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THE STRUCTURE OF PAULINE ESCHATOLOGY

by CLARK H. PINNOCK

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Perspectives

FEW other doctrines have so impressed themselves upon the minds of twentieth-century theologians as those of revelation and eschatology. James Orr was able to predict at the turn of this century that these topics would be pivotal for successive Christian thinkers out of his sound grasp of historical theology.¹ Yet despite the feverish pace of research into these matters, it cannot be said that any firm consensus has been reached. The Pauline eschatology itself, though it is central to Paul's entire theology, remains inadequately treated and poorly understood. One must reach back to the older works of H. A. A. Kennedy and G. Vos for truly thorough studies of the theme.

One of the major misconceptions about the subject which is being gradually checked is the mistaken equation of eschatology and apocalyptic.² This grossly contracted definition of eschatology is reflected in the Oxford Dictionary: "the department of theological science concerned with the four last things, death, judgment, heaven and hell". But eschatology is much broader than this. It forms a circle in which the entire Pauline theology can comfortably revolve. There is even a sense in which every world-view possesses its variety of eschatology, which is, broadly speaking, concerned with the nature and meaning of history, and which thereby illuminates all present experience. It is to be hoped that the current interest in

¹ In his *The Progress of Dogma* (London, 1901).

² Cf. B. Vawter, "Apocalyptic: its relation to prophecy", *CBQ* 22 (1960), 33-46.

Heilsgeschichte will come to focus more and more sharply upon eschatology. For a more appropriate medicine could scarcely be prescribed for the ills of modern culture, stained as it is with nihilism and rootlessness, than a full dose of Pauline eschatology. But just because this doctrine presents Christianity in so virile and supernatural a form, it meets with resistance in various forms. The history of modern discussion may not be unfairly described as an attempt not to concede and assess its force, but to evade and mute it.

In the primitive Church this doctrine was strongly linked to the task of Christian apologetics, which sought to vindicate the new gospel in the light of the prophetic Scriptures.³ Eschatology was the quality which marked the Christian message off from its Jewish forebears, and rendered it truly distinctive. But eschatology began to fall into hard times when Patristic theology adopted increasingly hellenistic categories to express the gospel. Failure to respect the Hebraic framework of eschatology resulted in a decreasing interest in this crucial topic. By the medieval period, the doctrine was an embarrassment to the organized Church, and received an over-individualized interpretation. The picture of the last things came to be painted in lurid colours, and the focus of eschatology was shifted from grace to wrath. It evoked fear instead of hope. In reaction, the Reformers⁴ stressed personal soteriology, their form of "realized eschatology". The proper perspective was on the way to being restored through their emphasis on Christ the Messiah, and God's historical and covenantal dealings with men. More recently eschatology has been propelled to the centre stage of theological debate by the school of "consistent eschatology" (J. Weiss, W. Wrede, A. Schweitzer). This movement swept aside liberal distortions of the gospel, and checked any strongly hellenistic reading of Paul. But its case was greatly overstated, and fixed arbitrarily upon the chronology of eschatology, that is on the alleged delay of the Parousia, instead of grasping its true focus, the person and work of Messiah Jesus. The approaches of both C. H. Dodd and R. Bultmann also fail to do justice to the full content of Pauline eschatology, not by dismissing the notion as marginal and residual as the liberals did, but by stressing unduly its realized

³ Cf. G. W. H. Lampe, "Early Patristic Eschatology", *Eschatology* (London, 1953). For the strong interest of the Fathers in the question of the Millennium, see J. Daniélou, *Théologie du Judéo-Christianisme* (Paris, 1958), ch. 11; H. Bietenhard, *Das Tausendjährige Reich* (Zürich, 1955).

⁴ Cf. H. Quistorp, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things* (London, 1955).

phases, and its existential application.⁵

A strong view of Biblical authority is especially crucial to a study of eschatology. Its precision and stability are drastically affected by the common failure to treat seriously its full content. Eschatology is a lofty and cosmic doctrine, and imposes a severe strain on the concept of revelation. Any reliable knowledge of the future plans of God must derive from the inspiration and illumination of his Spirit.

