

PAUL'S BELIEF IN LIFE AFTER DEATH.

BY FRANK CHAMBERLIN PORTER.

The apostle Paul was certainly one of the very greatest of those who through the ages have believed in a future life for man. One naturally thinks of him, among ancients, by the side of Plato. Is there indeed a third who can be put with these two for the quality and value of their testimony and the extent and permanence of its influence upon mankind? We naturally ask them both, not with curiosity but with reverence, why they held this belief, how they conceived of life beyond death, of its nature and of the conditions upon which men can hope to attain it. They differ widely and even radically in their grounds and in their conceptions. Plato's doctrine was the immortality of the soul in contrast to the body. Paul argues in direct opposition to this for the resurrection of the body, although he opposes also the current Jewish conception that flesh and blood can inherit the kingdom of God, and must add the word "spiritual" in order to make the idea of resurrection correspond to his experience of the resurrection of Christ. The grounds of all of Plato's arguments are found in the nature of the soul; the one ground of Paul's assurance is the historical fact of Jesus Christ, His death and resurrection, and the experience already in part present, though also a matter of hope, of the dying and rising of Christians with Him. Whether this difference precludes any real relationship between the testimony of Paul and that of Plato is one of the questions which the study of Paul's thought naturally suggests. For the present it is enough to point out a likeness between the two which is important for the understanding of both. In both it is possible to trace a change, perhaps a development, from writings of earlier to those of later periods. But of both it is certainly true that the fact of their hope, the persistence and assurance

with which they held to it, is of more value to us than the arguments by which they defended it or the terms in which they defined it. We desire proof in this matter, and sometimes seek it in dubious ways, through some sort of evidence of the senses, or some supernatural phenomenon that forces our doubts back and enables us to rest our faith on authority. But for most of us the age of authority in that sense is past. If we are to have convictions about the unseen world and the unknown future we cannot accept them on the bare testimony of those who claim to have seen what lies beyond the perception of common men, or to have been in regions inaccessible to others. Even for our hope in life after death we must find grounds in human nature and points of contact in our own experience if we are to justify belief. We must look within, not without, for our evidence. Confirmation, indeed, can come from without; and the greatest confirmation, the best aid to faith, is the experience and testimony of men of the highest intellectual and spiritual quality. Human nature and human experience at their highest and best reveal our own natures to us, create in us like experiences, and confirm our trust in our best hopes and deepest insights. The language and methods of argument of Plato and of Paul belong of necessity to their own times. What is of greatest and most permanent significance is the fact that these two men, representing at the very highest the intellectual and ethical greatness of the two races and cultures that are the main sources of our own spiritual life, agree in the intensity of their interest and in the persistence of their belief in the immortality of man.

Matthew Arnold truly said that we shall always need the Old Testament because we shall always need the enthusiasm of Israel's conviction that the power not ourselves makes for righteousness, and that to righteousness belongs blessedness. The Old Testament has not many arguments for theism, and meets few of the difficulties to

faith in one God by convincing proofs; but the prophets and poets of Israel were great spirits, and their hold upon God was living and confident. God was their light and joy and strength; and they are themselves our greatest help to faith, as their inner life expresses and imparts itself in words that glow with joy in God and love for Him. In some such way Paul's witness to the hope of life after death makes its appeal. His are the words we like to read in the presence of death; and we read them not for the arguments they contain nor for the details they set forth but for the enthusiasm of their confidence, for their emotional quality and appeal. We need and shall continue to need for our faith in immortality the enthusiasm of Paul's conviction that even death cannot separate us from the love of God. Everything that Paul says about life after death is touched with emotion; and the fact that he was a very great man of religion, a great Christian, gives to the confidence and enthusiasm of his hope the right to be contagious and reassuring.

We have our own questions that we should like to ask of so great a man who has so sure a confidence; and there are other questions which as historical students we are obliged to ask. For ourselves I think there are especially three matters about which we want to know the normal attitude of the human mind, the reaction natural to the mind at its best. First, does pre-existence in any sense underlie man's survival of death? To Plato, and perhaps we may say to the Greek mind in general, pre-existence corresponds to immortality, and is surer, as being a thing experienced, than that which is still future. Second, is it the self-conscious personality that survives, or does immortality mean a return to our source in the divine nature, or a re-absorption in the race or in the universe? Third, what is there in present experience that anticipates the future and justifies us in saying that the ground for our hope lies within and not in a purely outward revelation? We shall not be disappointed in the expecta-

tion that Paul throws light directly or by implication on these problems of our own.

It is of course to be freely recognized that we shall not understand the language of Paul about this or any other matter unless we read it in the light of the ideas of his inheritance and environment. This is so fully recognized now that I am more anxious to urge sympathetic response to that emotional quality in Paul's language to which I have referred, and to avoid the danger of forgetting that poetic and prophetic speech is not bound too closely to the letter.

From the Old Testament Paul may have derived some fundamentals of his faith in the future, in spite of the fact that the Old Testament is almost entirely concerned with the present life. The conception of Sheol never became a starting point for hope but remained wholly negative, the very embodiment of hopelessness. It was just so with the Greek Hades. The element of hope in the Old Testament religion centers in the nation, and is the expectation of Israel's independence and rulership over mankind. It is necessarily, therefore, a hope for the present world; and when at the end of the Old Testament period the claim of the individual made itself felt, this could only take the form of the hope of resurrection, the return of the dead to a fully human life on earth and a share in the glory of the nation. That resurrection rather than immortality of the soul should remain natural to Hebrew thinking rests also on the fact that the Hebrew conception of the nature of man did not allow the idea that the soul could live apart from the body. Before Paul's time, however, some Jews had developed the conception that men would rise with angelic rather than earthly natures, their bodies being fashioned of light or glory, a conception of which perhaps the most natural image was given to the senses by the starry heavens. Paul's conception of the spiritual body has therefore some connection with earlier Jewish thought which develop as a part of a more heaven-

ly conception of the Messianic consumation.¹ Because of the cases of Enoch and Elijah, and Israelite would be prepared for the possibility that God might take men to Himself without death; but such translation remained wholly exceptional.

