

IS THE PAUL OF ACTS THE REAL PAUL?<sup>1</sup>

By F. F. BRUCE, M.A., D.D., F.B.A.

RYLANDS PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL CRITICISM AND EXEGESIS  
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

## I

THE question of the authenticity of the portrait of Paul presented in the Acts of the Apostles has been raised in a variety of contexts. The question normally presupposes that we have access to an indubitably authentic portrait of Paul—the self-portrait presented in his letters, or at least in those letters which are commonly acknowledged as genuine. This presupposition underlies the present paper. True, a self-portrait is rarely an objective portrait, but then few portraits are completely objective. A portrait usually records the impression which the subject has made on the eye, or mind's eye, of the artist. So, if the differences between the portraiture of Paul in his undisputed letters and that in Acts are simply the differences which we should expect to find between a man's self-portrait and the portrait painted of him by someone else for whom he sat (consciously or not), the Paul of Acts may well be the real Paul, or rather an aspect of the real Paul. But if the author of Acts, whom for convenience we shall call Luke, has for purposes of his own distorted the lineaments of the Paul whom he knew, or has invented a Paul of whom he had no personal knowledge, then the Paul of Acts will not be the real Paul.

The impetus given to the critical study of the New Testament and of early Christian history by the Tübingen school of the mid-nineteenth century is something for which we must always remain grateful. The questions they asked must be recognized as questions of fundamental importance, however clearly we may see that their answers were quite wrong. The leader of the school, Ferdinand Christian Baur, asked the first of those fundamentally important questions when in 1831 he investigated

<sup>1</sup> A lecture delivered in the John Rylands University Library on Wednesday, the 22nd of October 1975.

the character of the "Christ party" and other parties in the church of Corinth.<sup>1</sup> He concluded that in the apostolic church there were two sharply opposed tendencies—that represented by Paul, which maintained a law-free gospel, and that represented by Peter, which maintained a close bond between the gospel and the Jewish law. Evidence of this tension was plainly to be seen in Galatians. Its only contemporary documentation was on the one side the Pauline corpus (restricted to the Galatian, Corinthian and Roman correspondence), and on the other side the Johannine Apocalypse (dated shortly before A.D. 70). Most of the New Testament documents reflected a later, second-century, phase when the antithetic positions of the Petrine and Pauline parties had been modified and "reconciled" (if it is possible to "reconcile" flatly contradictory theses) in a more comprehensive synthesis. It is in Acts that this synthesis comes to clearest expression: Peter is made to approach Paul's position, and Paul is made to approach Peter's, so that the two allegedly irreconcilable protagonists are brought into a considerable measure of agreement. If the Tübingen conception of apostolic history was right, then the Paul of Acts could certainly not be the real Paul.

But the Tübingen conception was too vulnerable to be maintained for long. For one thing, it is evident from one of its most confidently invoked documents, Paul's letter to the Galatians, that (in Kirsopp Lake's words) "the figure of a Judaizing St. Peter is a figment of the Tübingen critics with no basis in history".<sup>2</sup> Paul's indignation at Peter's withdrawal from table fellowship with Gentile Christians at Antioch was due precisely to his awareness that Peter's conduct did not conform with his inner convictions—that it was, in Paul's words, a piece of "play-acting" (Gal. ii. 11-14).

Today the case for seeing a basic inconsistency between the Paul of Acts and the Paul of the epistles is presented in different

<sup>1</sup> F. C. Baur, "Die Christuspartei in der korinthischen Gemeinde", *Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theologie*, v (1831), 61 ff., reprinted in *Ausgewählte Werke*, ed. K. Scholder, i (Stuttgart, 1963), 1 ff.; cf. his *Paul: his Life and Works*, E. T., 2 vols. (London, 1873-5); *The Church History of the First Three Centuries*, E. T., 2 vols. (London, 1878-9). See also H. Harris, *The Tübingen School* (Oxford, 1975).

<sup>2</sup> K. Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul* (London, 1911), p. 116.

terms. Acts is viewed as a document of "primitive catholicism" (*Frühkatholizismus*), a development in early Christianity which is almost by definition post-apostolic. The "primitive catholicism" of Acts may indeed be an early stage of this development, belonging to the last third of the first century, but still post-Pauline. Acts has gone hardly any way towards the conception of the church universal, with a codified confession of faith and the administration of grace through officially recognized channels, but traces are discerned in it of a movement towards the replacement of a charismatic by an institutional ministry and of the imminent hope of glory at the *parousia* by a sense of historical continuity stretching into the indefinite future. In Acts salvation history, a central motif in any case in its author's theology, has become "an episode of history", and its portrait of Paul, for whom (when he speaks for himself) the fullness of time has already arrived and history has given way to eschatology, is composed accordingly, so that the Paul of Acts is no longer the real Paul.

This last sentence echoes the argument of Philipp Vielhauer's essay "On the 'Paulinism' of Acts".<sup>1</sup> We may find the same point of view expressed in the Acts commentaries of Hans Conzelmann<sup>2</sup> and Ernst Haenchen,<sup>3</sup> as well as by Ernst Käsemann<sup>4</sup> and others; but Vielhauer's essay provides its classic exposition. It is not the purpose of this paper, however, to review Vielhauer's thesis point by point,<sup>5</sup> but rather to take

<sup>1</sup> P. Vielhauer, "On the 'Paulinism' of Acts", E. T., in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, ed. L. E. Keck and J. L. Martyn (Nashville-New York, 1966), pp. 33 ff. (This *Festschrift* for P. Schubert is referred to below as Keck-Martyn.) An assessment of this important essay is given by W. W. Gasque, *A History of the Criticism of the Acts of the Apostles* (Tübingen, 1975), pp. 283 ff.

<sup>2</sup> H. Conzelmann, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (HNT 7, Tübingen, 1963); cf. his *Die Mitte der Zeit* (Tübingen, 1954), E. T. *The Theology of St. Luke* (London, 1960).

<sup>3</sup> E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, E. T. (Oxford, 1971).