I. THE FORMATION AND PATTERN OF PAULINE ESCHATOLOGY

Paul's theology is an interpretation, from the viewpoint of a post-resurrection situation, of the events and experiences of the Christian era, in which the *eschaton* had already come. The resurrection of Jesus made an enormous impact upon the pre-Christian thinking of Paul. The catastrophe of the cross was seen to be reversed, and the outcome was the influx into history of eschatological realities. The great problem facing the converted apostle was to define the precise nature of the age preceding the Parousia in the light of the Resurrection. There were only hints of such a definition in the materials which lay to hand.

From the Old Testament, Paul inherited the notion of successive-ness in eschatology. At the climax to history, God would act in a decisive way to sum up His purposes. Even allowing for the adjustment made necessary by the coming of Christ before the end of history, these sacred writings remained the main quarry from which Paul extracted his ideas for the doctrine of eschatology. Recent study in O.T. criticism has tended to agree that eschatology is very deeply rooted in the thought of ancient Israel.⁶ Both streams of post-biblical Jewish eschatology, centring on an earthly Davidic king, and on a heavenly Son of Man, flow from the O.T. Paul's task was to show how prophetic expectations were to be understood in the light of the Church age.

⁵ A masterful analysis of the modern types of interpretation is found in *The Holy Spirit and Eschatology*, by N. Q. Hamilton (Edinburgh, 1957), ch. 4-6.

⁶ W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the O.T.* (London, 1961), ch. 11; H. J. Schoeps, *Paul in the Light of Jewish Religious History* (London, 1961), 89f.; H. L. Ellison, *Centrality of the Messianic Idea in the O.T.* (London, 1953); R. H. Gundry, *The Use of the O.T. in St. Matthew's Gospel with special reference to the Messianic Hope*, unpublished dissertation, University of Manchester, 1961, part 2.

Paul fell heir to a profusion of Jewish notions about eschatology.⁷ These materials were available for judicious use in the shaping of the Christian doctrine. It can be demonstrated that the selection which was made suited the teaching of Jesus and the O.T. Paul's eschatology is entirely controlled by his reference point, Jesus Christ, and all his data were "plastic" to the requirements of the Christian message. In fact, the form of the coming of the Kingdom through the work of Jesus disintegrated all traditional schemes of eschatology, while at the same time offering material in abundance for its reconstruction.

The Resurrection was the strong catalyst which reacted upon all of Paul's inherited conceptions. Besides reaffirming the Pharisaic belief in a final resurrection for all men, it necessitated a consideration of realized eschatology, of which it was the first fruits. It should not be overlooked that Paul saw his own mission in the light of this eschatological new age, inaugurated by the Resurrection. For he saw his ministry in prophetic terms (Gal. 1: 15; cf. Jeremiah 1: 5). He did not hesitate therefore to pronounce as a prophet would upon matters lying in the future.⁸

The teaching of Jesus doubtless contributed decisively to Paul's eschatology. It seems clear that a version of the Parousia discourse recorded in Matt. 24 underlies for example Paul's teaching in the Thessalonian epistles.⁹ The suggestion is more than probable, too, that the appearance of the risen Christ to Paul may have helped to shape his discussion of the final resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15.

Most fundamental to the structure of Paul's eschatology is its temporal aspect, his analysis of the two aeons. Because the curve of the *eschaton* has intersected time at the Resurrection, the age-to-come overlaps the present evil age. The present age for Christians thus partakes of a temporal dualism, a double aspect which explains a great deal of their experience. New life is lived out in the context of old history. But the present takes on an eternal glow, announcing proudly the future victory.

