outward religious exercises by the feeling of the worshipper and not by hard and fast rules, and of the seat and source of ethical distinctions being within and not without—keeping in view, that is to say, His respect for ceremonies established by divine law and His clear insight into their temporary character, we see that Jesus was aware that in His kingdom ceremonialism must come to an end, but that He was content to lay down the principles of this abolition and leave them in their own time to accomplish practically what they predicted. To quote Mr. Robert Mackintosh in his vigorous treatment of this subject: "Christ, while He not only respected the ceremonial law but was zealous for its honour, looked calmly forward to the destruction of its centre in the Temple, and omitted ceremony from His positive injunction, while in such diverse points as fasting, distinctions of meats and temple dues, He indicated its incongruence with the spirit of His kingdom." [1]

MARCUS DODS.

ST. PAUL'S CONCEPTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

XVIII. CHRIST.

IT may appear a grave defect in our treatment of Paulinism that so important a theme as this should be taken up at so advanced a stage. Its postponement may be deemed the more reprehensible that there is nothing binding us to a particular order in the arrangement of topics, and that one might begin the presentation of the Pauline conception of Christianity with any of the great cardinal categories of the system, and therefore with the person of Christ.[2] But there

[1] I desire to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. Mackintosh's thorough treatment of this subject in his *Christ and the Jewish Law*.

[2] Weizsäcker remarks that, in endeavouring to present in a connected view the doctrinal utterances in St. Paul's epistles, "we can start just as well from

are advantages to be gained by assigning to this august theme a position near the end of our discussions. For one thing, we thereby raise the topic out of the region of controversy into the serener atmosphere of calm contemplation. The formulation of Pauline theology had, as we now know, a polemical origin, and from first to last we have been pursuing our studies under the shadow of Judaistic antagonism. But now at length we come into the sunshine, and can contemplate the Lord of the Church as He appears in the pages of the apostle, not as the subject of a theological debate, but as the object of tranquil religious reverence. Another advantage resulting from taking up the present theme at this late stage is that we bring to the study of it all the light to be obtained from acquaintance with the Pauline system of thought in general, and in particular with his *doctrine of redemption*.[1]

For it is beyond doubt that St. Paul's conception of Christ's dignity was closely connected with his faith in Christ as the Redeemer. Jesus was for him the Lord because He was the Saviour. The title Lord frequently occurring in the Pauline epistles means "the One who by his death has earned the place of sovereign in my heart, and whom I feel constrained to worship and serve with all my heart and mind."[2] The doctrine of Christ's Person in these epistles is no mere theological speculation; it is the outgrowth of religious experience, the offspring of the consciousness of personal redemption.

But the connection between the two topics of Christ's Person and work in the apostle's mind is not merely

his doctrine of Christ as from that of the means of salvation, or, to go a step further back, from that of sin."—*The Apostolic Age of the Christian Church*, vol. i. p. 141.

[1] R. Schmidt in his work *Die Paulinische Christologie*, 1870, strongly insists on this order of treatment. "The question as to the connection of the doctrine on Christ's Person with the apostle's distinctive doctrine of salvation is indispensable" (p. 4).

[2] Such is the connection of thought in such texts as *Gal.* vi. 14 and *Rom.* v. 1.

æsthetic. His whole manner of conceiving Christ's redemptive work rendered certain conceptions concerning the Redeemer's Person inevitable. To see this we have only to recall the lessons we have learned in our past studies on the former of these topics.

By the vision on the way to Damascus Saul of Tarsus became convinced that Jesus was the *Christ*. From this conviction the inference immediately followed that Jesus must have suffered on the cross not for His own sin but for the sin of the world, the choice, on the convert's view of the connection between sin and death, lying between these two alternatives. The crucified Christ for the converted Pharisee became a *vicarious* Sufferer. But this character of vicariousness could not be confined to the Passion. It must be extended to the whole earthly experience of Jesus. That experience was full of indignities, beginning with the circumcision of the Child, if not before, and ending with the bitter pains of the cross. These indignities one and all must be conceived of as vicarious, and therefore redemptive collectively and separately. Christ became a Redeemer by subjection to humiliation, and each element in His humiliation made its own contribution to redemption, procuring for men a benefit corresponding to its nature—redemption from legalism, *e.g.* by the Redeemer's subjection to law. Christ's experience of humiliation was an appointment by God. But it was also Christ's own act. He humbled Himself; His whole earthly experience was a long course of *self-humiliation*, and the redemption He achieved was *a redemption by self-humiliation*.