Another important Old Testament point of connection for Paul's thought is found in the word "spirit." The spirit of God is the divine breath that gives man life. It is always a divine element in man. When God takes it back to Himself the body returns to dust and the man dies; "in that very day his thoughts perish" (Psa. 146: 4). When we read, "and the dust returneth to the earth as it was, and the spirit returneth unto God who gave it" (Eccles. 12:7), this does not mean immortality, for the spirit is not the man himself. Nevertheless when Jews under Greek influence came in touch with the idea of the immortality of the soul they found it more natural to connect personality with this spirit which comes from God and returns to God than to think of the soul (*nephesh*), which was to them simply the living man, the man himself, as surviving death.

Still another foundation for belief in life after death in the Old Testament, and the most vital of all, was the experience of living communion with God, which seems to become first fully conscious of itself in Jeremiah, and finds wonderful expression in some of the Psalms. It is remarkable that this experience could be so deeply and intensely felt as it is, for example, in the seventy-third Psalm without bringing with it the demand and the certainty of continuance after death. This is explained perhaps by the persistent dominance, even in Jeremiah, of the nation as the object of God's supreme care and the heir of His promises.

In the post-canonical Jewish literature of New Testament times we naturally look for interactions between the Hebrew and Greek ways of regarding death and the

¹See Dan. 12:3, and especially *Apoc. of Baruch*, 50-51.

future and we expect to find some anticipations of Paul's attitude, remembering that he was a Jew of the dispersion whose native language was Greek but his education that of a Palestinian rabbi. It is interesting to find in the Apocalypse of Enoch, in one section, the Similitudes, a conception of the future in which the spiritual world quite takes the place of this earth as the place of the consummation; and the conception of the resurrection is correspondingly spiritualized. In another section (chapters 91-105) we find an assurance of eternal life for the spirits of the righteous which surprises us in a Palestinian and probably Semitic writing, and seems to suggest that the Greek way of looking at the future life sometimes found for itself a place in the native Jewish mind. The Wisdom of Solomon is particularly interesting because of the possibility that Paul was influenced by it, and in any case because it was written by a man like Paul who wrote in Greek but still thought prevailingly as a Jew. The writer of Wisdom knows the sort of denial of immortality which Plato also combats, the view that when the body turns to ashes the spirit is dispersed as thin air; but he does not answer this argument by the effort to prove that the soul is immaterial. It is with a religious faith not a philosophical argument that he meets this scepticism. He affirms that God did not make death, but that men bring it upon themselves by sinful choice; that righteousness is immortal; that the righteous only seem to die; and that man can attain immortality and nearness to God by love and obedience to wisdom. There is here no suggestion of resurrection, although there is no emphasis on the soul as immortal, but only on immortality as belonging to righteousness and to the religious ascent of the soul toward God.

Philo is a Jew who not only speaks Greek but thinks much more as a Greek than as a Jew in spite of the fact that the Pentateuch is his text-book. Philo knows his Plato and also that later Platonizing Stoicism which accepted

immortality. He adopts the theory of the preexistence of souls, and regards their descent into human bodies as at least a calamity if not a sinful choice. But he is not interested in immortality as merely the soul's escape from the prison of the body into its native ether and the purity of its original freedom from contact with matter. It would carry us much too far to discuss his treatment of immortality in detail. Immortality belongs properly to God, while man is the mortal race. It belongs to the Logos and to the world of ideas, in contrast to the world of sense; to the genus also in contrast to the individual. The philosopher attains immortality in so far as he is able to rise into the world of the immortals, that is to abstract himself from the body and outward things and lose himself in contemplation of truth and goodness. This ascent of the soul to God is its ascent to virtue as well as to knowledge; and seems in certain passages to bring with it a real immortality; yet one is left in the end with some uncertainty as to the persistence of the human personality itself. It is certain that Philo does not emphasize the hope of immortality as a motive, and that he seeks in this life that escape from the material world and from the body which is the soul's salvation and blessedness.

Of the Hellenistic mystery religions which offered escape from death by union in a sacramental rite with a God who dies and rises again, something will be said later on.

As we turn back again to Paul we are impressed anew with the vividness and power with which he held to the hope of life after death, its importance to him and the confidence of his conviction. The foundation of his hope is Christ Himself. It is according to Christ that he interprets life after death, and it is because of Christ, in Christ, that he knows it to be a certainty. Paul had seen the risen and exalted Christ; he had seen the man who was crucified as now the heavenly Lord. But behind the

vision there was a knowledge of Jesus which made the vision possible; and after the vision there was an inner experience which meant to Paul that the risen Christ was not only Lord but spirit; and one will misunderstand Paul if he regards his vision as the explanation of his Christianity apart from his knowledge of the earthly Jesus, or apart from his experience that the mind of Jesus was constantly and more and more filling his nature, displacing his old self and forming itself within him. Paul's belief in the life after death is not only an inference from the resurrection of Christ but is inseparably bound up with this abiding, progressive re-creation of Paul's inner life by the spirit of Christ and after the likeness of Christ. The fundamental principle of Paul's Christianity is that Christ is altogether, from beginning to end, what the Christian ought to be, and what because of Christ he now can be, and is, and will be. His doctrine of resurrection is therefore simply the doctrine of the Christian's likeness to Christ.