⁷ Cf. G. Vos, *Pauline Eschatology* (Grand Rapids, 1949), 27; H. A. A. Kennedy, *St. Paul's Conceptions of the Last Things* (London, 1904), 58 seq.; T. F. Glasson, *The Second Advent* (London, 1945), part 1; P. Volz, *Eschatologie der jüdischen Gemeinde* (Tübingen, 1934); R. H. Charles, *Eschatology*, ch. 5-8; P. Grelot, "L'Eschatologie des Esséniens et le livre d'Hénoch", *RQ* 1 (1958) 113-31; W. S. LaSor, "The Messianic Hope at Qumran", *Festschrift for A. A. Neuman*, ed. S. Zeitlin et al. (Leiden, 1962).

⁸ Cf. B. B. Warfield, "The Prophecies of St. Paul", *Exp.* (3rd series) 4 (1886), 30-44, 131-48, 439-64.

⁹ Cf. J. B. Orchard, "Thessalonians and the Synoptic Gospels", *Biblica* 19 (1938), 19-42; G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Future* (London, 1954), 232-4.

A full study of Pauline eschatology must take into account theories which posit a major revision of aspects of the Apostle's thinking. J. Lowe has, however, exposed just how difficult it is to detect any radical development in Paul's theology within his literary period.¹⁰ There is little reason to suspect, for example, that Paul lost sight of the future Parousia towards the end of his life. Galatians, an early letter, contains no futurist eschatology at all, while Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, and the Pastorals contain a great deal. Some uncertainty over the precise dating of these letters makes the hypothesis more shaky. Similarly, the thesis that Paul's resurrection hope altered notably in the short interval between the writing of First and Second Corinthians is less than credible. In neither case does the exegesis warrant the supposition of such a development. What progress can be detected is the mark of a maturing mind, the shift from excitement to serenity, and from restlessness to calm hope.

II. THE ESCHATOLOGICAL TEXTURE OF PAULINE THEOLOGY

(a) *The New Era*

All of Paul's theology falls within the orbit of eschatology. It is a dramatic study in newness (2 Cor. 5: 17). Every Christian reality, because it falls in the wake of the Resurrection, is viewed in the light of the prolonged eschatological day. The whole fabric of his thought is woven with eschatological thread. To this sphere belong Messiah's person and work, the gathering and perfecting of the saints, and the termination of the age itself. The warfare of the Christian life, with its familiar tension between the old and new natures, arises from the fact that the believer straddles two ages, participating in the new, while still existing in the old. The "now" and the "not yet" is clearly seen in the fundamental notion of *sōtēria* itself. Present deliverance is both prophetic and proleptic of final complete emancipation. The attitude of *hope*, which encourages a humble certainty in the future works of God, is a basic Christian attribute. G. Vos suggested that, were it not for the polemical need to combat works-righteousness in Romans and Galatians, hope might have featured more centrally along with faith as a fundamental Christian attitude. For hope is actually faith gazing at history. Just how important future eschatology is can be seen by the fact that Paul depicts present experience in eschatological terms. Life in Christ is resurrection life. Justification

¹⁰ Lowe, "An examination of attempts to detect developments in St. Paul's theology", *JTS* 42 (1941), 129-42.

is the preview to the final day of judgment. All Christian experience is inaugurated eschatology. The future provides a guideline to the present. His analysis of the present age in eschatological terms reveals how radically Paul altered traditional eschatology. The "days of the Messiah", the millennium if you like, are in progress. The present era is unlike any which preceded it. This consideration makes it difficult to fit a millennium in the popular sense into Paul's eschatology.

(b) *The Gentile Mission*

Evidence from Acts and the Epistles reveals that Paul regarded his own mission to the Gentiles in eschatological terms. The prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and perhaps Elijah, were the models for Paul's self-awareness (cf. Acts 20: 10; 26: 16; Gal. 1: 15). Like his Master, Paul adopted the rôle of the Servant of the Lord (Acts 13: 47), Jesus for the ministry of suffering, Paul for the ministry of evangelism. J. Jeremias has shown this ingathering of the Gentiles to be a mark of the end times in Jewish eschatology. Certainly, Paul saw the conversion of the Gentiles as the avenue to the conversion of the Jews, and then to the end of the age (Rom. 11: 11-32). He sought to present the Gentiles to God, as an offering in the Spirit (Rom. 15: 15-19).