<sup>4</sup> E. Käsemann, *Essays on New Testament Themes* (London, 1964), pp. 89 ff.; "Ephesians and Acts", in Keck-Martyn, pp. 288 ff. A judicious statement of the relation of Acts to *Frühkatholizismus* is provided by C. K. Barrett, *New Testament Essays* (London, 1972), pp. 99 f., 114 f.

<sup>5</sup> Vielhauer adduces the attitude of Paul in Acts to natural theology (as in the Areopagus address), to the Jewish law (in his practice even more than in his speeches), to Christology (in which Jesus is proclaimed predominantly as the Messiah of Old Testament prophecy) and to eschatology (which is confined to the hope of resurrection and the future rôle of Christ as judge).

a fresh look at our two principal sources of information—the generally acknowledged Pauline letters, which form our one primary source, and the narrative of Acts, which forms our chief secondary source.

## II

First of all, we may look at the biographical and similar data about Paul presented in Acts and the epistles respectively. We can list quite a series of agreements or near-agreements—some of them belonging to the category of what have been called "undesigned coincidences".<sup>1</sup> For example, it is only in the epistles that Paul is said to be a member of the tribe of Benjamin (Rom. xi. 1; Phil. iii. 5); it is only from Acts that we learn that his Jewish name was Saul (Acts vii. 58 ff.; ix. 1 ff.; xiii. 9, etc.). It is not surprising that parents of the tribe of Benjamin should give their son the name borne by the most distinguished member of that tribe in Israel's history (1 Sam. viii. 1 f., 15 ff.; cf. Acts xiii. 21). There is no reference in the epistles to Tarsus as Paul's birthplace, something repeatedly emphasized in Acts; however, most students of the epistles would agree that their author does not appear to have been a *Palestinian* Jew.

Paul calls himself "a Hebrew born of Hebrews" (Phil. iii. 6; cf. 2 Cor. xi. 22), which probably implies, among other things, that his native speech was "Hebrew" (which in the New Testament frequently embraces Aramaic). In Acts this is the language in which Paul is addressed on the Damascus road by the risen Christ (xxvi. 14) and he himself can use it effectively in delivering a public speech in Jerusalem (xxi. 40; xxii. 2). His claim to be a Pharisee appears in different contexts in Philippians iii. 5 and Acts xxiii. 6, xxvi. 5. It is only in Acts that he is specifically said to have been educated in the school of Gamaliel, the most eminent Pharisaic teacher of his generation (xxii. 3; cf. v. 34); but in Galatians i. 14 he makes a more

<sup>1</sup> The phrase is part of the title of J. J. Blunt's *Undesigned Coincidences in the Writings of the Old and New Testaments* (London, 1847). An interesting examination of such coincidences between Acts and the Pauline epistles had been published by W. Paley in *Horae Paulinae* (London, 1790), which indeed stimulated Blunt to continue this quest and extend it throughout the rest of the Bible.

general claim which agrees well enough with the evidence of Acts: "I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers."

His brief but intense activity as a persecutor of the church is attested in quite similar language in Acts and the epistles. In Acts he is described as "ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison"; right up to the moment of his conversion he kept on "breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord" (viii. 3, ix. 1). In Galatians i. 13 he tells how he "persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it"; in 1 Corinthians xv. 9 he describes himself as "the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because [he says] I persecuted the church of God"; in Philippians iii. 6, contemplating his pre-Christian career, he regards his having been "a persecutor of the church" as the high-water-mark of his "zeal". The argument sometimes heard that in the epistles, unlike the record of Acts, Jerusalem is not the place where he persecuted the church could be the product of an anti-harmonistic bias as reprehensible in its own way as any harmonistic bias—more reprehensible, indeed, because the latter might spring from a simple, unsophisticated piety, whereas the former has not that excuse. It was the Judaeen churches, according to Paul himself, who later said of him, "Our former persecutor is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy" (Gal. i. 22 f.), and it is difficult to exclude the Jerusalem church from "the churches of Christ in Judaea".

As for the circumstances of his conversion and its aftermath, these have been considered in good measure in an earlier lecture delivered in this place, where we compared the autobiographical retrospect of Galatians i. 12–ii. 14 with the narrative of Acts, and there is no need to repeat in detail here what was said then.<sup>1</sup> In Galatians i. 15 Paul's conversion experience is summed up in the statement that God "was pleased to reveal his Son to me" (or "in me"), and the essence of his gospel is said to

<sup>1</sup> Cf. my "Galatian Problems: 1. Autobiographical Data", *BULLETIN*, li (1968–9), 292 ff.

have been imparted to him through that "revelation of Jesus Christ" (i. 12). "Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?" he asks indignantly in 1 Corinthians ix. 1, evidently referring to the same occasion, as also in 1 Corinthians xv. 8 where, after listing earlier appearances of the risen Christ, he adds, "Last of all . . . he appeared also to me" (perhaps in the sense "he let himself be seen by me"). The resurrection appearance granted to him, he insists, was as real as the appearances witnessed by Peter and James and many others on the first Easter and the days immediately following. His reference in 2 Corinthians iv. 6 to God "who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ" may include a reminiscence of the same experience.<sup>1</sup> In the conversion narratives of Acts emphasis is laid on the blinding light and the voice from heaven (ix. 3 f.; xxii. 6 f.; xxvi. 13 f.); nevertheless, we are left in no doubt that it was, as Ananias of Damascus told him, "the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came" (Acts ix. 17)—words which are later re-phrased, still on the lips of Ananias, as "The God of our fathers appointed you to see the Just One and to hear a voice from his mouth" (Acts xxii. 14), and in the commission of the risen Christ himself to the new disciple: "I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and bear witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you" (Acts xxvi. 16). As the Paul of Luke's narrative affirms that he was "not disobedient to the heavenly vision" which he had seen on the Damascus road (Acts xxvi. 19), so the Paul of Galatians i. 16 f. began to fulfil his commission to preach the Son of God "among the Gentiles" without waiting to "confer with flesh and blood".

