreover, he who refuses to pay the price for life's sorrows must forfeit the privilege of experiencing life's joy. A workable disinterestedness must include all life, for to be disinterested only in the bad things of life is fictitious. Disinterestedness or detachment is a "stick with two ends".

We cannot understand why one has the right to distinguish between the mature and the immature on the

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1. Ibid., p. 88.

basis of the humanistic principle. The immature is just as human as the mature. The moment we make the distinction we are faced with a difficulty. We are virtually saying that there is the abnormal, the subnormal, and the ideal in life. We are making, possibly unaware, a pattern of an ideal man. The real man is the ideal man. If we have created that ideal man, then we cannot force him upon our fellowmen unless we assume the right of exercising an intellectual dictatorship. If we say that all men who think straight assume that this is the ideal man, then we are begging the question, for the addition of stockholders to our intellectual firm does not establish the ipse dixit attitude of our logic. If we say reality is such, we have left behind us the realm of man and have become metaphysicians.

Lippmann speaks of evil and the consequences of evil, but not of sin. He solves the problem of evil by his doctrine of disinterestedness. Disinterestedness may eliminate pain, e.g., do not associate the leg that is being amputated with the walking of your self, or the child that is drowning with the child of your love. Even though one may consent to go a step lower than the animal solicitation for the young, life is more than a question of pain and anguish. The great question is whether law is a fundamental category of human experience. Is there such a thing as transgression against law? This question Lippmann does not face, nor can a humanist do so. Right

or wrong is not a temporal category. To kill a man today is as wrong now as it was centuries ago. The discussions on evil cannot decoy us from the more ultimate problem of guilt. The question of right and wrong is more human than the question of pain. A man can suffer anguish better than wrong. Dr. Heim, in his classroom lectures, used to say what disturbed the German nation most of all was the question: Was it right for the Allies to treat them as ignominiously as they did seeing that the cause of the war could not be laid at the door of any particular nation? The human soul in sorrow asks the question: Has God the right to take away the life of a husband when all the children are dependent upon him for food and shelter? In this respect Paul is more in sympathy with the human search than they who boast that they are humanists. Paul knows that the law is fundamental, and that the new life, the eschatological life, does not abrogate the law.

There is, moreover, a related question. If, as in the case of Krutch, ethics falls with our soulless science,<sup>1</sup> we have no right to insist upon the obedience to any law. If I should refuse to accept the law that I may not steal who can insist that I shall accept the honest life? Majority cannot dictate to me, for the worship of the deity of the mob is as offensive as that of the deity of

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1. It would be interesting in this connection to note the volatile premises of science as presented in the Psychologies of 1925, and then in the Psychologies of 1930.

the monarch of the skies. Humanism, that fails to face the fact that law is eternal, and that this law does not depend upon my likes and dislikes, is the gallows upon which itself will hang instead of the Absolutism which seems to be the Mordecai of this age. In fact, this is another form of begging the question. The reason why I allow a majority to rule me, except for indolence, fear, or possibly for the lack of importance of the question involved, is the fact that I identify myself with the group. The moment I dissent then majority does not become the test of truth, as far as I am concerned.

#### D. Religious Humanism

Although we have touched upon the religious problems inherent in any school of humanism, none of the foregoing groups have had a distinctive interest in the more peculiar religious phases of life. Paul Elmer More discourses the religious problem of certainty but has no interest in reorganizing the church for world wide programs. Lippmann gives us the highly fictitious "high-religion", but still no organization can bring this about but the individual himself. In this respect Lippmann could find a sympathetic note in Babbitt and More who resent the thought that the individual is only the football of the environment. The constituency of this school is composed of left wing Unitarians and liberal Jews.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Curtis W. Reese, "The Humanist Tradition" in The New Humanist, Jan.-Feb., 1934, Vol. 7, No. 1.

There are some like C. F. Potter who have no church connections at all, unless we call this new addition to the religious family an ecclesiastical institution. This, of course, would be an outrage against the historical use of the term.

It seems as if this phase of humanism is receiving more attention than formerly. Some of our outstanding theologians have sought to overthrow it in the symposium, Humanism, Another Battle Line. One can feel somewhat the force of the witty remark of C. W. Reese when he calls this merely a tea party.<sup>1</sup> The reason for this, says he, is that "many of the critics are in fact closer to Humanism than they are to traditional theism."<sup>2</sup> This brings home the question, can a modernist fight humanism? The humanist says: "No", for there is too much of humanism in him. He cannot fight himself seriously. "Self-pugilism" is mockery. The fundamentalist also says: "No", for a modernist has forsaken the revelation of God and has sought to find in consciousness the standards of truth. D. C. Macintosh dismisses this alternative with a courteous gesture by saying that it is the tendency of extremists to make logically only two extremes possible.<sup>3</sup> Although that evil may lurk in the wake of the extremist, it does not follow that this alternative is not permissible. If the modernist selects what he will consider the revelation

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1. Ibid., p. 27.

2. Ibid., p. 27.

3. Humanism, Another Battle Line, p. 67.

of God, and what will suit his needs, then it follows that he has placed himself above God and has lost all weapons to fight the humanist. If he denies that the revelation of God is the Scripture, then the burden resting upon him is to prove that his reason, his intuition, his feeling is the will of God. In short, he must prove that his conception of truth corresponds with ultimate reality. If man is the starting point, then either man must be the reality or have a secret passage way to that reality whereby he can test his discoveries.

According to A. Wakefield Slaten, Modernism is an attempt to reconcile traditional religion with new scientific methods. Modernism is not fundamentalism. "Fundamentalism is steel, Modernism is rubber", that is, Modernism is an expert at adaptation.<sup>1</sup> Modernism tries to be "middling" but succeeds in being "muddling".<sup>2</sup> "To be a Christian is to accept a certain historic scheme of thought as true. He who interprets the historic claim of that religion in a figurative and spiritualizing way has ceased to be a Christian."<sup>3</sup>

This verdict comes to us in a more figurative way of speaking from C. F. Potter. He reminds his readers that Fosdick, whom he calls a frank modernist, admits that the Supernatural is an obsolete word and stands for an

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1. In Humanist Sermons, p. 83.

2. Ibid., p. 86.

3. Ibid., p. 87.

obsolete idea.<sup>1</sup> But what then can God mean to the modernist? "Modernists still maintain that God is king and make due obeisance on state occasions, but he is shorn of his power and is only a symbol. The real power is the Prime Minister, Man."<sup>2</sup>

This, then, places before us the choice: man or God, experimentation or revelation, earth or heaven. If man has no revelation from God then he cannot know whether it is the man or the God in him that is thinking and reasoning. Perchance one may set forth that revelation is the other side of the same coin of reason, and that reason in man is God's revelation. Although this sounds compelling, how do I know? This would be begging the question for how can we identify the two without identifying God and man? This would presuppose many logical lacunae. If this difficulty can be bridged, are we still in search of reasons why we should believe the foregoing? The questions of error, of the relation of God to man must be faced. When is reason revelation, and when fallacious?