An attempt to buttress this valid inference has come from O. Cullmann and J. Munck. They have identified the "restrainer" of 2 Thess. 2: 7 with the apostle himself, who by his unfinished preaching hinders the manifestation of the man of sin.¹¹ However, the reference in Paul's mind is not at all clear to his modern readers, any more than it has been to nineteen centuries of commentators.¹² This fact alone suggests that the evidence cannot bear with any certainty so spectacular a theory as this.

Nonetheless, the connection of Paul's mission with the end did lend considerable urgency and drive to his tireless missionary efforts. Our modern science of missions should not overlook this important relation between missions and eschatology. For it helps to define the nature of Paul's "eschatological universalism". Paul expected the triumph of Christ to occur in the hearts of men through the preaching of the gospel, and not apart from it. To suppose that all men will be saved at the end despite their rejection of the gospel is an entirely unwarranted assumption. Every knee

¹¹ Cf. J. Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (London, 1959), ch. 2; O. Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, (London, 1951), 164 seq.; "Le caractère eschatologique du devoir missionnaire et de la conscience apostolique de Saint Paul", *RHPR* 16 (1936), 210-45.

¹² Cf. E. E. Schneider, "Mysterium Iniquitatis", *TZ* 19 (1963), 113-25.

will indeed bow to Christ; but those which do not bow in faith, will bow in subjection.

(c) *The Law*

Paul saw more clearly than most early Christians that the coming of Jesus altered forever the understanding of Law. For both Paul and the first evangelist, Christ, and not the Torah, was the perfect embodiment of wisdom, and he stood in their thinking as the new Torah. The Apostle summed up his view in the statement, "Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness" (Rom. 10: 4). In Him the Law had reached its goal and terminus. It had found its destiny, satisfaction, and fulfilment. Other Jews too anticipated a change to occur in the position and nature of the Torah with the coming of Messiah.¹³ But it is doubtful whether Paul's teaching on Law can simply be accounted for within the limits of Rabbinic thought. For Jesus Himself, in His teachings, example and atonement, had compelled a total rethinking of the question. The argument of Galatians 3 hinges on the fulfilment of the promise given to Abraham in Christ, a promise which justified the awarding of a new function to the Law (3: 14). Fresh conditions came into play when the fulness of time had come.

(d) *The Holy Spirit*

The Spirit Himself is a very strong witness to the eschatological texture of Paul's thought.¹⁴ He bridges the gap between the Resurrection and the Parousia, administering to men the benefits of the messianic age. In a narrower way, the Spirit corresponds to the present aspects of the Kingdom of God in the teaching of Jesus. This gift of the Spirit was the initial and all-determining event, which set in motion the whole inrush of eschatological reality. He is the agent for inaugurating eschatology in the life of believers, and His presence is itself the pledge of redemption in all its future stages (Rom. 8: 23; Eph. 1: 14). His present work of sanctification is patterned on and entirely integral to His future work of resurrection at the last day (Rom. 8: 11). Experienced eschatology is in reality the enjoying in advance of eternal blessings. It is bound to evaporate if its organic link to the events of the future be dissolved.

¹³ Cf. W. D. Davies, *Torah in the Messianic Age* (Philadelphia, 1952); H. J. Schoeps, *Paul*, ch. 5.

¹⁴ Cf. G. Vos, "The Eschatological Aspect of the Pauline Conception of the Spirit", *Biblical and Theological Studies* (New York, 1912), 209-59; E. Schweizer, "Gegenwart des Geistes", *Festschrift for C. H. Dodd*, ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge, 1956), 482-508; N. Q. Hamilton, *The Holy Spirit and Eschatology*, ch. 1-3.

III. FUTURE EVENTS IN PAULINE ESCHATOLOGY

At least two tendencies in modern criticism militate against a serious consideration of futurist eschatology; that scepticism which depicts the events most vividly in one breath, only to dismiss them as antiquated in the next; and the neo-liberalism which reduces their meaning to the limited scope of present experience. Both attitudes regard the terminology and thrust of apocalyptic imagery in pictorial and non-conceptual terms. Neither seems to treat the future points on the redemptive time line as precisely events. Yet it is impossible to segregate off the experience of salvation from its terminus at the end of history. Full justice must be given to the entire deposit of special revelation deposited in the Scriptures.