That Paul's conversion and call took place at or near Damascus, as Acts relates, is confirmed in Galatians i. 17 by his statement that, after his visit to Arabia, he "returned to Damascus". Of that Arabian visit Acts has no direct word to say, but there is an indirect connection with it in Luke's account of Paul's having to escape from Damascus by being lowered over the wall in a basket by night (Acts ix. 23–25). According

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the use of the "light" figure in Eph. v. 8, 14.

to Luke, this was necessary because of a plot against his life by Damascene Jews, but Paul's independent account of the incident in 2 Corinthians xi. 32 f. says that it was the representative of Aretas, king of the Nabataean Arabs, who was guarding the city gates with the aim of arresting him—which suggests that his clandestine escape was somehow connected with his recent activity in Arabia.

In Acts and Galatians alike it was from Damascus that Paul paid his first post-conversion visit to Jerusalem (Acts ix. 23–27; xxii. 17; xxvi. 20; Gal. i. 18). Luke describes that visit in generalizing terms (Acts ix. 26–29) not dissimilar to those in which he has just described Paul's activity in Damascus (ix. 19b–22); evidently he had little independent information about the details, which Paul states explicitly and with a solemn asseveration of his veracity in Galatians i. 18 f.<sup>1</sup> To be sure, Professor Olof Linton of Copenhagen published an article twenty-six years ago in which he suggested that Luke's deviation from Paul's account of that visit is not due simply to the inadequacy of his source-material, but rather that Luke reproduces that very account of Paul's first contact with the Jerusalem apostles which Paul is at pains to refute in Galatians i. 11 ff.,<sup>2</sup> with its implication that his ministry was somehow dependent on their recognition.<sup>3</sup> But this can hardly be sustained: Luke

<sup>1</sup> L. P. Trudinger, in "A Note on Galatians i. 19" (*Novum Testamentum*, xvii (1975), 200 ff.), translates *ἕτερον δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων κτλ* as "other than the apostles I saw none except James, the Lord's brother". This reduces the discrepancy with Acts ix. 26 ff., but is a very dubious way of construing the Greek text.

<sup>2</sup> O. Linton, "The Third Aspect: A Neglected Point of View", *Studia Theologica*, iii (1949), 79 ff. E. R. Goodenough ("The Perspective of Acts", in Keck–Martyn, p. 58) goes so far as to wonder "if it was someone thinking like the author of Acts whom Paul had in mind when he wrote to the Galatians: 'Even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed' (Gal. i. 8)".

<sup>3</sup> In Acts, as in his Gospel, Luke restricts the designation "apostles" to the Twelve, except for the reference to "the apostles Barnabas and Paul" in Acts xiv. 14, whereas Paul in his epistles insists on his apostleship as being in no way inferior in authority or status to that of the Twelve. But Luke is not depreciating Paul's authority or status; he may simply choose to use the word "apostle" in a more restricted sense. When it is a question of substance rather than nomenclature, Tertullian rightly emphasized the value of Acts for the objective testimony it provides for Paul's genuine apostleship (*De praescriptione haereticorum*, 23).

tells how in the synagogues of Damascus, before he went to meet the apostles in Jerusalem, the newly-converted Paul "immediately . . . proclaimed Jesus, saying 'He is the Son of God'" (Acts ix. 20). In this summary of Paul's earliest preaching it is probably not by accident that Luke makes him speak of Jesus as the Son of God, whereas most preachers in Acts proclaim him as the Christ or Messiah. This agrees with Paul's own testimony to the Corinthians regarding "the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we preached among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I" (2 Cor. i. 19). There is certainly no hint in Luke's narrative that "the disciples at Damascus", with whom he spent "several days" after his conversion (Acts ix. 19b), contributed anything to the content of his preaching. The historian today may indeed properly enquire what influence, if any, Damascene Christianity exercised on Paul at that turning-point in his career, but neither Luke nor Paul himself will provide him with any direct information on this question.

At the end of Paul's Jerusalem visit he was, according to Luke, taken down to Caesarea and sent off to Tarsus (Acts ix. 30); his own account is that he "went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia" (Gal. i. 21). Tarsus was the chief city of Cilicia, as Antioch was of Syria; at that time these two territories formed one united province. In due course Paul made his way to Antioch where he appears in both accounts in association with Barnabas (Acts xi. 25 ff.; Gal. ii. 11 ff.). It is with Barnabas that he pays his second post-conversion visit to Jerusalem, according to Galatians ii. 1 ff.; the narrative of Acts tells of two occasions on which they went to Jerusalem together (both times from Antioch)—the famine-relief visit of Acts xi. 30 and the visit to attend the "Council of Jerusalem" in Acts xv. 2 ff.<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to identify the conference which Barnabas and Paul had with the Jerusalem "pillars" in Galatians

<sup>1</sup> Mention should be made of the view that these were originally two variant reports of one single visit, which Luke took as reports of two separate visits; cf. J. Wellhausen, "Noten zur Apostelgeschichte", *Nachrichten von der kgl. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen*, phil.-hist. Klasse, 1907, 1 ff.; E. Schwartz, "Zur Chronologie des Paulus", *ibid.* 263 ff.; K. Lake, "The Apostolic Council of Jerusalem", in *The Beginnings of Christianity*, ed. F. J. F. Jackson and K. Lake, v (London, 1933), pp. 201 ff.

ii. 1-10 and the "Council" of Acts xv; if, on the other hand, we try to equate the Galatians visit with the famine-relief visit of Acts, the only link—and a tenuous one—is the reference in Galatians ii. 10 to remembering the poor, on which Paul comments that he "had in fact made a special point of attending to this very matter".<sup>1</sup>

The sequence in Galatians i. 11-ii. 14 is the only continuous piece of autobiography in the Pauline corpus.<sup>2</sup> It ends with Paul's rebuke of Peter at Antioch, of which characteristically Luke says nothing at all; there is just a possible link between the coming to Antioch of "certain men . . . from James" in Galatians ii. 12 and the coming to Antioch of "some men . . . from Judaea" in Acts xv. 1 who pressed the necessity of circumcision on the Gentile Christians there. But when Luke reports the parting of the ways between Paul and Barnabas in Acts xv. 36 ff. we can appreciate this cleavage better if we reflect that, in addition to the ostensible cause mentioned by Luke—disagreement whether to take John Mark along with them when they revisited the recently founded churches of South Galatia—there was the more serious factor of Paul's loss of confidence in Barnabas after the latter's joining in the "play-acting" of Peter and others at Antioch (Gal. ii. 13).