C. W. Reese gives us three starting points of this system of thought: 1. Uniqueness of each person's outlook. This would seem to follow, we may add, from the Protagorean emphasis upon the individual man. If the individual man is the standard of all things this could be anticipated. 2. The evolving nature of life. Humanists

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1. Op. cit., p. 43.  
2. Ibid., p. 44.

believe in evolution, and although they desire to be extremely scientific in their outlook they seem to lean closely to the philosophy of Bergson. This, of course, is a difficulty possibly for the spectator, but no one can assume that evolution arising from subconscious depths is of necessity scientific. 3. Intelligent control for human ends. All science, all advancement of whatever character this advancement may be, must be subservient to human needs. Science is not for the sake of science. Everything is a means to an end, and that end is none other than man.<sup>1</sup> In short, this brief span of life completes and depletes the truly human. The earnest expectation of Romans eight, the sonship of the believer which requires an eternity to realize the eternal concepts involved, are nothing but words. Just words!

C. F. Potter likewise has his windows through which he looks upon reality. 1. He assumes that the universe has meaning. This, he claims, is a starting point of science and religion. Why this universe should have meaning he does not state. Nor does he try to account for the relation between the meaning of the universe and that of man's destiny. This assumption would be welcome to an absolutist as well as to a humanist. How can a humanist say that, for he is going out of the sphere of man in positing anything of the universe. A true humanist must

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1. C. W. Reese, in op. cit., p. 29; Humanist Sermons, viiif. Humanism, pp. lff.



limit himself to the human. He must not project his hopes and ideals into the universe for then he will be doing exactly what is condemned in a theist when the theist creates a god according to the image of man. 2. This meaning is discoverable by man. Again we may ask, so? How do we know whether or no we have the meaning of the universe or man's imagination. 3. Supremacy of personality. Evolution shows that the evolving process is toward man. At the same time, although all Christians would accept unhesitatingly that personality is the masterpiece of creation, from a humanist's point of view this presents a further supposition not expressed. How did this unique personality come about? He has free will. He can shape the destiny of history. How did free will emerge from the inorganic world? Here are two spheres, the one operating by the inexorable law of physics, the other by the law of "ought". If all else is the slavish control of natural law, man can defy nature, man can change its course. The supremacy of personality may be an injection of something new in the universe to give it meaning. In short, what is personality? It is easy to say that we have faith in man, but still the question must be answered who is man? Man comes to us from a realm of choice, of ought, and of responsibility. The moment we add "ought" to the task of man with its consequences, and responsibilities, we see that we are confronted with an insuperable problem. We have an insertion of a new dimension of existence. This

new dimension is mysteriously considered the agent capable of knowing the meaning of the universe. If this has any sense at all, one is forced to conclude that somehow and somewhere a harmony, an intertwining, and an interdependence between the ego and the universe took place. Evidently, according to the principles posited by the humanists, we should not ask such human questions. The supremacy of personality is not the result of any naïve conception of the deity of man. Man is clothed with the unique dignity of responsibility. He is a servant of the "ought" in life.<sup>1</sup>

On this basis what then becomes of religion? A humanist does not need God to be religious. At the same time he is not an atheist. He claims to be an agnostic. Why the humanist should hate the term "atheism" is a puzzle, unless one wishes to use it for propaganda. We fear not to assert, that practically or theoretically, this class of humanism is atheism. Any one who can live with a God as good as buried cannot be classified as a theist. A God that is not necessary in the present will not be necessary in the future. But still these humanists have their definitions of religion. Both Keyser and Potter quote the definitions they approve of from men like Ames and his school.<sup>2</sup> A humanist goes to a humanist for a definition of humanism and calls this religion. This, again, is another form of begging the question. They quote men who

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1. For Potter's three suppositions, cf. op.cit., pp.15ff.
2. Keyser, Humanism and Science, pp. 169ff.

agree with their peculiar system, and then call themselves religionists. They look through their own windows in different souls to find there what they would be looking for in their own life. Religion to them is not the glory of God, but the glory of man. It is the faith that man shall triumph over the defeats that are now baffling him. This may require many centuries, still man's resources are adequate for the task. This faith in the potentialities of man is the religious spirit throbbing in his soul. The deeds he does for humanity are the temples erected to the dignity of man. The future glory, the millennium of the humanist is nothing short of a perfectly geared civilization with men strangely transformed from wickedness unto goodness. Where then is glorying? It is not excluded. By what manner of law? Of works! We reckon, therefore, that a man is justified by good railroads, good bridges, well-equipped hospitals, league of nations, apart from faith in Christ Jesus.

Shall men then pray? Indeed! Prayer becomes the master key to the secret passage way of one's own resources.<sup>1</sup> Prayer, therefore, is the cultivation of the indefinable personality of man, and the development of personality is the very heart of the religion of humanism.<sup>2</sup> What kind of a prayer could a humanist offer? "This, however, is what humanism would make of prayer to God: "O

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1. Potter, op. cit., p. 17.  
2. Ibid., p. 18.

Thou Objectification of our highest ideals!' 'O Thou Projection of our sublimated libido!' 'O Thou symbol of the highest social values!' 'O Thou Personification, Idealization, and Glorification of the world, including humanity!' 'O Thou Wish-Being!' 'O Thou Substantiated Abstraction!'"<sup>1</sup> Whatever value there may be in humanism, one thing is certain that it is the most non-human thing to expect man to bow down to himself and not to smile at his folly. Prayer, to a humanist of this description, simply means talking to one's self. By so doing, subconscious energies will be released which will reinforce the conscious life. To call in the dark room of the subconscious for help is folly. It is better to dispense with prayer entirely than to make men and women psychopathic.

What then becomes of evil and sin? Sin is not mentioned in a humanist's vocabulary. Its denial, of course, is based on the presupposition that the ethical sphere cannot have eternal laws. Still the world is peopled with bad characters and the whole financial world is based on the possibility of being deceived. Our very courtrooms demand an oath of all the witnesses, a custom which shows that, in spite of all our talk about the goodness of man, experience has taught us that we must corroborate Paul's statement, "let God be found true, but every man a liar."<sup>2</sup> The oath is indicative of the fact

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1. Macintosh, op. cit., p. 62.  
2. Romans 3: 4.

that we are all potential liars. Bad people, however, are not sinners, according to Potter. They are the necessary waste of evolution in its experimentation for a better race.<sup>1</sup> Why we should incarcerate these helpless superfluties when evolution has not elected them to play the role of a superman, remains a puzzle. Evil is the necessary stepping-stone to man's advancement on this basis. Why then is the culprit called a malefactor, and why then is he judged?<sup>2</sup> What then are the calamities that befall the wicked and the just? According to Potter, "Pain of any sort is a sign of maladjustment and not a sign either of wrath or the love of a supernatural deity. Pain is a social warning and not a religious accolade".<sup>3</sup> Thus speaks one who says he knows nothing about God, and upon whose basis no one can talk either good or bad outside of the self hemmed in by the walls of man. If Potter wants to believe in the supposition that the universe has a meaning, he forgets that he may be confronted with the question: Suppose this universe be personal, what meaning has this universe with all the pain and sorrows that eclipse the joys and pleasures of life? Even the "by-products of evolution", described in Romans one, could not be punished for forgetting God. Neither could sorrow be transformed into a solubrious consequence.<sup>4</sup> But should