(a) *The Man of Sin*

Disagreement has already been expressed with Cullmann's identification of the first eschatological figure in 2 Thessalonians 2, the "restrainer". The opinion of Tertullian (*Apology*, 32) seems more commendable, that this person is the symbol of the civil authority. Luke was equally positive in his attitude towards the Roman Empire, when in his history he regularly (no doubt with historical accuracy) absolves it of blame in connection with opposition to the gospel. Both these opinions were formed before the vicious persecution against Christianity began, which is the background to the Apocalypse. Paul describes the second figure, the "man of sin", in terms drawn variously from Ezekiel's taunt song against the King of Tyre (28: 1-19), and from Daniel's vision (11: 36).¹⁵ Further back stands the first lawless man, Adam.¹⁶ He is a kind of pseudo-son of man, who will head up the demonic counter-attack upon the Kingdom of God at the end time. The idea of the Antichrist has a wide setting in the thought of late Judaism.¹⁷ The notion of a final revolt against God before the end is attested in Rev. 20: 8f. and Matt. 24: 21. It is clear too that the Apostle combines in his thinking the idea of the imminent appearing (1 Th. 5: 2) and the expectation of preceding events which usher it in (2 Th. 2: 8), as his Lord did before him (Matt. 24: 4-15, 36-42).

¹⁵ Cf. C. F. D. Moule, *Birth of the New Testament* (London, 1962), 118 seq.; G. R. Beasley Murray, *Jesus and the Future*, 181 seq.; E. Stauffer, *New Testament Theology*, 9th ed., 84f., n. 218.

¹⁶ C. K. Barrett, *From First Adam to Last* (London, 1962), 11 seq.

¹⁷ The literature on this subject is vast; cf. W. Bousset, *Der Antichrist*, (1895); H. Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit* (Göttingen, 1895); E. Stauffer, *N.T. Theology*, ch. 53.

(b) The Parousia

If the contention of Martin Werner were true, that the failure of the Parousia to occur in the first century caused the disintegration of the primitive gospel, it were a serious charge indeed, striking at the heart of Christianity. But it is not. In fact, there is no evidence to suggest that the so-called "delay" ever constituted a major theological problem to the primitive Church.¹⁸ The recent treatment of the question by E. Grässer has not shaken this conviction.¹⁹ The reasons for this are numerous, and easy to summarize. The "thief in the night" image forbids all calculation (1 Th. 5: 2). The certainty of the Parousia hope rests on the Resurrection, not some chronological speculation (1 Th. 4: 14). The notion of nearness belongs to all genuine eschatology.²⁰ The phenomenon known as "prophetic perspective", in which the seer does not perceive the temporal relations among the events which he predicts, is well attested in the Bible.²¹ And the intimate relation existing between eschatology and pastoralia can be sustained only when the Parousia remains undated, and is always possible, so that it challenges men's wills to obedience. No doubt the Parousia is a fixed date on the calendar of God the Father (Acts 1: 7); but it is the genius of Pauline eschatology to deny it a dateable position on the timetable of believers.

Agreement has been expressed with Schweitzer's contention that the Parousia hope continues undiminished throughout the Epistles. Tuition in eschatology was provided on the principle of supply and demand. At one time it is more to the foreground of Paul's thought than at others. But whether immediate or remote, the Parousia remained a sure hope at every stage in his ministry.

(c) The Resurrection²²

Many scholars hold that within Paul's teaching about the resurrection of the dead there is discernible a marked movement from

¹⁸ So Moule, *Birth*, 97f; Stephen Smalley, "The Delay of the Parousia", unpublished paper in Tyndale House Library, Cambridge.