Luke's omission of controversies like that between Paul and Peter at Antioch, for reasons associated with the aim of his work (which did not include the unnecessary fighting of battles over again), inevitably affects his portrait of Paul; but it does not appear to spring from any desire to depict Paul as other than he really was.

There is no direct reference in Paul's letters to the terms of the apostolic decree of Acts xv. 28 f., and certainly no appeal to them even when one of the specific points covered by them—

<sup>1</sup> It is doubtful if Paul's going up to Jerusalem on this occasion *κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν* (Gal. ii. 2) can be correlated with the prophecy of Agabus in Acts xi. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. G. Bornkamm, "The Revelation of Christ to Paul on the Damascus Road and Paul's Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation", in *Reconciliation and Hope*, ed. R. J. Banks (Exeter, 1974), pp. 90 ff.; F. F. Bruce, "Further Thoughts on Paul's Autobiography (Gal. i. 11-ii. 14)", in *Jesus und Paulus*, ed. E. E. Ellis and E. Grässer (Göttingen, 1975), pp. 21 ff.

the eating of food sacrificed to idols—is submitted to Paul for adjudication, which it receives in 1 Corinthians viii. 1 ff. But in that very passage we may detect, indirectly, the influence of the decree. If the Peter party at Corinth had tried to impose on the church there conditions laid down in the letter earlier sent from the apostles and elders at Jerusalem to the Gentile believers of Antioch and the province (Syria-Cilicia) of which it was the capital, then Paul might well prefer to deal with the question on the basis of the first principles of Christian freedom and Christian charity, instead of appealing to an authority which was being invoked in some quarters to subvert his own.<sup>1</sup> Besides, by treating the question as he does he has provided permanently valid guide-lines for dealing with ethical issues of this order. But if in fact Paul was unhappy about the invocation of the decree in his own mission-field, we may suspect that his close association with the decree in the narrative of Acts could be due to the amalgamation of a Jerusalem meeting at which he was present with one from which he was absent.

Paul's companions after his parting with Barnabas—Silas and Timothy, introduced in Acts xv. 22, 40, and xvi. 1—appear in the epistles which are to be dated from this time onward, Silas being given the full form of his Latin name Silvanus (1 Thess. i. 1, etc.). With them Paul crossed from Asia Minor to Macedonia and Achaia, and we can attempt to correlate the accounts of their movements in the Thessalonian and Corinthian correspondence with the relevant sections of Acts. In fact the general sequence Philippi-Thessalonica-Athens-Corinth-Ephesus-Macedonia-Achaia, as we have it in Acts xvi-xix, is confirmed by references in 1 Thessalonians ii. 2, iii. 1; 1 Corinthians ii. 1, xvi. 5-9; 2 Corinthians xii. 14 ff.; Romans xvi. 1, 23. Detailed correlation is difficult because Paul's account of his movements is not systematic but occasional and allusive, while even Luke's account is not so complete as we might suppose if we could not check it by references in Paul; for example, it omits all mention of Paul's second, "painful" visit to Corinth (2 Cor. ii. 1, xiii. 2). When this is borne in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. C. K. Barrett, "Things Sacrificed to Idols", *NTS*, xi (1964-5), 138 ff.

mind, as coherent an outline can be reconstructed as our sources permit: Kirsopp Lake showed how to do it over sixty years ago in *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*.<sup>1</sup>

A further control of the narrative of Acts is provided by Paul's personal note in Romans xv. 25 ff., where (writing apparently from Corinth during the winter before he sets sail for Judaea) he tells the Roman Christians that he must go to Jerusalem and complete the delivery of the collection, organized in his Gentile mission-field for the mother church, before he can pay them his promised visit. His misgivings about the reception awaiting him at Jerusalem (Rom. xv. 31) find an eloquent commentary in the narrative of Acts xxi. 17-xxvi. 32. When he sends the Roman Christians greetings from "all the churches of Christ" (Rom. xvi. 16), this chimes in happily with the statement in Acts xx. 4 that several men from cities evangelized by Paul accompanied him on his voyage to Judaea.<sup>2</sup> In the light of Paul's own information we conclude that these were the delegates of churches which had contributed to the collection for Jerusalem. It is remarkable indeed, in view of the great importance that Paul attached to the collection, that Luke's only allusion to it should be Paul's affirmation before Felix: "After some years I came to bring my nation alms and offerings" (Acts xxiv. 17). Professor John Knox points out in this regard that Luke manifestly had a good, and indeed first-hand, source for this part of his narrative, so that his soft-peddalling the nature and purpose of the collection must have been deliberate. His explanation is that, whereas the collection was in Paul's intention a peace-offering to the Jerusalem church, Luke's picture of peaceful relations between that church and the Gentile mission ever since the apostolic council of Acts xv excluded any occasion for a peace-offering at this later stage, so that in his narrative the offering had to be

<sup>1</sup> K. Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, pp. 73 f., 152.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle to the Romans* (London, 1932), pp. xvii-xxiv, 234 ff. (especially pp. xx, 240). Dodd's account of the destination of Romans xvi seems more probable to me than the account persuasively presented by T. W. Manson, "St. Paul's Letter to the Romans—and Others", *BULLETIN*, xxxi (1948), 224 ff., reprinted in *Studies in the Gospels and Epistles* (Manchester, 1962), pp. 225 ff.

"separated entirely from its original context".<sup>1</sup> I have doubts about this explanation, which are bound up with the doubts I entertain about the whole thesis of Professor Knox's *Chapters in a Life of Paul*; but I am sure that he is right in thinking that a proper understanding of the terms of Luke's solitary allusion to the collection would help us to a better understanding of Luke's whole standpoint and purpose in writing. This should be emphasized, however: there are hints in the epistles themselves that the bringing of the collection to Jerusalem was envisaged by Paul not only as a gift to the church of that city but also (as Luke implies) as a witness to the whole Jewish nation at the centre of its life.