If this be, as I believe it is, St. Paul's theory of redemption, then it inevitably involved one other step—a step out of time into the eternal. The whole earthly life of Christ was a self-humiliation in detail. But how did it begin? In a Divine Mission? Doubtless: God sent His own Son. But to make the conception of Christ's earthly experience as

a humiliation complete is it not necessary to view it as a whole, and regard it as resulting from a foregoing resolve on the part of Christ to enter into such a state? If so, then the necessary presupposition of the Pauline doctrine of redemption is the *pre-existence* of Christ, not merely in the foreknowledge of God, as the Jews conceived all important persons and things to pre-exist, or in the form of an ideal in heaven answering to an imperfect earthly reality, in accordance with the Greek way of thinking, but as a moral personality capable of forming a conscious purpose.[1]

This great thought finds classic expression in the Epistle to the Philippians,[2] as to the authenticity of which little doubt exists even among the freest critical enquirers. But we do not need to go outside the four great epistles for traces of the idea. It is plainly hinted at in the words: "Ye know the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor."[3] Nothing more than a hint is needed, for in view of the apostle's doctrine of redemption, the conception of a great Personality, high in dignity but lowly and gracious in spirit, freely resolving to enter into a state of humiliation on earth, almost goes without saying. It is what we expect, and it does not require a multitude of very explicit texts to overcome scepticism and convince us that it really entered into the Pauline system of thought.

This conception of the pre-existent Christ immediately raises other questions. In what relation does this Being who humbled Himself stand to man, to the universe, and to God? Materials bearing on all these topics may be

[1] On the difference between the Pauline idea of pre-existence and the notions entertained by Jews and Greeks, *vide* Harnack's *Dogmengeschichte*, vol. i. pp. 710–719, consisting of an Appendix on the idea of pre-existence. For the religious value of St. Paul's view on this point *vide* Weizsäcker's *Apostolic Age*, p. 146. Neither of these writers has any doubt that Paul believed in and taught the pre-existence of Christ.

[2] Chap. ii. 5–9.

[3] 2 *Cor.* viii. 9.

found in the letters which form the chief basis of our study.

1. The apostle says that Christ was made of a woman,[1] and that He was sent into the world in the likeness of sinful flesh.[2] That is, He came into the world by birth, like other men, and He bore to the eye the aspect of any ordinary man. But though Christ came in the likeness of the flesh of sin, He was not, according to the apostle, a sinner. He "knew no sin"[3] The mind that was in Him before He came ruled His life after He came. He walked in the spirit while on this earth, the Son of God according to the spirit of holiness. Yet St. Paul conceived of the resurrection as constituting an important crisis in the experience of Christ. Thereby He was declared to be, or constituted the Son of God with power. Thereafter He became altogether spiritual, even in His humanity, the *Man from heaven*.[4] The expression suggests that Christ, as St. Paul conceived Him, was human even in the pre-existent state, so that while on earth he was the Man who had been in heaven, and whose destination it was to return thither again. This view would seem to imperil the reality of the earthly state as something inadequate, phantasmal, transitory, and a mere incident in the eternal life of a Being not of this world; not a true man, though "made in the likeness of men," and "found in fashion as a man."[5] But the soteriological doctrine of the apostle demanded that Christ should be a real Man, and that His human experience should be in all respects as like ours as possible. Even in respect to the flesh of sin the likeness must be close enough to insure that Christ should have an experience of temptation sufficiently thorough to qualify Him for helping us to walk in the spirit.

Among the realistic elements in the Pauline conception of Christ's humanity may be reckoned the references to

[1] *Gal.* iv. 4. [2] *Rom.* viii. 3. [3] 2 *Cor.* v. 21.
[4] 1 *Cor.* xv. 47. [5] *Phil.* ii. 7–8.

the Jewish nationality and Davidic descent of our Lord. These occur in the Epistle to the Romans,[1] which is irenical in aim, and might therefore not unnaturally be regarded as indicating the desire to conciliate rather than the religious value they possessed for the writer's own mind. Such references are indeed not what we expect from the apostle. His interest was in the universal rather than in the particular, in the human race rather than in any one nation, even if it were the privileged people to which he Himself belonged. Then it is not easy to conceive of him as attaching vital importance to Davidic descent in the strict physical sense as an indispensable condition of Jesus being the Christ and the Saviour of the world. He rested his own claims to be an apostle on spiritual rather than on technical grounds, and we can imagine him holding that Jesus might be the Messiah though not of the seed of David, just as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews maintained that Jesus was a priest of the highest order though not belonging to the tribe of Levi. Instead of reasoning from Davidic descent to Messiahship, St. Paul might invert the argument and say: Because Christ, therefore David's seed; just as he said of believers in Christ: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed";[2] "seed" in both cases being understood in an ideal not in a literal sense. But all the more just on that account it is significant that he does think it worth while to state that Jesus was "of the seed of David according to the flesh." It may be taken as indicating two things: that St. Paul believed in Christ's descent from David as a matter of fact, and that he regarded it as a fact of some interest. The statement occurs in a passage at the commencement of his most important epistle, in which he carefully indicates his Christological position, and it may therefore legitimately be regarded as counting for something in that position.