¹⁹ Grässer, *Das Problem der Parusieverzögerung in den synoptischen Evangelien und in der Apostelgeschichte*, Berlin, 1957. His view receives careful analysis and rebuttal from I. H. Marshall in *Eschatology and the Parables* (London, 1963). Cf. also Cullmann, *TZ* 3 (1947), 177-91; C. P. Ceroke, *CBQ* 19 (1957); G. Bornkamm, in the *Lohmeyer Festschrift*, Stuttgart, 1951.

²⁰ So G. Vos, *Pauline Eschatology*, 32f.; H. J. Schoeps, *Paul*, 101.

²¹ G. Vos, *ibid.*, 5.

²² Cf. W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (London, 1955), ch. 10; M. E. Dahl, *The Resurrection of the Body* (London, 1962).

primitive Jewish notions (1 Th. 4: 13-18), to a more refined spiritualized concept (1 Cor. 15: 35-57), and then to a hellenistic recasting of the whole idea (2 Cor. 5: 1-10).²³ But E. E. Ellis is quite correct in dismissing this reading of the evidence, especially in 2 Cor. 5: 1-10.²⁴ The passage contains two very unhellenistic notions, that of the Spirit (v. 5) and the judgment (v. 10).²⁵ W. D. Davies finds two conceptions of the resurrection in the Epistles; in the first the body is received at the Parousia, and in the other at death. But it is not necessary to posit two contradictory versions of this hope. All the evidence contributes to one coherent conception.

A few features of this doctrine should be noted. The resurrection of Jesus guaranteed the certainty for the future resurrection of believers (1 Cor. 6: 14; 15: 20; 1 Th. 4: 14). Paul did not feel as strongly as some Hellenists about the supposed scandal of resurrection. In his defence before Agrippa, he could not appreciate why it was that the king found the idea so incredible (Acts 26: 8). But at the same time, Paul ploughs a middle furrow between crass materialism and undue spiritualizing. In this respect his discussion in 1 Cor. 15 does not move far beyond certain types of Rabbinic thought. The resurrection does not consist in a mere identity of atoms. Its terms include the radical transformation of this empirical body. Clearly, redemption is more physical for Paul than modern minds usually care to think (cf. Rom. 8: 18-25). Perfect clarity in this realm cannot be expected. The power of God is not restricted to human possibilities (Mt. 22: 29; 1 Cor. 15: 38).

The exact extent of the resurrection is less than clear in the Epistles. Whether the scope of the event comprised all men, or a limited number such as Israel, is an unresolved question in late Jewish sources.²⁶ The treatment of the resurrection in connection with the saving work of Christ (1 Cor. 15: 22) proves that Paul saw the resurrection of believers as a work of the Spirit (v. 44; Rom. 1: 4). Does the Spirit then quicken the bodies of unsaved men? Luke does report Paul to teach a resurrection of the just and the unjust (Acts 24: 15). John echoes the same view in his gospel (5: 29). On the Areopagus, Paul himself warns the pagan

²³ This is the position of W. L. Knox, set out in his book *St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles* (Cambridge, 1939).

²⁴ Ellis, "2 Cor. 5: 1-10 in Pauline Eschatology", *NTS* 6 (1959-60), 211-24.

²⁵ Cf. the treatment of Kennedy, *op. cit.*, and Vos, *op. cit.*, 172 seq. The older view that the passage treats of an intermediate state seems truer to the evidence.

²⁶ The Pharisees for example envisaged only the souls of righteous men passing into resurrection bodies; cf. Vos, *op. cit.*, 218; Kennedy, *op. cit.*, 76f.; Davies, *Paul*, 306f.

Athenians of the coming judgment, whose certainty is grounded in the Resurrection of Jesus (Acts 17: 31). A partial answer to the dilemma is found in Paul's purpose for writing. He is probing the nature of the resurrection for believers, and relating it inseparably to their salvation. This procedure opened the way to ethical considerations. Despite an apparent discrepancy, the argument in 1 Cor. 15 seems to presuppose a general resurrection for all in the background (cf. vv. 12-28).