### III

More important than these externalities is the impression of Paul himself given by our two sources. On one level we can draw up quite an impressive list of parallels. There is the incidental fact that the Paul of Acts, like the Paul of the epistles, supports himself by his own labour rather than be a financial burden to his friends and converts (cf. Acts xviii. 3, xx. 34, with 1 Thess. ii. 9; 2 Thess. iii. 7 f.; 1 Cor. ix. 18). Again, if in Romans i. 16 and ii. 9 f. Paul repeats that the order of gospel presentation is "to the Jew first and also to the Greek", so in Acts, apostle to the Gentiles as he is, he visits the synagogues first in city after city and tells the unresponsive Jews of Pisidian Antioch, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken first to you" (Acts xiii. 46).<sup>2</sup> Although in Acts Jewish hostility to

<sup>1</sup> J. Knox, *Chapters in a Life of Paul* (London, 1954), p. 71. Professor Knox's insistence that Paul's own writings, and not Acts, must be our basis for constructing a "Life of Paul" is acceptable in the sense that Paul's writings are our primary source. But Paul's writings are occasional in character, and cover a limited portion of his career; and there can be no valid reason for not making responsible use of Acts to supplement their information if Acts can be shown by objective tests to merit being taken seriously as a historical work.

<sup>2</sup> The picture which Acts gives of Paul's visiting synagogues and preaching there has been rejected as unhistorical on the ground that, by Paul's own account, his apostleship was specifically to the Gentiles, not to the Jews (Gal. i. 16, ii. 7-9; Rom. xi. 13 f.). But the apostle to the Gentiles was a sufficiently good strategist to know that he could find an excellent bridgehead for the discharge of his commission in the God-fearing Gentiles who attended synagogue worship in the cities of the Diaspora.

the gospel has been felt to receive undue emphasis, yet there is one place in the Pauline corpus where the apostle, apparently under great provocation, denounces his Jewish opponents in unsparing terms as those who "displease God and oppose all men by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they may be saved" (1 Thess. ii. 15 f.)—language so atypical of Paul that we look (but in vain) to see if there is some textual doubt about the passage, but language which agrees with the general picture in Acts and which could indeed find its explanation in the narrative of Acts xvii. 5–9. Much more typical of Paul is his description in Romans ix. 2 f. of the "great sorrow and unceasing anguish" which he endures at heart because the great majority of his fellow-Jews decline to accept the gospel in which alone, as he believes, their true well-being can be attained. And this is the Paul who in Acts, from Damascus to Rome, persists in offering the saving message to his Jewish brethren first in spite of repeated rebuffs.

The Paul of Acts who can adapt himself so readily to Jew and Gentile, learned and unlearned, Areopagus and Sanhedrin, synagogue audience and city mob, Roman governor and King Agrippa, is the Paul who speaks in 1 Corinthians ix. 19–23 :

For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews ; to those under the law I became as one under the law—though not being myself under the law—that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law—not being without law toward God but under the law of Christ—that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

This passage should not be exploited as a blanket explanation to cover inconsistencies of every kind. On the other hand its significance should not be minimized.<sup>1</sup> It may justifiably be related to incidents in Acts where Paul appears to accommodate himself to Jewish ways more than the Paul of (say) Galatians might be expected to do, if those incidents can reasonably be

<sup>1</sup> Cf. P. Vielhauer, "On the 'Paulinism' of Acts", in Keck-Martyn, p. 40 ; also G. Bornkamm, "The Missionary Stance of Paul in 1 Corinthians 9 and in Acts", *ibid.* pp. 194 ff.

viewed as in line with Paul's expressed purpose "that I might by all means save some".

How far was Paul prepared to live like a Jew among Jews? Naturally, in Jewish society he would conform to the Jewish food laws ; common courtesy, not to speak of Christian charity, would dictate such a course. He would not outrage Jewish sentiment by violating the sanctity of holy days. For himself, he probably "esteemed all days alike" (Rom. xiv. 5), but the Paul of the epistles reckons his calendar in terms of Jewish festivals—"I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost", he tells the Corinthians towards the close of his Ephesian ministry (1 Cor. xvi. 8)—as the Paul of Acts also does : a year or two later, for example, on his last voyage to Judaea, he "had decided", Luke says, "to sail past Ephesus, . . . for he was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost" (Acts xx. 16).

True, he is dismayed that his Galatian converts have begun to "observe days, and months, and seasons, and years" (Gal. iv. 10). But they were Gentiles : there was no reason for them to adopt the observance of the Jewish sacred calendar, least of all to adopt it as a matter of legal obligation. Once he himself had inherited the observance of that sacred calendar as a legal obligation, but now he had learned to exercise complete freedom regarding its observance or non-observance, and it was deplorable that Gentile believers who had no ancestral motivation for doing so should place themselves under the yoke of the commandments in this or any other way.

There are some converts from an old faith to a new faith who look upon the practices of the old faith, however ethically neutral they may be, as henceforth tabu. They have thus exchanged a positive form of legal obligation for a negative form. But truly emancipated souls are not in bondage to their emancipation. Paul was truly emancipated in this sense. If the interests of the gospel in one situation made it expedient to conform to Jewish religious practices, he would conform : in a different situation the interests of the gospel would be hindered by such conformity, and he would act accordingly. When he says that he has "become all things to all men" he may well be echoing a criticism which was freely voiced against him : even

to this day a preacher of whom this is said is more often blamed than commended. It is plain from Paul's letters that his critics regarded him as a vacillator, one who trimmed his course so as to please men. They failed to see, as similarly myopic people still fail to see, that apparent inconsistencies at a lower level may be vindicated by an overriding consistency at a higher level. The consistency which some people demand is that "foolish consistency" which R. W. Emerson described as "the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines".<sup>1</sup> But the consistency which found expression in Paul's words "I do it all for the sake of the gospel" is consistency of an altogether higher kind.