The passages with which studies of Paul's doctrine of the future usually most concern themselves are 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5: 11; 1 Corinthians 15; 2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Philippians 1:19-26. The necessity of a careful study of these passages is evident; yet it is possible that too exclusive occupation with these sections may lead one to a better understanding of primitive Christian eschatology than of the thoughts most original with Paul. It is certain that these passages need to be interpreted in the light of many others found in all parts of his writings. It will serve our purpose to look briefly at the passages just named. In the first of them Paul answers the fear lest those who die before the Parousia will miss their share in the glory of the consummation, that is fellowship with Christ. Paul answers that Christ's resurrection makes certain the resurrection of His disciples; that "we that are alive" will have no advantage over those who have died; that the destiny of all alike is to be "ever with

the Lord''; that we should live meanwhile in the light of this exception and in preparation for this hope, that is that we should live together with Him now in order that we may live with Him then. Christ's resurrection is therefore the proof that we shall rise, and fellowship with Christ is the nature of the Christian life as well as its final goal.

In 1 Corinthians 15 the same fears are answered. Christians, dead and living, will fare alike at the coming of Christ, the living being transformed into the same heavenly, spiritual natures in which the dead will be raised. But here Paul has especially to confute the position of Greek Christians who believed in the immortality of the soul but not in the resurrection of the body, to whom the resurrection of Christ was either an exception or only an appearance. He meets this antipathy by a sort of compromise between the Hebrew idea of the resurrection of the body and the Greek conception of the immortality of the soul. No doubt the compromise was necessary in order to adjust the Hebrew and the Greek elements in his own mind. He rejects the physical conception of resurrection which on the whole prevailed in Pharisaic Judaism, but resurrection itself was absolutely essential to his fundamental faith that the future life of man rests upon and is wholly like that of Christ Himself. The strange phrase "spiritual body", which would seem a contradiction in terms to every Greek, was a not unnatural effort on the part of a Greek-speaking Jew to preserve the distinct personality and at the same time free the life of the future from the burden and corruption of flesh and blood. The resurrection of the physical body could not but be repugnant to every one who had in any measure the inheritance of Plato in his veins. But Paul believes that if the physical body is thought of as transformed and spiritualized this repugnance may be overcome. For Paul is vehemently opposed to the Platonic conception of the immortality of the soul, partly no doubt

because he is a Hebrew, but chiefly because it is not according to Christ; it was not the way in which the first believers could have experienced as a reality Christ's life after death; and Paul's own vision of the Lord was necessarily a sense experience, the real appearance of Christ embodied in glory or light. But the resurrection of Christ, which Paul knew from his own seeing just as Peter did and the other disciples, was not, to Paul, His return even for a time to a flesh and blood existence. In this Paul is clearly at variance with later traditions found in the Gospels. Of Jesus it was true that that which was sown was corruptible and that which was raised incorruptible; that it was sown a physical body and raised a spiritual body. Another thing which also the whole argument of this chapter aims to make clear is that Christ's resurrection is typical; that it is not unique except that it is first; but that all who are in Christ will rise just as He did. "As we have borne the image of the earthly (Adam), we shall also bear the image of the heavenly (Christ)." The present body, which does not rise, Paul calls not physical or material but psychical, a body fitted for the human soul. Soul, *psyche*, the word of honour in Plato's hope, is lowered in Paul, and made inseparable from the physical, to which in Plato it is absolutely contrasted; and the word spirit, *pneuma*, which to the Greeks was more material and less personal than *psyche*, and contained less promise and potency of immortality for man, is exalted and becomes the essential nature of the risen Christ and so of risen Christians; it becomes also as we shall see the expression for that present experience of the indwelling Christ which is already working out the miracle of the Christian's transformation into both the character and the nature of his Lord. It would seem that to Paul the word "body" means individual personality, and is essential in his thought to the distinction and the permanence of the separate self. It is therefore necessary to Christ's heavenly life, and must remain necessary for

that personal communion of disciples with their Lord and with one another which is the essence of the Christian life. As at many other points of difficulty in the understanding of Paul, so in regard to this paradoxical union of body and spirit the clue to the understanding of his thought is to be found in the nature of love, in other words in the personal quality of Christ.

This deep feeling of Paul that the distinct personality which loves and is loved must not be dissolved by death, comes to still more distinct expression in 2 Corinthians 5:1-10. It is a passage of peculiar difficulty and should not be interpreted apart from the chapter preceding and the discussion that follows. It would seem that owing to the serious illness to which Paul refers in 1:8-11, and probably also to the hardships and dangers which he was constantly encountering, Paul now faced the probability that he would himself die before the coming of the Lord; and the passage before us expresses at least his shrinking from the thought of death as a complete separation of soul from body. He longs as much as any Greek for deliverance from the present burdening body of flesh, but he requires a heavenly body in order to keep and to perfect that communion of his real self with Christ which is the only value of life either here or hereafter. What is not clear is whether his longing is for the speedy coming of Christ before death overtakes him, so that the immortal nature may be put on over the mortal without any interval of nakedness, or rather for a beginning even now of that being clothed upon with his heavenly habitation which will make death incapable of interrupting his being at home with the Lord.

In Philippians also Paul looks forward to death, and even desires it as a departing to be with Christ, accepting a longer life in the flesh only that he may magnify Christ by further ministry to his converts.

The passages we have thus briefly reviewed contain many problems and suggest many questions of which we

have not taken account. The questions that are most discussed are, (1) Whether there is a change in Paul between First and Second Corinthians from a more Jewish eschatological form of hope to greater emphasis on inner union with Christ the Spirit; and (2) whether Paul's eschatology remains purely Jewish in its fundamental features, or is influenced either by the philosophy or by the mystery religions of Hellenism.