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1. Op. cit., p. 16.
2. Romans 3: 5ff.
3. Potter, op. cit., p. 30.
4. Romans 8: 18 ff.

we fear this statement of Potter? He has forfeited the right to make any statement as to what the deity can do and cannot do when he prides himself on the agnostic position most humanists love to take. Besides, in connection with the so-called by-products, waste-material in evolution's expensive laboratories, we are confronted with two possibilities: (1) Evolution is a law; or (2) Evolution is but a freak appearing on our planet for a period of time. If the former, then our waste-material (bad people) will always be with us. If a law, then we know of a power beyond the human. We have something permanent and transcendent. Humanism can give us nothing but pessimism for the universe is such that by-products and waste-material will be the raw material upon which evolution must work. If we take the second position that evolution is but a temporary freak we are no better off. If no law then chance, and chance may plunge us into a hell. If humanism wishes to give us an anchor of the soul it cannot satisfy our longings by whitewashing its metaphysical assumption-chance. If no eternal laws, then there is no truth. If no eternal laws, then chance. If chance, then despair. If despair, then no salvation. If, to the contrary, eternal laws, then we have broken down the walls of our limited self.

From the dawn of civilization, religion has given man a millennium of some kind. Religion is almost unthinkable without some kind of a promise of a better land. Our

final concern is, therefore, what golden age can this religion of man promise us. This religion promises us something for the future, although it must be said in passing, it has nothing to guarantee us that a future will take place. Here again we have the same two possibilities: If there is no Absolute God, if anything is possible, we surrender our position to "chance". How can such a system give us a bright future? Superficially, many artists dreams are projected upon the canvass of what may be. One description is as good as another for the salvation awaiting the sons of men is a better program to establish themselves more snugly in well furnished homes, or to ride in smoother and better air-conditioned trains, or to see more beautiful flowers in the parks while a better band is playing away the sorrows of life.

From John Haynes Holmes' mental easel comes this bizarre painting: 1. There will be no gods in the future. 2. There will be no churches. There will be the community with its sacred places, e.g., Lincoln Memorial, where men can pray, and the Cleveland Civic Auditorium. 3. There will be no Sundays as we have Sundays now. Every day will be a holy day. One hour of each day will be devoted to communion. 4. There will be no Bibles. All literature will have a guiding influence. 5. There will be no prophets or Saviours, no Messiahs, Christ, or Son of God to save mankind. Instead there will be a new calendar which will include Whitman, Tolstoi, Mahatma Ghandi. 6. There will be

no religions but religion. All sects will be the many mansions of our father's house.<sup>1</sup> And still the Old Testament patiently teaches all religionists that the prophet veritably dragged men from the mire of idolatry and filth. Besides, the burden of proof rests upon any one dreaming of new ages to produce cause for assuming that man will be better in the future than he has been in the past.

Potter is given somewhat less to daydreaming and more to the immediate social needs. He has a program mapped out which will bring the desired results, as far as his vision until the present can determine. There are the twenty-one proposals and objectives: 1. The cultivation of international and interracial amity; 2. The legalizing of birth-control; 3 The improvement and extension of education; 4. The raising of cultural standards; 5. The correlation of cultural agencies; 6. The defense of the freedom of speech; 7. The encouragement of art, music, drama, the dance, and all other means of self-expression; 8. The elevation of the ethical standards of the motion picture films; 9. The promotion of public health; 10. The checking of standardization in case where it may injure the individual; 11. The improvement of methods of dealing with criminals; 12. The improvement of means of

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1. Humanist Sermons, pp. 18ff. (C. W. Reese, to the contrary, would make the church the responsible agency for ushering in this new world.)



communication; 13. The abolition of religious subsidies; 14. The improvement of industrial conditions; 15. The extension of social insurance; 16. The establishment of full sex-equality; 17. The extension of child welfare measures; 18. The purification of politics; 19. The abolition of special privilege; 20. The conservation of natural resources for the people; and 21. The substitution of temperance for prohibition.<sup>1</sup>

The strangest thing of all this is that this resembles Christianity in some of its objectives. Probably Christians have not lived their Christianity to the full, but a true conception of Christianity demands that this present life be spent in love and for righteousness. Christianity with Babbitt, however, would insist upon the renovation of the individual for a well-equipped hospital is no guarantee of kind nurses. Christ made different men out of fishermen before He could entrust them with the great task of changing the environment. The good, however, is borrowed from the Christianity without the recognition of the debt. The only difference is that the foundation has been changed. This foundation is from man, by man, and unto man are all things. The question for anyone to face is naturally, will a different foundation in the course of a few centuries produce an entirely new superstructure?

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1. Op. cit., pp. 114 f.

### E. The Antithetical School

For want of a better term we wish to mention theologians who are not interested in any particular school of humanism but consider all brands alike who, whatever the source, the goal, the method, and outcome may be, depend solely upon man. The reaction then would include men like Schleiermacher and his antagonist Hegel. It would justify a theologian like Voetius, although perhaps unacquainted with the term humanism in this modern connotation to consider a man like Descartes an atheist for constructing his entire edifice upon the doubt of a man.<sup>1</sup>

In this respect terms like absolutism should not deceive us. Although Schleiermacher taught an absolute dependence upon God, this God was the God of Schleiermacher's creation. Besides, the soul could reach out to the Almighty without the aid of the sacrifice of God on Calvary in the historical sense of the term. To imagine that one can construct a system out of the "feeling" self presupposes that man can lift himself to the divine heights.<sup>2</sup> Although a different aspect of the mental life of man is emphasized, the intellectual, Hegel too stands condemned for identifying the spirit of God and the spirit of man.<sup>3</sup> The human soul can reach the Absolute through logic. Still the source is man.

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1. Thomas, "Eloge de Rene Descartes" in Descartes, Vol. I, pp. 105f., and "Descartes a Voet," in Vol XI, pp. 45ff.
2. E. Brunner, "Die Grenzen der Humanität, p. 5.
3. Ibid., p. 6.

There is a historical justification for the use of the concept humanism in this way. We confess that historically the term had a different connotation. In this present sense, all men, even Paul Elmer More, who reaches from his reason to Plato, to Christ, to the Church Fathers, would fall in the same class. A theologian's concern is not primarily whether James and Schiller are correct, and Hegel a bundle of folly, but whether any one is building on the foundation of man or of God. The philosophical question is not irrelevant for a theologian feels that a preliminary belief in the Absolute will bridge the chasm more smoothly than its outright denial. The historical justification, then, is not that the word is used in this way historically, but that we have an analogous case in the struggle between rationalism and Christianity. From a philosophical point of view there were two schools of thought, rationalism and empiricism. From a theological point of view the philosophical differences were secondary, for both in spite of their family quarrels, belonged to the same family of man's self-sufficiency to find God.<sup>1</sup> This fits, admirably well, the case here. From a philosophical point of view there may be the eternal struggle whether or not thinking is reality, or whether utility is the ultimate test of truth, or whether technology is the only guarantee of accuracy,

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1. McGiffert, Protestant Thought Before Kant, p. 186.

whether or no the microscope is simply enlarged human eyes or the reliable guide into reality. From a theological point of view this all belongs to the realm of man's personality for when elevated to the dignity of a Weltanschauung, constitutes a denial of the indispensability of revelation.