This should be kept in mind when Luke represents Paul as participating in Nazirite vows—either undertaking one himself (Acts xviii. 18) or paying the expenses of others who were about to discharge one (Acts xxi. 23 ff.). The latter occasion, of course, had a disastrous outcome, and Paul may not have been as sanguine as his Jerusalem brethren were when they urged this course upon him; but if they thought it would ease a delicate situation for them, Paul was not the man to refuse their request, whatever private doubts he might have entertained about its effectiveness. A Nazirite vow was a purely voluntary undertaking, with a long tradition of Jewish piety behind it; it involved nothing that could compromise the truth or freedom of Paul's gospel. Nor is there any ground at all for the idea that James and his fellow-elders pressed it on Paul as a subtle means of humiliating him.<sup>2</sup>

Luke says that they pressed it on Paul in order that the Jewish residents and visitors in Jerusalem might have visible evidence that he was still a practising Jew and that there was no truth in rumours that he tried to get Jews of the dispersion—presumably Jewish believers in the gospel—"to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or observe the customs" (Acts xxi. 21). It is certain that Paul, in Jerusalem

<sup>1</sup> R. W. Emerson, "Essay on Self-Reliance", *Essays, Lectures and Orations* (London, 1848), p. 30. Cf. F. J. Foakes-Jackson, *The Life of St. Paul* (London, 1927), p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. S. G. F. Brandon, *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church* (London, 1951), pp. 134 f.

of all places, would live as a practising Jew—if only to be consistent with his own regular policy, to "give no offence to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God" and to "try to please all men in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved" (1 Cor. x. 32 f.). There were few Greeks in Jerusalem, but both Jews and the church of God in that city would be scandalized if he failed to "observe the customs".

But if this was Paul's own policy, as a Jewish Christian, why should he wish other Jewish Christians to adopt a different one? Provided they shared his attitude to the traditional practices of Judaism as no longer divine requirements but as voluntary actions which might be undertaken or omitted as expediency directed, they might freely go on with them. It was no more necessary for them than for Paul to be in bondage to their emancipation. And in fact we have no indication in Paul's letters of his advice in these respects to Jewish Christians, except that Jewish and Gentile Christians alike should respect each other's scruples—or lack of scruples.

What we do have in his letters is his earnest remonstrance with *Gentile* Christians who were being urged to add circumcision and other Jewish observances to their faith in Christ on the ground that such additions were necessary to complete their salvation and win them the approval of God. But surely, it may be urged, in the light of this remonstrance, Luke stretches our credulity beyond tolerable limits when he tells us that Paul circumcised Timothy (Acts xvi. 3). Can this be the Paul who testifies "to every man who receives circumcision that he is bound to keep the whole law" (Gal. v. 3)? Is not Vielhauer right when he interprets these words to mean that "circumcision is never a matter of indifference, but rather is confession and acknowledgment of the saving significance of the law, is a denial of baptism, and therefore splits the church"?<sup>1</sup> The trouble is that in that very letter Paul says, twice over, that circumcision in itself is a matter of indifference: "in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith working through love" (Gal. v. 6); "neither circumcision counts for

<sup>1</sup> P. Vielhauer, "On the 'Paulinism' of Acts", in Keck-Martyn, pp. 40 f.

anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation" (Gal. vi. 15).<sup>1</sup> And this is what we should expect Paul to say: for him, external and morally indifferent acts or conditions are neither here nor there; but when they are given religious significance and treated as means of establishing merit in the sight of God, then, and for that reason, they are to be deplored. "Every man who receives circumcision" by way of legal obligation is bound to keep the whole law of which circumcision is one small part; let no one think that the receiving of circumcision in itself will be acceptable as a token performance of the divine law.

Again, in this same letter we may gather, reading between the lines, that Paul was charged with not always maintaining the rigid line on circumcision which he adopted with the Galatians. What does he mean by his argument, "But if I, brethren, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted?" (Gal. v. 11), if not that some people said that he did preach—or even practise—circumcision? If they knew of his circumcision of Timothy, or of some similar occasion, they might well conclude that Paul was guilty of inconsistency.

But once again we must distinguish a higher and a lower consistency. If the emancipated man wishes for certain proper purposes to perform a ritual act which in itself is ethically indifferent, he will perform it, not by compulsion but freely. If expediency requires that someone who by birth (as the son of a Jewish mother) and by religious upbringing is a Jew in every respect but circumcision (presumably because his Greek father would not hear of it) be circumcised for his greater usefulness in the gospel, Paul will circumcise him; in such a situation circumcision is nothing but a minor surgical operation performed for a practical purpose. It is natural that many people in Paul's day did not grasp the difference between doing such things voluntarily and doing them as matters of religious obligation, and accordingly charged Paul with inconsistency; but the difference is one that should be patent to New Testament students today.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. vii. 19: "neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but keeping the commandments of God." On the difference between this "but" clause and those in Gal. v. 6 and vi. 15 see J. W. Drane, *Paul: Libertine or Legalist?* (London, 1975), p. 65.

## IV

Luke, like Paul, was a theologian, even if he was not a theologian like Paul. Luke had not been brought up under the law of Moses and had no experience of the displacement of the law as the foundation for life which made such a difference to Paul. Maybe those are right who think that Luke's was a *theologia gloriae* whereas Paul's was a *theologia crucis*—but even Paul could rejoice that the humiliated and crucified Jesus had been highly exalted by God and given "the name which is above every name" (Phil. ii. 9).<sup>1</sup> Luke may be pre-eminently "the theologian of salvation history", but salvation history is not an alien concept to Paul,<sup>2</sup> although his understanding of it is controlled by the centrality of justification by faith in his thought, to a point where he can view the age of law, running from Moses to Christ, as a parenthesis in salvation history, interrupting the age of promise which was inaugurated with Abraham and consummated in the gospel (Gal. iii. 15–19; Rom. v. 20).

It is a commonplace in *Actaforschung* that the speeches ascribed to Paul in Acts give expression to Luke's theology rather than to Paul's. Three of these speeches will repay a brief examination.