It has been argued (especially by Schweitzer) that the most essential thing for the understanding of Paul is to see that all his teachings, ethical and theological, are determined by the peculiarity of the short interval between the resurrection and the parousia of Christ in which his own work must be done; and that it is our chief task to attempt, in the light of this, and with the help of occasional hints in his letters, to reconstruct his eschatological scheme by answering such questions as these: Are there two resurrections or one; one judgment or two? Who are to rise at the parousia? Does judgment take place then? What is the relation between judgment and election? What is the relation between judgment and election? Can believers who fall lose their final blessedness? Is there a general resurrection? When are the elect to judge angels? Such questions, I cannot but think, indicate an external and remote attitude toward Paul himself.

There are other passages, many of them, besides those referred to, in which Paul expresses in varying terms but with clearness and emphasis the things that he is most anxious to have his converts understand and make their own. The following are some of the many passages of fundamental importance for the understanding of Paul's doctrine, passages which need to be read and reread and understood even more through sympathy and spiritual response, through tact and insight, than through comparison with contemporary eschatologies and current conceptions of the world: Galatians 2:19-20; 5:16-6: 10, 14; Romans 6-8; 14:7-8; 1 Corinthians 3:21-23; 2 Corinthians

1:8-10; 3:17-18; 4:1-5:19; 13:3-4; Colossians 2:20-23; 3:1-17; Philippians 1:20-25; 2:1-11; 3:10-14, 20-21.

It would be better to read these parts of Paul's letters and let his words have their natural effect upon us than to discuss, as we must proceed to do, some of the questions they suggest. Words such as these impart not only truth, but a great and distinct personality; and yet not only a particular personality, but universal truth, "truth not individual and local, but general, and operative; not standing upon external testimony, but carried alive into the heart by passion; truth which is its own testimony." For this man is not only a great disciple and prophet of Christ, but a creator of Christian experience and of the language in which it can be expressed and imparted. He is a great Christian poet; and one is tempted to quote Wordsworth further because the application of his words to Paul is so exact and illuminating. The poet "is a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind; a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him; delightful to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings-on of the universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them,"—it would be difficult to describe better the author of the eighth chapter of Romans or the fourth of Second Corinthians. Further Paul is a genius of the sort that "sends the soul into herself, to be admonished of her weakness, or to be made conscious of her power." And with such a writer one can make progress only if "he is invigorated and inspirited by his leader, in order that he may exert himself." Paul is one of those who calls forth and bestows power, who requires and creates in his readers thoughts and feelings like his own.

If now we undertake the often thankless and even perilous task of changing poetry into prose, of looking for intellectual conceptions in words of imagination and passion, there are especially two thoughts in Paul that often recur, and that challenge the mind to grasp them and to test their value. One is the thought that the resurrection of Christ is typical, normal, not unique, the first, but the first of many, a disclosure, therefore, of the reality, the grounds and the nature of man's life after death. The other is the thought that the dying and rising of Jesus is also experienced here and now in the life of every believer, and describes the present moral oneness of the disciple with his Lord. Our questions, therefore, concern especially these two conceptions. How did Paul think of the resurrection of Christ, and, therefore, how of the future life of the Christian? And how did he think of the oneness of the believer with Christ, and especially in what relation to each other did he put present ethical oneness or likeness of character, and future sharing of deliverance from death and transformation into a heavenly nature?

In regard to the first of these questions, a matter of fundamental significance is that it was God who raised Christ from the dead. After the word "Father" (*Abba*), Paul's ruling title for God might almost be said to be, He that raised up Jesus Christ from the dead.² The same God who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead will raise us also with Him. We have seen that there is in Paul no doctrine of the immortal nature of the soul, or of that higher part of the nature of all men which Paul calls the mind, or the inward man. There is also no intimation of the preexistence of the soul. Immortality is God's creative act, the work of His power and gift of His grace first to Christ, and then to all who are His. Christ is the first fruits, the first born, the first of many brethren (Col. 1:15,

² 1 Thess. 1:10; Gal. 1:1; Rom. 4:17, 24; 7:4; 6:4; 8:11; 10:7, 9; 7:4; 1 Cor. 6:14; 15:16; 2 Cor. 1:9; 4:14; Col. 2:12, 20; 1:18; 3:3.

18; Rom. 8:29). But Paul accepts the preexistence of Christ, and even, in a few sentences, implies His identity with that divine Wisdom through whom God made the world. Our first thought naturally is that the life after death of one who lived with God before His earthly life is only natural, His resumption of His true nature after the brief interruption of His incarnation. It is surely a matter of great significance that Paul makes no use whatever of the preexistence of Christ as explaining His immortality. It is strange that even though He preexisted in the form of God it should still be necessary that God should raise Him from the dead by a direct act of creative power, exactly as He will raise every follower of His. The account of the life, death and exaltation of Christ in Philippians 2:1-11 is peculiarly striking. He preexisted in the form of God, that is an angelic or divine being; but it was not for this reason that He attained life after death. He did not, because of His divine nature, return at death to His former state. He was not one whose humanity was only an appearance. God raised Him from death and exalted Him to a new place and title greater than He had before because He renounced such honours and powers and chose instead humility and sacrifice, even the death of the cross. In all this He was not unique. Paul describes his experience only in order to enforce the admonition to love and lowliness and to a care not for one's own things but also for the things of others. So that what Paul here says of the preexistent Christ does not in Paul's own mind prevent His being fully our example, not only in moral character but even in His attainment of life after death. Nothing is attributed to the preexistent Christ who was in the form of God except precisely that mind humility and compassion which ought to characterize men upon earth; and it was because of this that He lived after death.