Finally, a caution in the use of terms may prevent much careless thinking. Although Christianity has human interests at heart, it would be better not to use the term humanism to indicate these interests. Let the humanists employ the term they desire. Let the Christians, if they are thankful for their way of looking upon life, be content to call it Christianity. To use the term humanism may lead some to believe that there is a possible bridge between the two. When applied to the days of the Reformation such was the case, for humanism had a different connotation. Such is the case no longer. Instead of selling our Christianity by beclouding our concepts, the safe procedure would be to maintain its distinctiveness. No one can fail to read the human interests Paul has at heart in his admonitions to the readers of the Epistle to the Romans, especially chapters twelve to sixteen, but it surely would betray failure to see the issues to call this humanism. A system stands or falls according to the validity of the interpretative concepts of the individual interpreting reality.

## F. Summary and Evaluation

Before comparing Romans and humanism more sharply we wish to restate in a summary way certain inherent difficulties of practically any school of humanism:

1. All call certain human, recurrent tendencies fallacious. Why is man incurably religious,<sup>1</sup> and at the same time, in error when he believes the religion dear to him? Why is the urge to seek for an underlying unity, an Absolute, a non-genuine urge, although human beings have cherished this urge as necessary for centuries? Or, on the basis of humanism, what is normal and what is abnormal, without setting up an ideal pattern of reality as we conceive it?
2. Humanism must bear in mind that the satisfied soul soon becomes a home-sick soul. This has taken place across the ocean. Humanism will take away man's desire to believe in God, to give one's self to His service. One of the desires of the German Church today is to regain what it has lost through this devastating influence. Man can pride himself on achievements. Man has made a home in the world. But in all his activities he carried with him the germ of death. Says Rendtorf in a popular church periodical "Der Mensch der modernen Zivilisation, der zum Herrn der Erde wurde, ist in seiner eigenen Welt einsam geworden. Er hat den Himmel über sich zerschlagen- darum hat er auch die Erde entfremdet und hat seine Heimat verloren".<sup>2</sup> One feels in this citation the same undertone of Krutch, but, in this case, from the premise of a regained faith.
3. With Babbitt we maintain that the evil in man is too intertwined in his entire make-up, leaving no stone of all his capacities unturned. Humanism cannot eliminate that which is too deep to be touched by a few important environmental changes. Besides, an environmental change will never satisfy the conscience that knows it has been wronged. If a man cleans my automobile after having cursed me, the environmental change of a clean car, or a clean garage cannot satisfy the conscience that distinguishes between right and wrong.

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1. Robert Ernest Hume, The World's Living Religions, p. 1
2. In Glaube und Volk, 15 März, 1933.

4. We notice a singular neglect of the historical material at our disposal. Few humanists tackle the problem: What shall we then do with Jesus and the teachings concerning Him? If, in the final analysis, Jesus actually lived, and proved Himself to be what He maintained He was, then possibly our minds may fail us, but His revelation will be the clue to the proper understanding of the Father. Such remarks coming from Santayana and Havelaar that the records are a beautiful drama is begging the question. A humanist is logically forced to show why we should not believe in Christ. Quotations from authors who believe as we do will not constitute argumentation.
5. Humanism says that man is the highest development in the scale of evolution. The supreme good is man. What, however, happens to man? He dies. If such is the case, the final category of all existence is the irrational, inexorable power, death. That is, the final category of all human existence is irrationality. And if that is the case, irrationality becomes more fundamental than rationality. This, then, would take away the rational right to say that any human experience is the true experience. We have taken the ground away from under our feet: (1) If irrationality becomes more fundamental we can say nothing, for to say anything at all it must be rational; (2) If death ends all then death and not man is the highest development of evolution.
6. Humanism has no right to posit a future. If there is no God to overcome this present evil world of ours, if there are no laws that are eternal, then all we can do is simply take a chance. A philosophy of chance is incompatible with a philosophy of the remedial powers of an unknown future. We may, perchance, posit a universe. This is fallacious, for we may subtly transfer the label "Absolute" to the universe. If we refuse to do that, then we have a universe not governed by eternal laws. If so, how can we have a "universe"? The distant blue is not an oasis but a fata morgana for the color waves that play in the desert heat upon the scorching sands are but the game of chance. There is either one who rules all, knows all, directs all, or there is chance. If there is chance, this chance becomes more fundamental than certainty. Through a happy inconsistency the humanist is optimistic. He has however, no right to be, but unaware to himself he is positing something eternal. He knows that eternally it is better to live in peace than in war, to live honestly, and to seek the right.
7. Ends in an ipse dixit. If man is the starting point of all his mental life, then man is begging the question.

He must face the question whether man is self-interpretative. If he is, who gave him the right? Did he simply assume that right? It matters not whether he can find one or many who believe the same way for numbers do not change the truth that man is begging the question. By finding and quoting kindred souls we are making others our spokesman, but still we maintain a position because we maintain it. Unless humanism can prove that it is self-interpretative it must of necessity say, do not take me seriously for only I am setting forth this proposition. To prove that it is self-interpretative requires either that man goes to man, which would be begging the question, or to go outside of the human level, which would be the annulment of the position. Apart from other considerations we maintain that humanism is a cloud that is sailing in the skies, hanging in the clear blue, fringed by the golden rays of the sunset of Christianity that still brightens it before it sails into the darkness of night. Humanism scrutinized is not self-satisfying.

8. We must bear in mind that much of the foregoing does not apply to the literary school. At the same time a rule for a special domain cannot be final unless it is inherently so. That is, the law of measure, a special law for the human sphere is fictitious, for in comparison with Paul, it fails to recognize that if the resurrection life is the ideal life we must live that now. We may say that this law will hold good even for the new life. Then, however, we are mixing spheres, and are begging the question for why should one assume that Paul's doctrine of the new love and the law of measure is an equation?
9. Humanism has very poor credentials. More turned to religion, Krutch to scepticism and pessimism, and Lippmann to a quasi- "High Religion". The Left-Wing Unitarians have given us a picture of the future that must be inflated with pious wishes although the more it is inflated the sooner it will be evident that it is not puncture proof. We eternal tourists are worried about ethical nails in the road. One would expect that the very humanists would advertise their scheme a little better!

C O N C L U S I O N S



"For I am not ashamed of the gospel; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is revealed a righteousness of God, from faith unto faith: as it is written, But the righteous shall live by faith". Romans 1: 16,17.

"For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace". Romans 8: 6.

Will the Epistle to the Romans be vital again?