(a) *Paul's address at Pisidian Antioch*

First, there is Paul's synagogue address at Pisidian Antioch (Acts xiii. 16–41), which probably sums up the way in which the gospel was presented to a synagogue congregation, comprising Jews and God-fearing Gentiles, against the familiar background of the history of Israel. As Paul, in Romans i. 3, speaks of

<sup>1</sup> Whether or not Phil. ii. 6–11 is of Pauline composition, Paul makes its sentiments his own by incorporating them into his argument. Cf. R. P. Martin, *Carmen Christi* (Cambridge, 1967); C. F. D. Moule, "Further Reflexions on Philippians 2: 5–11", in *Apostolic History and the Gospel*, ed. W. W. Gasque and R. P. Martin (Exeter, 1970), pp. 264 ff.; M. D. Hooker, "Philippians 2: 6–11", in *Jesus und Paulus*, ed. E. E. Ellis and E. Grässer (Göttingen, 1975), pp. 151 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. E. Lohse, "Lukas als Theologe der Heilsgeschichte", *Evangelische Theologie*, xiv (1954–5), 254 ff.; H. Flender, *St. Luke: Theologian of Redemptive History*, E. T. (London, 1967); E. Käsemann, *Perspectives on Paul*, E. T. (London, 1969), pp. 60 ff.

Jesus as "descended from David according to the flesh" (perhaps quoting a primitive confession of faith), so at Pisidian Antioch he is made to recount the earlier phase of salvation history, the mighty acts of God from Moses to David (cf. Psalm lxxviii. 51-72),<sup>1</sup> after which he goes on: "Of this man's posterity God has brought to Israel a Saviour, Jesus, as he promised . . ." (Acts xiii. 23). In this retrospect, though it begins with the Exodus, there is no word about law; it is the fulfilment of promise that is emphasized, even if here the promise is that made not to Abraham but to David. Then Paul summarizes the culminating phase of salvation history, the mighty acts of God in Christ, crowned by the resurrection, in fulfilment of psalm and prophecy.

If it be objected that there is not much difference between what Paul says here and what Peter says in Jerusalem on the first Christian Pentecost (Acts ii. 22-36), we can but agree; but perhaps there was little difference in substance between the Petrine and Pauline presentations of the gospel to Jewish audiences. If Paul, faced with a synagogue congregation in the Diaspora, did not speak like this, then let us be told how in fact he did speak. Two points may give us pause, however. There is less *theologia crucis* in the account of the death of Jesus in this speech than might be expected from the real Paul, whether he was addressing Jews or Gentiles. And in particular, when the Paul of Acts tells how the risen Christ "appeared to those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people" (verse 31), the real Paul would certainly have added, and (we may be sure) did add: "Last of all . . . he appeared also to me" (cf. 1 Cor. xv. 8). But a Pauline touch is introduced at the end of the address. Just as Paul in the synagogues of Damascus speaks of Jesus as "the Son of God", where others spoke of him as the Messiah, so, where others proclaimed that forgiveness of sins was available through Jesus (cf. Acts ii. 38, x. 43), Paul at Pisidian Antioch not only says that "through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you", but adds that "by him every one that believes is justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by Moses'

<sup>1</sup> Cf. G. E. Wright, *God Who Acts* (London, 1952), pp. 70, 76-81.

law" (verses 38, 39). True, from these words as they stand the full Pauline doctrine of justification by faith could not be deduced<sup>1</sup>; but the words are quite in line with the teaching of Romans iii. 20-26, that God "justifies him who has faith in Jesus" whereas "no human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law". The language of Acts xiii. 39 need not be construed to mean that faith in Christ takes over when Moses' law gives up—a most un-Pauline idea, of course.<sup>2</sup>

#### (b) *Paul's address before the Areopagus*

But it is Paul's speech before the Athenian Court of the Areopagus which has most confidently been marked down as un-Pauline. Its message is set in a context not merely of salvation history but of world history, which is even more un-Pauline.<sup>3</sup> Instead of setting forth the Pauline gospel, it anticipates the rationalism of the second-century apologists, in its attempt to establish the true knowledge of God by an appeal to Greek poets and thinkers.<sup>4</sup> The "word of the cross" is tactfully omitted, because it was known to be "folly to Gentiles" (cf. 1 Cor. i. 23).<sup>5</sup> The Pauline emphasis on being "in Christ" by grace is replaced by a pagan emphasis on being "in God" by nature.<sup>6</sup> All this and more we are accustomed to hear from those who find it impossible to associate the *Areopagitica* of Acts with the real Paul.

Yet it is not at all impossible to envisage the author of the

<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the passive of *δικαιώω* is here translated "be freed" in RSV, "be acquitted" in NEB and NAB, with the implication that something less than justification in the full Pauline sense is meant.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. B. W. Bacon, *The Story of St. Paul* (London, 1905), p. 103; he found that the doctrine taught in Acts xiii. 38 f. was "exactly that which St. Paul fundamentally repudiates, . . . namely, that a man may rest upon the works of the law for his general justification, and rely on the death of Christ to make up the deficiencies".

<sup>3</sup> Cf. H. Conzelmann, "The Address of Paul on the Areopagus", in Keck-Martyn, pp. 217 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. M. Dibelius, *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*, E. T. (London, 1956), pp. 26 ff.

<sup>5</sup> P. Vielhauer, "On the 'Paulinism' of Acts", in Keck-Martyn, pp. 36 f.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. A. Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, E. T. (London, 1931), pp. 6 ff.

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first three chapters of Romans making several of the points which are central to the Areopagus speech. We have to bear in mind that the epistle is addressed to Christians whom Paul does not need to persuade of the folly of idolatry, whereas the speech is addressed to pagans who require such persuasion. In the epistle Paul insists that the Creator's "eternal power and divinity" can be recognized from his works, to a point where failure to recognize them is inexcusable (Rom. i. 18-23). In the epistle, too, he indicates that the saving work of Christ has meant a change in God's dealings with men: hitherto "in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins" but now he had provided his Son as an effective "expiation . . . to be received by faith" (Rom. iii. 21-26).