A different, less human and personal, conception of the preexistence of Christ underlies those few expressions

of Paul which identify Him with the divine Wisdom. It cannot be doubted, in view of Proverbs 8, Ecclesiasticus 24, Wisdom of Solomon 7, that when Paul says, "There is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him" (1 Cor. 8:6); or, "In him were all things created . . . all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist" (Col. 1:16-17), he implies that Christ is the divine Wisdom. Such references, however, are few and the thought is not elaborated. We have not yet in Paul so developed a Logos doctrine as in the Fourth Gospel. Moreover in 1 Corinthians 1:24, 30; 2:6, where Christ is called the wisdom of God, it is without any suggestion of an eternal divine hypostasis. It is rather the Gospel itself which is here a divine wisdom in contrast to the pretentious foolishness of Greek philosophy. But perhaps the most striking proof that Paul did not create but only here and there recognized the Wisdom Christology is to be seen in the fact that he makes no use of it as an explanation of Christ's life after death. One who is in reality only the incarnation of the eternal divine Wisdom, the reason, or power, or spirit of God, through which the world was made and in and by which it consists, would not require a divine act to raise Him from the dead. Death could only be His release and return to His former and abiding divine and eternal existence. Paul, must we we not say, interprets the Wisdom of God as Jesus Christ, in the sense that in Him men have fully all that knowledge of God and access to Him and experience of His indwelling which such a Jew as the writer of the Book of Wisdom found in that Spirit of Wisdom which fills the world and comes freely in answer to prayer into human lives, making men friends of God and prophets, and imparting its own immortality. But Paul does not so interpret Jesus by the divine Wisdom as to endanger his fundamental principle that Jesus is altogether, from first to

last, that which every Christian can be and should be. The case is somewhat different with the writer of the Gospel of John, although even here the natural logic of the Logos Christology is not carried through. The story of the resurrection-appearances of Christ retains its place; but at many points we are reminded that eternal life belongs to Christ by origin and nature rather than by a special act of God. Christ came from God into human life, and it is but according to His nature that He should return to God. He is always, even while on earth, divine. That His earthly life is real, that the Logos became flesh, that He was really crucified and really rose from the grave, is insisted upon no doubt precisely because there were those who made the natural inference from the Logos doctrine that the earthly life of Jesus was only a seeming, and the death either unreal or the dying of a human being who had been for a short time the bearer of a divine presence, not his own human self. Yet the writer is himself, of course, convinced that Jesus was the incarnate Logos, and in some ways reveals the consequences of this doctrine as Paul does not. Never in John is God spoken of as the one who raised Jesus from the dead. Jesus, on the contrary, is one to whom God has given His own distinctive power of raising the dead, of having life in Himself, and giving life to whom He will (John 5:21-27). The account of the resurrection of Lazarus with its culminating sentence, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die," would seem to make his own resurrection unnatural and out of place. We can well understand how in opposition to Docetism the death and resurrection retain their place, but we can understand also the emphasis with which it is said, "I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (10:17, 18). It is true that the Son does every-

thing as the Father gives His commandment. It is true also that even in John the oneness of the Son with the Father is to be fully shared by all who are one with Him in love and obedience. Yet it is perhaps not too much to say that John marks a stage between Paul and the later theology which professes to rest upon them both, but in reality departs still more than John from Paul's conception that the death and resurrection of Christ are entirely typical and in every respect parallel to that of all whose life is like His. It is seriously to misunderstand Paul if we fail to recognize that Christ's resurrection was significant for Christ Himself. It signifies His designation as Son of God with power (Rom. 1:4); it was His elevation to the supreme office and title of Lord (Phil. 2:10, 11); through it He became lifegiving spirit (1 Cor. 15:45). All that Christ is to the Christian He came to be through His resurrection.

But why did God raise Him from the dead? About this Paul is explicit. It was because of the mind which was in Him, because of the moral character of His self-renunciation and obedience even unto death, because in lowliness of mind He counted others better than Himself. In other words, Christ attained to the resurrection from the dead through what He was and suffered and achieved, and in this respect also is not removed by the uniqueness of His nature from His place as the first among many brethren.

We have already answered the question in what form or nature Christ was raised; but may still ask what Paul's thought probably was as to the relation of the "spiritual body" to the body that died and was buried. Does Paul's description of the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15:35ff. enable us to say whether the appearances of the risen Christ to Peter and last of all to Paul himself implied in Paul's mind the empty tomb of Gospel tradition? That the body that arose was not the body that was buried is emphatically affirmed. The relation of the new to the old

is likened to the relation between a grain of wheat and the blade that grows from it. Christians who live when Christ comes are to be suddenly translated, the corruptible putting on incorruption, and the mortal putting on immortality. In so far as Paul's interest in affirming bodily resurrection lies in his Hebraic feeling that to the body belongs the personality it would seem necessary to him to think of the spiritual body as having a real connection, in spite of its radical difference, with the earthly and psychic. Perhaps we can further make an inference in this case from the experience of the Christian to the experience of Christ, reversing the usual order, and infer from the fact that Paul thinks of the Christian as already being transformed into the bodily as well as the spiritual nature of Christ, that the heavenly nature is a transformation of the earthy rather than a complete substitute for it. Yet perhaps all these considerations do not outweigh the opposite impression of Paul's vehement assertion that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." It is not easy to suppose that Paul's conviction that Christ was raised on the third day depended at all upon the discovery of the empty tomb, or involved any knowledge or care as to what became of the fleshly body.