[1] *Rom.* ix. 5, i. 3. [2] *Gal.* iii. 29.

Obviously the Divine Sonship is for him the main concern, but it does not follow that the other side is for him a thing of no moment. And wherein lies its value? Why say Christ is a Jew and a Son of David when stating a truth which eclipses these facts and reduces them apparently to utter insignificance, viz. that He is the Son of God? Because he desires to affirm the reality of Christ's humanity, not in an abstract form, but as a concrete, definitely-qualified thing: Jesus a real Man; a Jew with Hebrew blood in His veins, and possessing Hebrew idiosyncrasies, physical and mental; a descendant of David with hereditary qualities inherited from a long line of ancestors running back to the hero-king. Such seems to have been St. Paul's idea, and it is worth noting as a thing to be set over against any traces of apparent docetism in his epistles, and against the notion that he regarded Christ's earthly life in the flesh as possessing no permanent significance—a mere transitory phenomenon that might with advantage be forgotten.[1]

Yet nationality and definite individuality, while not irrelevant trivialities, were far from being everything or the main thing for St. Paul. For the enthusiastic apostle of Gentile Christianity the universal relation of Christ to mankind was of much more importance than his particular relation to Israel or to David. And, as was to be expected, he had a name for the wider relation as well as for the narrower. The Son of David was for him, moreover and more emphatically, "the *second man*."[2] The title assigns to Christ a universal representative significance analogous to that of Adam. It is not merely a title of honour, but

[1] There is nothing decisive in the Pauline epistles concerning the miraculous birth of Christ. The expression ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυεὶδ κατὰ σάρκα might even be held to exclude it, except on the assumption that Mary, as well as Joseph, was of the line of David. If connection with David depended on Joseph only, Jesus might be more exactly described as Son of David κατὰ νόμον than κατὰ σάρκα. The expression γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός fits into, but does not prove, birth from a virgin.

[2] *Cor.* xv. 47.

a title indicative of function. It points out Christ as one who has for His vocation to undo the mischief wrought by the transgression of the first man. Hence He is called in sharp antithesis to the Adam who caused the fall the last Adam made into a *quickening spirit*.[1] As the one brought death into the world, so the other brings life. "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive."[2]

2. That in a system of thought in which Christ stands in a vital relation to the whole human race He might also be conceived as occupying an important position in relation to the universe it is not difficult to believe. It is well known that in the Christological epistles ascribed to St. Paul, especially in the Epistle to the Colossians, a very high cosmic place is assigned to Christ. He is there represented as the first-born of all creation, nay, as the originator of the creation, as well as its final cause; all things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, angels included, being made by Him and for Him.[3] This goes beyond anything to be found in the four leading epistles. But even in these we find rudiments of a doctrine as to the cosmic relations of Christ which might easily develop into the full-blown Colossian thesis under appropriate conditions. For St. Paul, as for Jesus, it was an axiom that the universe had its final aim in the kingdom of God, or in Christ its King. This truth finds expression in several familiar texts, as when it is said: "All things work together for good to them that love God";[4] or again, "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."[5] The groaning of the creation in labour for the bringing forth of a new redeemed world is a graphic pictorial representation of the same great thought.[6] It is only the complement of this doctrine that Christ should be represented as having the control of providence, or as the Mediator of God's

[1] *Cor.* xv. 45. [2] *Cor.* xv. 22. [3] *Col.* i. 15, 16.
[4] *Rom.* viii. 28. [5] 1 *Cor.* iii. 23. [6] *Rom.* viii. 22.