Our age does not present a more formidable opposition than the century in which this document was written. Stoicism is a form of humanism. Stoicism does not necessarily imply pantheism, but the general drift of this system was in that direction. When any system of thought identifies the individual mind with the Absolute there are two possible dangers: 1. We make the human absolute and look upon time and space and all the human limitations as appearance, or we make (2) the absolute human as the post-Hegelian development in Germany indicates. Pantheism is humanism for whether man call himself a spark of the divinity or whether he calls divinity man at his best, the identification of the two makes God a form of man. Pantheism is, virtually, the apotheosis of humanism.

The Athenian experience shows the difficulties with which Paul had to contend.<sup>1</sup> Athens was the temple of Humanism as Jerusalem was the temple of revelation.

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1. Cf. above, pp. 43ff.

There, too, Paul encountered many tendencies which presage the tendencies of ages to come, namely, the human mind abhors the eschatological message. Paul Elmer More has very little use for Paul. This Greek savant possibly forgets that the very same difference existed in Athens. The possibility exists, as we have noticed before, that the only choice one has is humanism or eschatology, for eschatology presupposes the open grave, regeneration, and life from above. This life from above, however, cannot be of man, for of man is "in Adam". This new life is "son-ship life". If so, Paul was not an eschatological sponge, absorbing the ideas of his age unmediated. Paul's eschatology and anti-humanism are the results of his Weltanschauung. The very presence of the Holy Spirit implies that the eschatological life is a present possession.<sup>1</sup> We do not become children and heirs when Christ returns, but we have a mansion above already.<sup>2</sup> The present trials are not an unrelated interplay of maladjustments, but the subtle warp of the texture of the glorified life.<sup>3</sup> The flow of human blood upon the slaughter-fields of the nations shall coagulate when touched by the sincere desire to allow the law of love to operate unimpeded in both the individual and in the group.<sup>4</sup> Such is the nobler con-

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1. Romans 8: 9ff. Note the use of the word "now" in Romans.
2. Romans 8: 16ff.
3. Romans 8: 28.
4. Romans 12-16.

ception of eschatology.<sup>1</sup> With this conception of eschatology in mind let us make a final comparison, for it will bring home that any age may change its styles but underneath the garb the same human heart is beating and the same breast is knocking: "In Adam", "In Christ".

A. Statement of Fundamental Differences

Romans

Humanism

1. God

God is knowable for man is the bearer of His image. To reveal Himself unto man is not a projecting of a foreign self into the life of man. Although we are lost children we still are children. Romans 2: 14ff.

According to the left-wing Unitarians, Agnosticism is the only attitude. This implies the denial of the image of God in man. We are not and never were, and possibly never shall be his children. This is also true of Schiller, Lippmann and Krutch.

God is the Revealer. The image of God makes this revelation intelligible. The Spirit of God uses the forms of speech, the modes of thinking to bring to man the message of life. At the same time the message itself is of a new life, a new world, a new source. Romans 8: 1 ff.

Science, and discovery for human goals. No new life, but this world shall be transformed into a paradise. Hence no revelation necessary.

God is eternal. A "limited God", is foreign to the Epistle to the Romans. God has an eternal plan and no power can separate the redeemed from the eternal intentions of God. Romans 8: 33 ff.

Practically we can live as if no eternal God existed. This we do not know. (In fact how could one ever make a statement about an eternal God on the basis of humanism. Even to deny it would be overstepping the boundary.)

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Cf. Explanatory Remarks on 8-11.

God is righteous. His will is the standard of our conduct. He must set the condition for reinstatement to sonship. Romans 3:21f.

Man is the standard of life. He is bad, has maladjustments, is the waste in nature's and evolution's experimentation, but has not offended the deity he does not, and possibly cannot know.

God is gracious. The elective plan of God is presented in Romans for our comfort to know that if God has a plan believers cannot be defeated by the world. Romans 9-11. He gives us his power unto salvation. Rom.1:16f. He through Christ gives us the "Gospel of God". Rom. 1:1.

We are not in need of grace. (Note: We do not include Irving Babbitt, although we know of no definition of grace from his writings.)

God is Absolute. Not that God is the Absolute of philosophy. That would be begging the question. He is Absolute in all things. Standard of conduct, dispenser of grace, and revealer of truth. He is the potter that forms the clay.

If this life depletes the purpose of our existence, why should we desire grace which implies a new life, a new relation. Humanism cannot give us a definition of the highest good. Neither can it be optimistic. Krutch seems to be the most consistent thinker and he became a pessimist.

God is the only source of life. He gives eternal life.

Evolution: The religious humanists believe in an emergent evolution from the subconscious world to the conscious life of man.

## 2. Jesus Christ

Appointed to bring about all things to a goal, the eschatological life. Romans 1:4.

Science for this life. (Babbitt and More would not subscribe to this, for this would disturb the balance of nothing too much.)

His death and resurrection becomes a "once-for-all". His death is irrepeatable. Romans 6:10.

Life is a life of trial and error. Experience must prove what is workable.

As the hub of all history all things must be related to the cross, resurrection and return of Christ. Unless a thinker can relate

According to some, science is man's projection upon nature. He makes himself a home in this world, and the best home is good houses and

the present and the past  
with the future his system  
is a failure.

Life does not become a life  
of trial and error, possibly  
through metempsychosis to be  
repeated, but once-for-all  
related with Christ's death  
and Christ's glory.

Christ is the supreme reve-  
lation of God, not as an  
abstract concept, a symbol of  
a universal law of sacrifice,  
but the factual revelation  
of the sacrifice of Calvary.

### 3. Man

#### As a Thinker

Must have the absolute God  
to think the truth. By not  
having God, and not holding  
him in remembrance, man  
incurs the just wrath of the  
Almighty.

Must include in his thinking:  
sin, redemption, return of  
Jesus Christ.

All humanitarian projects in  
which man is privileged to be  
engaged must be done for  
God's sake. He has called us  
out of darkness, we are chil-  
dren of light. Our deeds are  
the diffusion of light from  
heaven.

#### As a Moral Being

His life is not governed by  
a code based upon experimen-  
tation primarily, but upon the  
will of God. The moral law  
is the rule that must stand  
fast in all centuries.

He is not free to choose his

good parks.

No such supernatural rela-  
tion.

Personality is the highest  
form of revelation of  
evolution. Beyond human  
personality we cannot go.  
Deeds of men will bring  
about the desired change.

There are no absolute  
standards.

As we know only man, it  
follows that it would be  
safer to think only about  
man's immediate needs.

The love for humanity, for  
humanity's sake should compel  
us to give of our best.  
We must be willing to  
sacrifice for generations  
still unborn.

We do not know of such a  
fixed moral law. Better  
to exercise disinterested-  
ness, (Lippmann) or believe  
love simply a biological  
factor. (Krutch.)

own standards of conduct. He is responsible to God. Romans 2:14.

The responsibility of man is far reaching in dignity for he is the image of God who can sin against God or praise God. Because man the responsible creature sins against God, man is to blame for all the results of sin. Romans 1:18-3:31.

We do not know from whence the pains of life, or the bad things are. We study them to conquer them. Formerly a man thought lightning a token of an irate deity-Franklin made it a friend. Science will eliminate the maladjustments.

#### Man as a Citizen of Two Kingdoms

True eternal life does not clash with the duties of the state. Romans 13:1ff.