Our second main question concerns the nature of the Christian's oneness with Christ. This is the point at which it is now usual to compare Paul's language with that of various Hellenistic mystery cults of Paul's time and soon after of which we have fragmentary records. The common feature in these Oriental religions which made their way into the Greco-Roman world is the conception that through some ceremony, some magical sacrament, the worshipper may become so identified with a diety, and especially with the death and rising of a god, that he escapes the mortality of human nature and becomes immortal, and in that sense deified. The possibility is not to be excluded that Paul could have known some-

thing about such cults and could have heard the language in which their devotees described their experience of dying and rising again with their god. What his relationship was to such movements it will probably never be possible to know with any certainty or fullness. What can be said with confidence is that Paul here as elsewhere knew how to subject the thoughts and fancies of those about him to the mind of Christ. That which distinguishes the mystical language of Paul from that of the so-called Mithras-Liturgy and other similar records is above all his ethical emphasis. Death is the evil from which the mystery-religions sought redemption. To Paul also death is an evil the fear and burden of which he deeply feels; and it is an evil from which Christ brings redemption. But there is another evil which lies deeper and from which redemption must be sought first. It is sin through which man has been brought into subjection to death, and even the whole creation put in bondage to corruption; and the fundamental Christian experience is not the sense of immortality through union with a divine being, but the sense of righteousness, the feeling of moral capacity, the ability to do the good that one wills, the consciousness that pure impulses have the upper hand over the lusts of the flesh, and above all that unselfishness triumphs over the natural human assertions of pride, envy, anger and hatred. The Christian, then, in Paul's experience is first of all one who because of Christ is making his own the moral nature of Christ; and Paul knows that this transformation after the image of Christ, this forming of Christ in the Christian, means in the end sharing His resurrection.

There are two peculiarities which Paul's language about the oneness of the Christian with Christ suggests, two directions in which apparent opposites come together and seem even fused into one. The transformation of the Christian into the likeness of Christ is on the one side a divine miracle, comparable only to that of creation itself, the work in man of the Spirit of God, which is the Spirit

of Christ, or Christ Himself; but it is at the same time the duty of the Christian, a thing constantly to strive after, never to be certain of, but always to make the object of strenuous endeavour. Paul in one breath tells Christians what they already are, sons of God, spiritual beings, no longer in the flesh, no longer even men, and then urges them to become what they are, to make actual their real nature as Christians by their choices and desires, to suppress by moral effort the passions and self-assertions that are already dead, or to which they have died, because Christ is in them.

The second peculiarity in Paul's thought is found in the relation in which the ethical redemption and the physical redemption of the Christian stand to each other. We should perhaps have expected that Paul would put side by side the influence of the mind of Christ, the power of His example, the divine inworking of His spirit by which His character is reproduced in men, and, on the other hand, the proof derived from His death and resurrection that resurrection and eternal life await the Christian also hereafter; so that we should have first the present conquest of sin through the indwelling spirit, and then for the future the hope of deliverance from death and reunion with Christ in some more outward way as of person with person. But in fact Paul seems especially to like to put these two things together so that they are even sometimes confused or blended, so much do they seem to him to be two aspects of one and the same thing. Dying and rising with Christ means not only nor even chiefly for Paul being raised by God as Christ was from the dead to a spiritual nature like His and to a share in His glory; but it means also and more often dying to sin and rising to newness of life. The death and resurrection of Christ are literally to be repeated in case of every Christian; but they are also to be spiritually experienced or undertaken by the Christian, and they constitute the principle of his inner life. Dying in order to live is the very essence of

the imitation of Christ. Moreover the purifying of the nature from sin and the transformation of the body into incorruption are two processes that go on continuously together. No doubt when one reads the eighth chapter of Roman's one's first impression may be that the Christian has already experienced fully the new inner life of the spirit in which sin has no place, but that he still looks forward in hope to that which is still lacking in his sonship, that is, to the redemption of his body; that only with this will come the full revelation of Christians as sons of God, and that with this the weakness and corruption to which the whole creation is subjected will also be overcome. But Paul does not look at the matter quite so simply as this; for on the one hand the end of sin and the attainment of the spirit of Christ although it is given in the death of Christ and in the spirit of life which the Christian has already received, is nevertheless still to be worked out by man through moral effort; and on the other hand the redemption of the body does not wait altogether for death, but begins and in some mysterious way goes forward here and now.

If we glance at some of the passages that are most characteristic of Paul and have the least connection with anything to be found in the literature of his time we shall understand better than by generalizations the peculiarity, and perhaps get a clue to the understanding, of his characteristic way of looking at the Christian experience. In the sixth chapter of Romans Paul finds that baptism signifies a union with Christ in His death and in His resurrection, an end of the body of sin, a walking in newness of life, and yet at the same time the assurance of future life with Him. Paul's use of these expressions is so free and various that we cannot think that he was bound by a hard and fast interpretation. He writes far more as a poet than as a theologian. But one thing is beyond doubt, that his emphasis is ethical, and that he does not mean Christians to suppose that the death and resurrection of

Christ carry with them by any physical necessity either the moral perfection or the exemption from death that belong to Him. His "therefore" is, "Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies." They are to think of themselves as dead to sin and alive unto God, and then are to act accordingly. Man's redemption from both sin and death is already historically accomplished and is at the same time in both cases future; both redemptions are gracious acts of God, yet both are achieved by man's choice and effort; having been made free from sin we are to make ourselves servants of righteousness; since death has no more dominion over us we are free to attain as servants of God the end, eternal life.