In his book, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, A. Schweitzer claims to have discovered a double resurrection in the Epistles, one at the commencement and one at the conclusion of the millennial reign of Christ.²⁷ His theory, however, does exegetical violence to 1 Cor. 15: 23-28, which on a more natural reading suggests that the Parousia ushers in the absolute end to history.

(d) *Chiliasm*

Schweitzer's theory just cited assumes the presence of "pre-millennial" eschatology in the Epistles. But this assumption is highly precarious. For the methodology, so frequently employed, is entirely unsound, which stretches the rich fabric of Pauline eschatology upon the pictorial framework of Revelation 20: 1-6. This question leaves unsolved the actual interpretation of this controverted passage, though it seems indisputable that on a straight historical reading this thousand years must follow the collapse of the Roman Empire, and thus from our perspective precede the Parousia.²⁸ There is, however, in Paul little evidence, direct or indirect, to warrant the hypothesis of chiliasm. The most basic point is simply, that from the structure of his eschatology, there is no theological room left for a millennium. The present age is the Messianic age. In addition, the apparent proximity of resurrection and judgment is noteworthy (2 Th. 1: 7-9). The Parousia brings only condemnation for unbelieving men. It is conceivable that another New Testament writer could be a chiliast, where Paul was not. Complete unanimity in futurist eschatology is not a premise one can assume. But it should be noticed that Paul himself gives no encouragement to the chiliast position.

(e) *The Judgment*

The central Christian experiences of justification and sanctification find their temporal and logical termini in the resurrection and

²⁷ Cf. E. B. Allo, *RB* 41 (1932), 179-209; J. Héring, *RHPR* 12 (1932), and *SJT* 14.

²⁸ Cf. J. W. Bailey, "The temporary messianic reign in the literature of early Judaism", *JBL* 53 (1934); G. Vos, "Chiliasm", *PTR* 9 (1911), 26-60.

judgment, the consummation of God's redemptive work. Justification by faith in the Saviour-Judge announces in advance the verdict of the great assize. The judgment as pertaining to believers does not have as its primary reference the issue of salvation, but rather the idea of investigation. The secrets of men's hearts, and the works done under grace will come under the careful and merciful eye of that Man whom God has ordained. There is in the Epistles considerable stress laid on the notion of rewards for faithful service (cf. 1 Cor. 3: 14; 15: 58; 2 Cor. 5: 10).²⁹ Eschatology provides a very strong sanction for Christian ethics. Paul's teaching on it continually evokes powerful moral considerations.³⁰ The idea of reward proves offensive to some minds. It is resisted by those who hold a liberal altruistic version of religion, and by those who, so well schooled in Reformed theology, cannot find a place for meritorious action with their theology of grace. But these gifts do not in fact obscure the note of sovereign grace. For they are not distributed on a commercial basis. Paul knows no Rabbinic doctrine of merits. The undeserved saving work of Christ is the indispensable foundation for their bestowal (1 Cor. 3: 11). At the judgment, the durability and quality of the building erected upon that basis will be tested (vv. 11-15). The Church is the new temple of God, established on the rock Christ Jesus.³¹ The doctrine of judgment does in no circumstances erase the assurance of believers, but encourages in them a godly fear, and calls them to serious discipleship (2 Cor. 5: 11). At this point Paul's ethical realism comes clearly into view. Anticipation of investigation lends great incentive to man's workmanship on God's own dwelling place.

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²⁹ Cf. B. Reicke, "The New Testament Concept of Reward", *Festschrift* for M. Goguel, 195-206; F. V. Filson, *St. Paul's Conception of Recompense* (1931); G. P. Wetter, *Der Vergeltungsgedanke bei Paulus* (1912); H. Braun, *Gerichtsgedanke und Rechtfertigungslehre bei Paulus* (1930); L. Morris, *The Biblical Doctrine of Judgement* (London, 1960); G. Vos, *Pauline Eschatology*, 65 seq., 272 seq.

³⁰ C. F. H. Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics* (Grand Rapids, 1957), 549-72.

³¹ J. Munck compares Paul's terminology with temple construction in the Old Testament; *Paul*, ch. 5.