As a citizen of the new Kingdom, man is in duty bound to transfer the benefits of the love that unites the citizens to this world, in order that the world may reap the benefit of that new life.

Earthly life is the summary of man's duties.

#### B. The question of Life and Death

When Paul calls the mind of flesh death the interesting question presents itself, is there any value in humanism at all? Humanism is a legitimate protest against the forgetting of one's secular duties. This, however, is not the fault of Romans but of the readers. Christians are apt to fall into all sorts of extremes, and extremes bring about reactions. It would, however, be equally fallacious to maintain that this is general in Christianity. Christians have always cared for the sick and the dying. Christians have always interested themselves in the betterment of the human race. Such outstanding Calvinists of the

the continent, as Groen Van Prinsterer, Abraham Kuyper, and Anne Anema,<sup>1</sup> and in more recent years Colijn ought to caution anyone against concluding too hastily that Christians are careless about the welfare of the nations and the world. At the same time the danger does exist that we seek a heavenly home while our brethren are starving.<sup>2</sup> This is anti-Christian, however, and is never condoned for a second by the author of our Epistle.<sup>3</sup> Although a legitimate protest and warning, the thought remains behind, the humanists have taken the benefits that most Christians usually associate with Christianity (with the exception of a few) out of the Christian's temple and have transferred them into their own, and have placed them on the fictitious pedestal of man without proclaiming the real intention of destroying the deity.

The mind of flesh receives a new meaning for us when we compare it with the mind of spirit. Because it (the mind of flesh) cannot fit into its system any eschatological scheme other than the utopias that have failed, it is deprived of the only source of life. It is, therefore, dead. In its little sphere, flesh can do civil good. But this good, which is also the gift of God, can never cause a man to claim the benefits of the new life. At the very best, these gifts given to the mind of flesh are inherently limited to this sphere. Why should

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1. Anema, Onze Tijd en Onze Roeping, pp. 26ff.
2. James 2: 14ff.
3. Romans 12: 9ff.

the construction of a new bridge entitle one to enter the Kingdom of God? The smiling countenance of God is not through a construction, but from beginning to end, faith. This may seem foolish to a spectator, but it should be remembered that Romans teaches us that we are children, and confidence is the outstanding characteristics of a child who truly loves its parent. Faith and sonship are kindred concepts of a life that is designated for a prodigal's return. As Immanuel Kant had categories for the respective realms of reason, so we too must emphasize that every plane should be allowed to dictate which categories suit its needs. If this be borne in mind, we can see no difficulty in maintaining Paul's consistency in setting forth that the new plane, the eschatological, in the broad sense, demands faith, love, hope. The new dimension has given us its own categories.

Then why is the mind of flesh death? In this respect Paul is again consistent. We all must meet God, and then what shall take place? We can meet Him in our new capacity as son, and then this will be a home-coming; we can meet him as an idolater who has many substitutes for the true God, such as good works, new bridges, new hospitals, and then we must face the consequences. This simply means when humanism becomes a substitute for Christianity it becomes idolatry. All idolatry is competition, or, better still, enmity. Man is hemmed in by the power of death, man has not received the new dignity of



being a child of God whereby he can call Abba Father. Whether or no this sounds like the clanging cymbal, from Paul's point of view there is a formidable consistency underlying the whole framework.

Now we are placed before a choice. We dare to assert that from a logical point of view every system is consistent as far as it goes. In its main outlines humanism is consistent. If man is the measure of all things why should we then be concerned about God? This would break down the principle that man is the measure of which he boasts. The sane thing then would be to make the home of man the best home he knows. To do this he must use the means at his disposal, such as science, religion, and art. Although death ends all, we know nothing beyond that, there may be an immortality, and if this means that death is then the final category, well, then it does, but as long as I am here I shall be happy that I am a man and not an animal. This is consistency, but, of course, too limited. The very delimitation of the field may be interpreted as inconsistent. This to the writer seems inevitable. But, after coldly ignoring the relation between man and the universe, or merely asserting that such a relation exists, this system can hold true to its premise- man. It must, however, omit so much that one would feel that the deepest questions of life remain unsatisfied.

Christianity can boast also of consistency. If God exists as God then it is our task to worship Him. If

we fail to owe allegiance to Him we are virtually dethroning Him by setting up the self as monarch. In order that fellowship may be restored He has sent His Son into the world. If death can defeat the purpose of Christ then Christ's work is not triumphant. That is, a Christian is in duty bound to believe in an eternal home else the work of Christ has been thwarted by a power greater than that of Christ. Death is the wages, moreover, of sin. If the sin has been pardoned and reinstatement has taken place, then the pardoned child has the full right to sonship, and to be an heir of life everlasting. God then becomes his standard, and Christ his mediator, for Christ has received power to bring about the ultimate change that shall bring with it a new heaven and a new earth. There is nothing inconsistent in this whole scheme of redemption. Humanism cannot offer any objections to it without forfeiting the right of maintaining the assumptions of humanism, for to deny this would be to assert that humanism can judge matters not distinctly human.

We do believe, however, that humanism cannot take in all of human experience. This is one decisive blow against the system that seeks to do justice by man. Humanism is consistent as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. All that a humanist can say is this: "Up to my present experience I do not feel the need of the strength of the living God". But will that statement stand the test of time when calamities come to a soul? But if

humanism wishes to beg the question, if it is satisfied to sell itself to an unknown future as a football of chance, if it wishes to take from under its feet the very ground of any argument, that there is an eternal law of truth, all this is consistent on a humanistic basis. But the question is pertinent, however, will humanism satisfy itself?

The question is far deeper, however, than mere consistency. We must ask the further question we have been raising throughout the entire project, what is the validity of the interpretative assumptions of the two systems? Through which windows shall we look, through the belief that God is ultimate, or that Man is and shall be the final product of evolution? This does not mean the God of our logic. A rational God may be but the figment of our brain having no correspondence in reality.<sup>1</sup>

Paul's position is an unequivocal life or death. If man through his reason, emotions, or will has found a god, he is still in the realm of flesh, and dwelling in that dimension, is in the sphere of death.

That such a reply would not satisfy a humanist needs no proof. Paul to the humanist is but another mortal

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1. In fact we may follow the position of the Barthian School that there is no way from man to God. "'No way from man to God,' means also that God absolutely transcends our understanding. Not even a proof of his existence is possible to us. Barth sweeps away with scorn the whole apparatus of apologetic for theism. Brunner says trenchantly that 'next to the foolishness of denying God, certainly the greatest is that of proving him!'" Walter Lowrie, Theology of Crisis, pp. 123f.

experimenting with the questions that burn in every bosom. That his verdict should be death means absolutely nothing.

We possibly could come to the Apostle's assistance, if he needs any, by reinforcing his verdict by the very confession of Krutch, Lippmann, and, for that matter, More. We might be able to substantiate our position by indicating that Philosophic Humanism, Ethical Humanism, and Religious Humanism must resort to a philosophy of chance. Chance will work havoc with any epistemology. Chance then is death to eternal truth, and eternal plans of God. Epistemologically speaking, we discover that the mind of flesh is death.