activity in the world. This is done when it is stated that God "hath put all things under His feet"; [1] and still more explicitly in another text from the same Epistle, where Jesus Christ is described as the one Lord by whom, or on account of whom, are all things.[2] The reading varies here. If it were certain that δι' οὗ is the correct reading, we might find in this passage the doctrine of a mediatorial action of Christ in creation, and not merely in providence, while from the reading δι' ὃν the latter only can be inferred. But indeed, in any case, from providential power to creative is only one step. He who directs providence in some sense creates. He furnishes the divine reason for creation, and is the Logos if not the physical cause of the universe. And in this point of view the doctrine of Christ's creative activity is thoroughly congruous to the Christian faith, and altogether such as we might expect a man like St. Paul to teach. The *rationale* of that doctrine is not the idea of Divine transcendency which, in the interest of God's majesty, demands that all His action on and in the world be through intermediaries. It is rather an ethical conception of the universe which demands that all things shall exist and be maintained in being for a God-worthy purpose.

3. In passing to the question as to the relation of Christ to God as set forth in the Pauline epistles I remark that the titles most commonly applied to Christ by the apostle in his other epistles are just those we found in use in the Primer Epistles: the *Son of God* and *the Lord!* [3] We find both combined in the Christological introduction to the Epistle to the Romans, where we have reason to believe the writer is expressing himself with the utmost care and deliberation: "His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." If we enquire in what sense the former of the two titles is to be understood, another phrase occurring in the same place

[1] 1 *Cor.* xv. 27. [2] 1 *Cor.* viii. 6.
[3] *Vide* EXPOSITOR, January, 1893.

might lead us to conclude that the sonship of Jesus is ethical in its nature. The apostle represents Christ as from or after the resurrection declared or constituted the Son of God in power *according to the spirit of holiness*, as if to suggest that Jesus was always worthy to be called the Son of God because of the measure in which the Holy Spirit of God dwelt in Him, and that His claim to the title became doubly manifest after the resurrection, whereby God set His seal upon Him as the Holy One, and made such doubts about His character as had existed previous to His death for ever impossible. And unquestionably this is at least one most important element in St. Paul's conception of Christ's sonship: sonship based on community of spirit. It is a sonship of this nature He has in view when further on in the same Epistle He represents Christ, God's Son, as a type to which the objects of God's electing love are to be conformed, and as occupying among those who have been assimilated to the type the position of first-born among many brethren, that is a position of pre-eminence on a basis of generic identity.[1] Yet that there was something unique in Christ's sonship as St. Paul conceived it we might infer from the expression "His own son" occurring at the beginning of the same section of the Epistle in which the brotherhood of sons is spoken of.[2] "His own son," not merely the first begotten in a large family, but the only begotten in some sense. And this aspect of solitariness or uniqueness is even more strongly suggested in the text in 1 Thessalonians, in which Christians are described as waiting for God's Son from heaven.[3] There is indeed no ἑαυτοῦ there to lend emphasis to the title. The emphasis comes from the juxtaposition of the title with words in which conversion to Christianity is made to consist in turning to the true God from *idols*.[4]

[1] *Rom.* viii. 29.
[2] *Rom.* viii. 3.
[3] 1 *Thess.* i. 9.
[4] 1 *Thess.* i. 10.

How significant the application to Jesus, in such a connection, of the title Son of God! Finally we may note, as pointing in the same direction, the statement in 2 *Corinthians* iv. 4, that Christ is the image of God,[1] taken along with that in *Romans* viii. 29, that the destiny of believers is to be conformed to the image of God's Son. The ideal for Christians is to bear the image of Christ; for Christ Himself is reserved the distinction of being the image of God. We are but the reflection of that in Him which is the direct radiance of God's glory (*ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης*), the copy of that which constitutes Him the express image of God's essence (*χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑπόστάσεως*).

In an important passage in 1 *Corinthians* viii. the title *Lord* gains equal significance to that which *Son* bears in 1 *Thessalonians* i. 10, from its position in a similar context. In some cases, as already hinted, the title might be regarded as the generous ascription of religious honour to Christ as Redeemer proceeding from a heart too warm to be exact in its use of language. But in 1 Corinthians viii. St. Paul is thinking as well as feeling, and he is thinking on a difficult and delicate problem, viz. the place to be assigned to Christ in view of Pagan polytheism. In that connection he makes this statement, "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, (as there are gods many and lords many,) yet to us there is one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto Him, and one Lord Jesus Christ through whom or for whom are all things and we through Him."[2] The apostle here sets one real *θεὸς* over against the many *θεοὶ λεγόμενοι* of Paganism, and one real Lord over against its *κύριοι πολλοί*. And one cannot fail to feel that the title Lord ascribed to Jesus in such a connection is charged with grave significance. It seems as if the apostle meant thereby to introduce Christ into the sphere of the truly divine, urged on thereto by the

[1] *ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ Θεοῦ.* [2] 1 *Cor.* viii. 5 and 6.

imperious exigencies of his religious faith, and against his prejudices as a Jew in favour of a strict abstract monotheism inherited from his forefathers. And the title Father attached to the name of God seems to suggest that He finds room for Christ within the Divine under the title Son.