Take the author of these words and bring him to Athens: invite him to expound his teaching not to fellow-believers but to cultured pagans. Remember that he has now for several years been a successful evangelist in the pagan world—a fact which (despite his modest disclaimer in 1 Cor. ii. 1-5 and elsewhere) implies considerable persuasiveness in speech and approach, including the ability to find and exploit an initial area of common ground with his hearers, apart from which any attempt at communication would be fruitless. What will he say to such an audience? I find it difficult to imagine him as saying something very different from what Luke represents him as saying. He will try not to alienate his hearers in his first sentence, but he will tell them that idolatry is inexcusable, because the true knowledge of God is available in his works of creation and providence; he may even point out that some of their own thinkers have perceived that men are the offspring of the supreme God who is the source and stay of their being. He will tell them too, very probably, that God is willing to overlook their past ignorance of his nature, culpable though it is, but that the Christ-event has introduced a new factor into the divine-human relationship, which calls urgently for a change of mind and practice. The apostle who, in Romans ii. 16, speaks of "that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus," could very well impress it on a pagan audience that God "has fixed a day on which he will judge the

world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all men by raising him from the dead" (Acts xvii. 31). It is implied, moreover, that no long interval is to elapse between this recent act of resurrection and the coming judgement of which it is the pledge.

Paul had clear and abundant precedent in the Hebrew scriptures for his exposure of the folly of idolatry and of supposing that the supreme God could be accommodated in a material building, as also for his insistence that this God provides all his creatures with food and living space, while he himself is not dependent on anything that they can offer to him. While echoes of the Hebrew scriptures are discernible in his speech to those who are familiar with them, he naturally does not introduce quotations from them when speaking to hearers who are totally unacquainted with them. In addressing synagogue congregations or in writing letters to Christians he might make liberal use of such quotations to illustrate or confirm his arguments; but in this different situation, if poets whom his hearers do acknowledge as authorities have expressed sentiments in line with his arguments, he will quote them—giving their words a fresh nuance, if necessary, from the new context in which they are quoted. It is underestimating Paul's versatility, his capacity for being "all things to all men", to think that he could not have presented the essence of Romans i-iii to pagans along the lines of Acts xvii. 22-31.<sup>1</sup> True, Luke did not hear Paul address the Court of the Areopagus, but he knew how Paul was accustomed to present his *praeparatio evangelica* to just such an audience, and endeavoured, following the pattern of Thucydides, "to give the general purport of what was actually said".<sup>2</sup> And if (as Luke tells us) some of Paul's hearers on this occasion did believe his message, he could have said of them precisely what he said of his converts in Thessalonica—that they "turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come" (1 Thess. i. 9 f.).

<sup>1</sup> B. Gärtner, *The Areopagus Speech and Natural Revelation* (Uppsala, 1955), gives a more positive appraisal.

<sup>2</sup> Thucydides, *Hist.*, i. 22. 1.

(c) *Paul's address to the Ephesian elders*

One further speech by the Paul of Acts invites our attention: that is his farewell speech to the elders of the Ephesian church by the shore at Miletus (Acts xx. 18–35). Of all the speeches attributed to Paul in Acts this is the only one addressed to a Christian audience; it is not surprising, then, to find in it more parallels to the thought and wording of the epistles than in any of the others. Moreover, this speech comes in the context of a “we” section, and the *prima facie* implication of this is that the narrator of the “we” sections (Luke himself, I believe) is here summarizing a speech which he heard. I once suggested that he might even have taken shorthand notes<sup>1</sup>—a suggestion so preposterous to the mind of one distinguished commentator on Acts that, when he quotes it, he adds a parenthetical exclamation mark as the only adequate expression of his astonishment.<sup>2</sup>

This speech contains the most explicit mention of the redemptive efficacy of the death of Christ to be found anywhere in Luke's history. “Feed the church of God”, says Paul to the Ephesian elders, “which he purchased by the blood of his Beloved” (Acts xx. 28).<sup>3</sup> Such language in a speech composed by Luke would indeed be surprising; it can be more readily paralleled in the writings of Paul. Professor Conzelmann says that the writer at this point “probably adopts a turn of phrase current in the Church (perhaps to give a speech a Pauline stamp)—such tendencies are occasionally to be noted in Luke”.<sup>4</sup> But it is simpler to conclude that the “turn of phrase”, instead of representing an attempt to give a “Pauline stamp” to a non-Pauline speech, is one of several tokens which mark the speech as Pauline. To quote Professor Moule: “This is Paul, not some other speaker; and he is not evangelizing but recalling an already evangelized community to its deepest insights. In other words, the situation, like the theology, is precisely that of a Pauline epistle, not of preliminary evangelism”.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles* (London, 1951), p. 377.

<sup>2</sup> E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 71.

<sup>3</sup> Taking *τοῦ ἰδίου* as dependent on *τοῦ αἵματος*, not in attributive relation to it.

<sup>4</sup> H. Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, p. 201.

<sup>5</sup> C. F. D. Moule, “The Christology of Acts”, in Keck-Martyn, p. 171.

## V

Is the Paul of Acts the real Paul? Yes; he is the real Paul, seen in retrospect through the eyes of a friend and admirer, whose own religious experience was different from Paul's and who wrote for another public and purpose than Paul had in view when writing his letters. We must remember, too, that Luke did not set out to write a life of Paul: even if Paul occupies the major part of his canvas, he is concerned to portray the church of Jerusalem too.<sup>1</sup> From his perspective, both the progressive Paul and the conservative church of Jerusalem had their God-given parts to play in the first Christian generation, and he endeavoured to do equal justice to both. Both Paul and Jerusalem contributed to the faith and life of the second generation, and Luke was more interested in the deeper unity which he discerned between them than in the tensions which, however distressing they were at the time (as may be seen from Paul's letters), now appeared to him to be temporary and superficial and worthy to be forgotten. We are thankful for the preservation of Paul's letters, which ensures that they have not been forgotten; but Luke's interests were different from ours.

A man's own work is his greatest monument; but we can often form a juster appreciation if we can also see him as others saw him. Without Paul's letters we should have a very inadequate and one-sided impression of him, but thanks to Luke's portrayal we have a fuller understanding of Paul's place in the world of his day and of the impact he made on others than if we were dependent on his letters alone.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. G. W. H. Lampe, *St. Luke and the Church of Jerusalem* (London, 1969).

<sup>2</sup> See now C. Burchard, “Paulus in der Apostelgeschichte”, *TLZ*, 100 (1975), 881–95.