One may make another rejoinder. Idealism and mysticism assert there is a God. Would not this God give us all that we need for life and peace? Again, the question is: Is this God, although eternal and the guarantee of the laws of truth, sufficient? Not if He is the product of flesh. The mind of flesh in this respect is death also. For how can we make the leap from man to ultimate reality? We must either be one with that reality which would destroy the fact of sin, as well as that of creation, or we are not one, and then how can we bridge the human and the divine? Supposing that this were a misrepresentation of Idealism, we still would have to conclude that if reason were all that man would have he is dead. What we need is power, and power is a fact, a deed, an event. We need good news of a deliverance. This reason

cannot give. Revelation is the only means of telling the evangel.

We conclude, therefore, that all the avenues of flesh are avenues of death when compared with the fundamental truths of the new life, which the Father has revealed through the accursed death and blessed resurrection of our Lord.

To this we must add one more sure sign of death. If we depend upon chance for all our future bliss, or if we trust evolution which demands a heavy toll of human beings for experimentation, or if we think of the Absolute of our minds as requiring disharmonies to come to consciousness in man, we must surrender this world to an inevitable pessimism. The end of evolution is pessimism. The final goal of chance is almost anything but certainty. The end of an optimistic attitude toward an Absolute coming to consciousness is usually followed by a reaction to despondency.<sup>1</sup>

Over against this Paul has the Christ who died "once-for-all".<sup>2</sup> Life becomes the hub of the universe. This "once-for-all" means something that cannot be repeated. Evolution cannot continue to demand its experiments, nor will disharmonies forever plague the human-race. The "once-for-all" of Christ, the hub of the new life, means an end to the old. It means a return to complete what was

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1. Cf. above pp. 144ff.

2. Romans 6:10.

latent and implied in the resurrection. To have a "center" is distinctly Christian. Its very absence is death.<sup>1</sup>

This, however, does not prove the opposite: "for the mind of the spirit is life and peace". In order to be more positive, we shall insert a paragraph on Apologetics. Will Christianity give us life and peace? Can we prove it? Without a doubt, if its assumptions are valid, the inference is clear. If Christ arose from the dead, if He changes our relation to God through His Spirit, there must be life and peace. But are our assumptions valid?

### C. A Paragraph on Apologetics<sup>2</sup>

Paul marks the beginning of the struggle between faith and reason in Christianity. When he penned those mighty words, I am not ashamed of the Gospel for it is the power of God unto salvation, Paul took a stand which we

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1. Cf. Romans 6:10, 8:6, and 8:28.
2. Cf. Karl Barth, Kirkliche Dogmatik, pp. 89ff, 311ff. Herman Bavinck, Gereformeerde Dogmatiek, Vol. I, pp. 34f., 544ff. Karl Heim, Glauben und Denken. This entire book is Heim's philosophic framework. In this work he points out that both the rationalists of the continent, and the empiricists of the island were children of the same family by name, "consciousness-philosophy". (Bewusstseinsphilosophie.) That is, all their philosophies, as divergent as they may be, had one fundamental characteristic, "conditioned by consciousness". Strange to say, Karl Heim is guilty of the same conditioning when he constructs his own system of philosophico-theology, the system of paradoxes, upon the data of consciousness. Christians are permitted, however, to believe that "consciousness" per se does not vitiate our thinking, nor does this mediation in any way detract from the validity. The Logos who created the world is the Logos of all true light. (John 1: 1-14.)

we must respect. In that statement we discover several truths. 1. Salvation is power and not a logical universal. 2. The power is from God. That is what we know of God, for 3. It is revealed. This revelation becomes vital when we accept it by faith. This is the struggle of the church which may give way to humanistic tendencies. We believe that Anselm led the church in the wrong direction when he tried to prove God by identifying Him with the necessary highest good of our intellect. The increase of learning from Spain and from the near east simply piled difficulty upon difficulty. Who would reign over the church: Plato, Aristotle or revelation? Luther and Melanchthon sensed this problem. Kant sought to overthrow the proofs for the existence of God by reason, and, at the same time, prove his existence by another domain of reason, the Practical Critique. Decartes begins with his personal

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Although a Christian cannot prove this rationally, he alone of all people knows that his epistemology is not a fiction; Abraham Kuyper, Encyclopaedie der Heilige Godgeleerdheid, Vol. III, pp. 456ff; Kuyper and Warfield were at odds in this respect. Warfield placed apologetics at the beginning of his theological Encyclopaedia, Kuyper as a subdivision of the dogmatological group; Auguste Lecerf, De la Nature de la Connaissance religieuse, deals with the same problem. One can tell that this writer has been influenced by both Kuyper and Bavinck; James Orr, The Christian View of God and the World, is more in sympathy with Warfield than with the Dutch, German, and French theologians. This may be due to the influence Hegelianism had a quarter of a century ago, for Barth and Heim react strongly against the gigantic and compelling system. To this may be added Brunner's Der Mittler, pp. 85ff., in which he asserts that any true conception of evil precludes the possibility of a system.

doubt, and from that doubt he constructs a pretentious system. Spinoza and Hegel contend with the twofold aspect (the religious and the philosophical) of truth. And what have we gained? Can philosophy ever prove that salvation is the power of God? At best it can prove that a God can exist, although to do so it runs the danger of premising man without proving his capacity to comprehend God. It can do what James Orr contends that God is rational, and if so, we must see the traces of the rationality of his being.<sup>1</sup> But there, too, we must be careful not to confuse the universals employed in our logic, the absolute, and the God of power unto salvation. Why should the thought, the absolutes that I employ necessarily imply that there is a God?<sup>2</sup>

We do believe that the cravings of the human heart for the eternal realities are adumbrations of the deeper needs of man. We believe that the image of God must be fully assured of resting in God before it will stop striving for the higher reaches of reality. But this cannot be proven unless a man assumes that God exists and that man is the image of God. A Christian has a right to assume it, for he posits it. But this is no proof, and at the bar of reason would be in need of proof. Once it is taken for granted the eternal longing for God or a god becomes self evident.

Possibly history can plead our cause. Our great

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1. James Orr, The Christian View of God and the World, pp. 3ff.
2. James Orr, op. cit., pp. 54, 59, 81, 86.



authority for this method of approach is none other than Paul himself. Paul employs his experiences as an argument.<sup>1</sup> Whenever Paul addresses the Jews, he makes this challenge: "Deny these facts if you can! They were not done in a corner. You know whereof I speak". Paul hurls before Agrippa: "What shall I then do with the facts of Jesus' life, my life, and that of others?" Paul could make a formidable case. Of course, the only difficulty we of today would have would be to prove that what happened and what was recorded correspond. We may reply that the early church accepted these facts, and that there are no historical documents to deny any accounts recorded therein. We may even go a step farther by indicating that if we cannot depend on documents, we should be consistent and deny all documentary evidence. Notwithstanding this, Agrippa had all these facts. The King and his retinue of sceptics cannot call God, Abba Father. If they could cry, Abba Father, they would discover the Father's handwriting and promises. This may be called the testimony of the Holy Spirit. This may seem too subjective, but then we will be in the same class as the humanist. They too are too subjective. And on what grounds can they deny this contention? All that their denial amounts to is either: (1) I have not experienced it; or (2) What I or the majority of people do not experience is abnormal; or (3) This is con-

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1. Acts 26: 26, also above, pp. 16ff.

trary to reality, and then they have become dogmatists and metaphysicians.