In the eighth chapter of Romans Paul's high self-consciousness as a Christian comes to its supreme expression. He has described the reign of sin, and has brought it certainly into close relation with the flesh, the body and its members, and the law or impulse that resides in these. Now all these are dead, Christians no longer live in the flesh, but in the spirit; because Christ is in them the body is dead on account of the sin belonging to it, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. And then by that quick confusing turn, so characteristic of Paul, death becomes literal death again and life the future resurrection which Christ's resurrection makes certain and His spirit dwelling in us brings about. It is evident that the moral renewal which Christians see in themselves is to Paul the most convincing proof of the physical renewal which is yet to be. The word *spirit* is extremely helpful to Paul in his effort to express both the inwardness and the divine source and quality of what is new in the Christian experience. Since it is divine the spirit is eternal and is a principle of eternal life in man; but since it is the spirit of Christ, it has also the quality of His moral nature and creates likeness to Him in those who possess it. It is the spirit of sonship, enabling man to say "Father"; and having made us sons it makes us thereby heirs with Christ

and sharers with Him both of suffering and of glory. This whole chapter makes it evident that Paul's faith in the resurrection is bound up with His experience that the spirit of Christ is already in the Christian and is already transforming him into the likeness of Christ.

Christians now have to suffer more than other men, and Paul himself more than other Christians; yet this very suffering is only a part and a proof of likeness to Christ. Like His, these are the sufferings of love. Death may be their outcome for the disciple as for the Master, but that Christ was raised from the dead is proof of the love of God and of the certainty that from that love no power, neither death nor life, neither things present nor things to come, can separate us.

A passage that is hardly less great than the eighth of Romans is the fourth of second Corinthians. At the end of the third chapter Paul describes that transformation into the image of the Lord which is effected by the Christian's unveiled vision of His glory or by the presence of the Lord Himself as the indwelling spirit. Then the sufferings of the present life, Paul's own weaknesses and distresses, are interpreted as a bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body; a death in him which becomes life in his converts. Our outward man is decaying, Paul says, yet our inward man is renewed day by day, as if he were already experiencing the transformation by which what is mortal is to be swallowed up of life.

The striking way in which the divine and the human, the present and the future are blended in Paul is seen again in the third chapter of Colossians. Christians, Paul says, have been already raised together with Christ. He therefore admonishes them to set their minds on the things that are above, where Christ is. He would have them realize that they have died and that their life is hid with Christ in God; and since this is so he urges them to put to death their members that are upon the earth. Hav-

ing put off the old man and put on the new, he presses upon them the duty of putting away anger and wrath, malice and lying, and putting on a heart of compassion, kindness, and humanity.

One more passage which guards us against neglecting the ethical or substituting a mystical and magical conception as Paul's understanding of the Christian life, is in the third chapter of Philippians. The righteousness which is not his own but is from God by faith, is nevertheless a righteousness that he still strives to attain by every effort to the end of his life. Fellowship with Christ, which is the power of the new life in Him, and also of life after death, is even still some thing to strive after, and he will make no claim that he has attained. "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed unto his death; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not that I have already attained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended by Christ Jesus."

Paul's doctrine of the dying and rising of the Christian with Christ does not, therefore, divide sharply into two doctrines, that of a present complete dying to sin and rising to the fullness of the new and perfect life according to Christ, and that of the future rising from the dead by the deed of God. For on the one hand the perfect life in Christ is not yet fully attained, though Paul likes to assert it in order to kindle the desire to make what is ideally true actual in one's conduct and spirit; and on the other hand the coming transformation of the body is in some way anticipated in the Christian's present experience. Somehow Paul was convinced that his own body with its weaknesses and sufferings, failing and decaying as it seemed to him, was becoming a fitter dwelling place and instrument of the Spirit, freer from impulses that held him to earth and things of sense; although he still

longed for that complete translation through which would come to him a bodily life free from weakness and suffering, and lifted above death, in which the spirit could realize without hindrance its full and perfect life. Many things in Paul's letters remind us that he is not a Greek to whom soul and body are two unrelated natures foreign to each other, the body being but the tomb or prison of the soul. To Paul man is a unity. It is not the body that weighs the soul down and from which relief is sought; the body is capable of redemption. It is even now holy as a temple of God since the spirit of God dwells in it. This helps us understand how it is that the dying and rising of Christ can be to Paul at the same time an ethical experience present and continuous, and also a future physical dying and a rising no longer in the image of the earthly but in that of the heavenly.

We have seen that the experience of the spirit is the present attestation of the truth of the Christian hope. We know from Paul's discussion of the gifts of the spirit that of all the various phenomena in which early Christianity saw proof that a divine power had taken up its abode in man, Paul values most those that were most in accordance with the character and purposes of Jesus, those that most conducted to the unity and to the upbuilding of the Christian brotherhood. It is certain that to Paul the supreme proof that Christ had risen and therefore the proof of life after death was the experience that Christ's spirit in him and in other Christians was creative of a new moral nature, that in Christ the old man, the sinful nature, had died. "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold they are become new." Paul is one of the most confident and greatest of all witnesses for hope in immortality; and the ultimate ground of Paul's hope is not his vision of the risen Christ but, deeper than that, his experience of the spirit of Christ as the creator of a new moral nature. What shall we say, then, of this foundation on which