Suppose we accept this revelation, will Christianity satisfy our thinking as well as our feeling? In this respect we think Christianity is the most consistent system of thought. Christianity is based on two great truths, the Sovereignty of God and the Responsibility of man. These two great and significant truths will give us support in all our thinking and willing.

If there is an eternal God we have a guarantee that there is eternal truth. This will give us the right to believe in logic and in the constancy in nature. This will also prevent us from falling into the logical heresy of having a world governed by chance and still maintain that what we say is eternally true. An eternal God will give us the right to believe that it will always be immoral to kill and to steal.

At the same time, we see much pain and sorrow in life. At first blush we are apt to lay this at the door of heaven. But- man is responsible. We do not know how personality and the sovereignty of God are related. We do know that the greatest predestinarian, St. Paul, emphasized human responsibility as none other. If we could understand man, personality, we should be able to account for this paradox.<sup>1</sup> If man feels that he is responsible, his life is

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1. The strangest thing in the history of predestination is that man in order to explain this knotty problem asked the question, who is God? We should bear in mind that if

enriched, his guilt increased. We do not blame the Almighty for the sorrows of life. Man has brought them upon himself.<sup>1</sup> Personality, therefore, establishes: (1) God is true and holy, and (2) Man is found to be the liar. We have sinned.

If we posit the personality of man we can also believe in the limitation of our intellects. Why we do not understand all things at once will not cause us any surprise. We are limited. A Christian will not do what James did, argue from limited knowledge to a pluralistic universe. He will consider that the finite must follow the infinite step by step as God sees fit to reveal unto him. At the same time he can appreciate the difficulty facing James. A Christian does not belittle the fact of limitations, for he knows they are unavoidable if man is man.

Thus God is found holy and man the liar. Man is the limited one, the guilty one. Evil, therefore, is ethical and can be removed. If evil were inherent in the universe, there would be no such hope. It can be pardoned. Christianity alone can account for the removal of guilt. When the question is put seriously, what shall then become

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we should know who man is, we should have the answer to the question. Man holds the secret as well as God. When the time comes that we know ourselves as we are known, then this problem will clear up. At present we posit the two facts, and know they best suit all our thinking, willing and feeling.

1. Cf. Romans 1:18f; 2:6ff.; 3:4,9f.; 8:5ff.

of guilt, other systems must either evade the issue or deny the actuality of the evil.

Christianity has all that is good in any system. Unlike Idealism it can hold to the idea of God without becoming pantheism.<sup>1</sup> It believes in creation. Unlike Pragmatism it can hold to our limited apprehensions without becoming pluralism. It can look upon evil realistically without wrecking the ethical universe. One cannot prove Christianity mathematically, but once accepted its premises entitle one to hold a philosophy of life that satisfied. This is the specific task, we take it, of apologetics. We, as Christians, ought to know that we should not fear the onslaughts of science or philosophy. Apologetics is to satisfy the Christian. Humanism cannot face its own logic. Christianity can.

To speak of eternal truth it does not have to resort to any fanciful philosophy, for it has the eternal God. Such is the epistemological value of the doctrine of the pre-temporal plan of God. If it does not have to seek refuge in chance it has a logic which is a true science. If so, its system may compel acceptance instead of begging the question. If it has the will of the eternal God, it

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1. Not that all the Idealists are pantheists. The danger, of course, is far from fictitious. If Idealism resorts to pantheism it must also become a philosophy of chance, for how can there be eternal laws when God and man are essentially one? Man is limited. We must then either deny these limitations, or consider the Absolute limited.

does not have to put ethics on an experimental basis. Christianity does not have to discover whether love is the fulfilment of the law and the prophets. Christianity gives meaning to a believer's everyday life. Although man was not free to choose when and where he was to be born, the pre-temporal plan had his field of activity selected for him. If so, man has a duty to perform. This gives courage in despondency, for where there is a purpose there is hope.<sup>1</sup> Our present "workshop" is dignified into a training camp for eternity, because we fill the present moment with eternal life.

Epistemologically speaking, therefore, Christianity is satisfying. Humanism leads to death and question-begging. Not Christianity! The eternal God will bring to pass the bright future of a blissful life. This position is more trustworthy than the faint and feeble efforts of man who has no other support than "chance" or "fortune". If the logic inherent in the Christian system is trustworthy, then we may also conclude that the eschatological life, in the Pauline sense, becomes the true interpreter of this mundane life. Through the new life we know the eternal Father, and the sins of fallen man. The eschatological life will make plain that the eternal Father will finish that which He has begun, and that man, the responsible creature, will reap what he has sown. To restate the same truth, what

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1. Cf. above, "Paul's Conception of Time", pp. 98ff.

eschatology does for ethics, it does also for our rational life. In ethics it teaches us that holiness, peace, and love adorn the pathway of a believer.<sup>1</sup> This is no repudiation of our mundane existence. In fact, the opposite is the case for it raises this daily life into heavenly regions. In our rational life (through love to God) we see: (1) that truth is changeless because the author of truth is eternal; (2) that the promises are sure for the Father of promises is not the God of caprice; and (3) that our present painful limitations and sorrows are the results of our own sins, for the new life teaches us the radical difference between the old and the new. This is no rational proof for Christianity. It is, however, a modest attempt to show that this system of thought is consistent. Its logic is compelling when its premises are granted.

Christianity is self-consistent, and satisfying to the deepest needs of the human soul. It pulverizes man to rebuild him for the eternal temple of God's grace. In man's denial that he is self-sufficient for life and death, and in his assertion that God is all and in all, man is raised to the highest level not attainable when satisfied with the idolatry of self. Although ultimately any system is a matter of faith, Christianity has the historical manifestation of the revelation of God's power, the Christ, who arose from the dead, who was believed in by the early

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1. Romans, Chapters 12 to 16.

apostles, was upheld as the Christ of grace at the Council of Jerusalem, was preached to the humanists of Athens as the returning Christ, and is still being preached today as the Christ that brings the new life to us in this present day in order that we may be with Him forever.

The best defense of Christianity is still the Christian. At the same time, although Christianity cannot be proven rationally, anymore than one can prove maternal love rationally, after the power of the cross has found us it offers us the best solution to the problems of life, for it accounts for the universal and the limited, the abiding and the passing, guilt and righteousness, death and life, without destroying the holiness of God and the personality of man.

It gives us an heavenly objective which cannot be realized as long as we delight in the blood of innocent men and women. It gives us the Glory of God that must also be realized in the lives of His image, our fellowmen. It is interested in man but not for the sake of man, for that would be idolatry. The more Christianity loves God, the better equipped it will be to serve man, for then it can lift man to a new sphere, the new man in Christ Jesus.

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