Paul's structure stands? Is it indeed so firm a fact that it can sustain the faith that he founded upon it? Paul himself had to face the fact that Christians did still sin. He urged them to be in reality by moral effort and achievement, that which they were ideally in the thought of God, in their true life which is in Christ. Paul no doubt sometimes put the experience of newness of life in strong terms expressing his exultation of feeling and his deep sense of gratitude. But when we look at his life as a whole, at the richness and fullness of his Christ-likeness in love and sacrificial devotion, we are ready to accept his testimony that in Christ he was a new being, that he no longer lived but Christ lived in him. For ourselves the truth of the ideals of Jesus and the power of His personality to reproduce itself in the disciple, His capacity to become the spirit of life, the spirit of love, in human beings, remain realities, the greatest realities in the religious life. Paul is often criticized for his apparent neglect of records of Jesus' earthly life and teachings. Yet the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians is a marvelous character-sketch of Christ and is entirely inexplicable except as the result of His earthly life. It is wholly owing to Jesus that Paul goes so far in the direction of giving ethical meanings to the religious language, traditions, institutions of his time. Certainly the greatest thing in Paul is his reinterpretation of religion in accordance with the character of Jesus of Nazareth. He is not deceived in thinking that his life reflected the glory of the Lord and was being transformed into the same likeness from glory to glory. Nor was he mistaken in believing that a character such as that of Jesus, a ministry and sacrifice like His, with the revelation it brings of human values and of divine forces, and with the powers that go forth from it for the re-creation of human life, constitute the best assurance we have or can have of the immortal life. In His life the reality of the world of the spirit is so evidently seen as to be above denial. Immortality belongs

to the things that are in their nature eternal, to God, to truth, to duty, to goodness; and the only immorality which has worth and is to be desired is that which is attested by the reality of these things and attained by living in fellowship and agreement with them. Paul knows this world of the spirit, its supreme excellence and beauty, its joy and its power. He has seen it in the face of Jesus Christ, and is convinced because of Him that it is destined to prevail, and that it is the safe and abiding dwelling-place of all who choose to make it their home.

Paul's hope for life after death rests then ultimately upon his present dying and living with Christ; that is, upon his present experience of the spirit of Christ remaking his nature after its own likeness. We may not understand best what this meant by the more mystical expressions of it (Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 3:17-18; Rom. 6:2-11; 8:9-11), characteristic though these are of Paul's mind. The real contents of this view of life, which Paul knows to be divine and therefore undying, can be understood best by his description of his own character, purposes, and conduct given, in defense of his ministry, not in boasting or self-interest, in 1 Thessalonians 2: 1-12, and especially in 2 Corinthians 10-13; and in his account of the fruit of the spirit, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22-23; comp. Col. 3:12-14; Rom. 12); and in his judgments as to the relative value of those gifts of the spirit which were to early Christianity evidences of God's indwelling in man, and so of man's sharing in the immortal nature; Paul subjects them all to the test of Christ-likeness, and makes love therefore the test of the value and reality of the rest, and the greatest of the three that are destined to abide (1 Cor. 12-14).

According to Paul's experience the spirit which creates these divine effects in human lives and is the present evidence and possession of eternal life is not the divine part of human nature as such, but has come into human

life through an historical event, the life, death and resurrection of an historical person. This Spirit of God is the spirit of Christ; it is Christ Himself as He takes possession of men and becomes their life, their new self; and the nature of this spirit is Divine Love. Man shares this divine nature only by the gift of the love of God; so that life beyond death is assured and created in man by the eternal love of God manifested and given to us in Christ. Nothing—not death itself—can separate us from the love of Christ, the love of God which is in Christ. This is the ultimate ground of Paul's confidence. But love can be given only as love; it can be received only by those who love. The work of love is to create lovers, says Royce. If the divine love is the source and power and nature of man's eternal life then the conditions and purpose and goal of that life must be interpreted in accordance with the nature of love, the mind of Christ. This is Paul's guiding principle throughout. The future life can be hoped for only as it is now practiced and attained by likeness to Christ. This oneness of Christians with Christ which is both Christ's effect in them and their following of Him, is described and urged too clearly and constantly by Paul to leave any doubt that he means by it the actual character of the actual Jesus. Likeness to Christ is not a law which if one obey he will receive life after death as his reward. It is already that life; and one possesses it only by dying and living with Christ, dying now to sin, and rising to newness of life.

But love cannot be a thing given by one and received by another. It is received only when it is given back, or given forth. Mutuality and co-operation are involved in the very nature of love. There is a loss of self in love which is nevertheless the finding of gaining of self. Paul's answer to our most pressing question, that which concerns the permanence of personality, would be, we may be sure, determined, as all else is, by the nature of love. Since love is a relationship between persons, Paul clings,

as we have seen, to that "spiritual body," both for Christ and for all who are Christ's which meant to him the continuance of distinction and individuality. Yet Paul knows that it is not according to love, or according to Christ, to seek one's own, either for this life or for the life to come. When Christ lives in him, the "I" no longer lives (Gal. 2:20.) Love destroys the self in every sense in which it involves selfish assertion and separateness. Oneness, not division, is the creation of love. For those who have put on Christ "there can be neither Jew nor Greek . . . bond nor free . . . male nor female; for ye are all one (man) in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). The immortality that is according to love would seem to require both the saving and the loss of individuality, its saving in and through its loss. He that would find his life shall lose it, and he that loses his life shall save it. That Paul understands this paradox is evident (2 Cor. 4:7-18; 6:3-10); but perhaps nowhere more strikingly shown than in what he says of the final purpose of the risen life of Christ Himself. "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; but ye, Christ's; but Christ, God's" (1 Cor. 3:21-23). Christ rises to Lordship, and must reign, till He has put all His enemies under His feet, death last of all; but "when all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:20-28).

The final place of individual personalities will be that which is determined by the nature of love, the nature of God. Paul's doctrine of immortality is not a doctrine of self-assertion or self-centered desire. Christ means to him the opposite of this. "Ye are not your own." "He died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves." "For none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."