From what we have now ascertained as to St. Paul's way of thinking concerning Christ it might seem to follow that he would have no hesitation in calling Christ God. Has he then done this in any of his epistles, more especially in those which are most certainly authentic? There is one passage in the Epistle to the Romans which, in the judgment of many, supplies a clear instance of the ascription to Christ of the title *Θεὸς*. It is the well-known text *Romans* ix. 5: *ὧν οἱ πατέρες καὶ ἐξ ὧν ὁ Χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα, ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων Θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. Ἀμήν.* The construction of this sentence which most readily suggests itself, at least to minds familar with the doctrine of Christ's divinity, is that which places a comma after *σάρκα*, and takes the following clause as a declaration concerning Christ that He is God over all, blessed for ever. Another arrangement and interpretation, however, are possible, viz, to put a full stop after *σάρκα*, and to regard the last clause as a doxology, or ascription of praise to God the supreme Ruler: May God who is over all be blessed for ever. Thus read, the text contains no ascription of deity to Christ. Here, it may be observed in passing, we have an instance showing how much may depend on punctuation, and what a serious defect from the point of view of a mechanical theory of inspiration is the absence of punctuation from the autograph text. In connection with so important a subject as the Person of Christ it would certainly have been a great advantage to have had from the apostle's own hand a carefully punctuated text. Had this existed, and had it been found to contain a sign of the value

of a comma after σάρκα it would have left little room for doubt that St. Paul meant to speak of Christ as God over all. As the case stands we are left to determine the question whether this was indeed his intention by other considerations, and at most we can arrive only at a probable conclusion on either side of the question. As was to be expected, the passage has given rise to an immense amount of discussion, in which of course exegesis has been to a considerable extent influenced by dogmatic bias. Into the history of the interpretation I cannot here enter; I cannot even attempt to state in detail the grounds on which the decision of the point at issue turns. Let it suffice to state that among the considerations which have been urged in support of the view that the claim refers to Christ are these: that whenever an ascription of blessing to God occurs in the Hebrew or Greek Scriptures εὐλογητὸς precedes Θεὸς, that if the clause in question were a doxology referring to God as distinct from Christ the ὢν would be superfluous, and that such a doxology coming in where the clause stands would be frigid and senseless. These and other arguments however have not been deemed unanswerable; and, on the whole, in spite of personal predilection, one is constrained, after perusal of learned monographs, to admit that the bearing of this famous text on the deity of Christ is by no means so certain as at one time he may have been disposed to think.[1]

One other text of great importance in its bearing on Christ's relation to God may here be noticed. It is the

[1] Amongst the most thorough discussions of the passage may be mentioned the article on the Construction of *Romans* ix. 5 by Prof. Ezra Abbott in the *Journal of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis*, 1882, which gives a very full account of the literature of the topic. Prof. Abbott distinguishes no fewer than seven different ways in which the text may be, and has been punctuated and interpreted. Among the orthodox theologians who have pronounced against the reference to Christ may be named Dr. Agar Beet. *Vide* his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, p. 271.

benediction at the close of the second Epistle to the Corinthians: Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, καὶ ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἡ κοινωνία τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος, μετὰ πάντων. We have here a Trinity, not however to be forthwith identified with that of the formula framed by the council of Nice. The apostolic benediction does not run as a dogmatic theologian having in view the interests of Trinitarianism might desire. Dogmatic bias would suggest at least two changes: the transposition of the first two clauses, and the addition of the word πατρός after Θεοῦ, lest the use of the latter term absolutely should seem to imply that Christ while Lord was not God. Yet, notwithstanding these peculiarities—defects they might be called from the dogmatic point of view—this benediction of St. Paul implies surely a very high conception of Christ's person and position. One would say that he could hardly have used such a collocation of phrases as the grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, unless Christ had been for him a Divine being—God. All the three Beings named in the sentence must possess in common Divine nature. The second and third certainly do. It has been questioned whether for St. Paul the Holy Spirit was a Divine *Person*, or merely a Divine *Power*, but he was certainly either the one or the other. The Holy Spirit, if not a distinct Person in the Godhead, was at least God's—God's energy, therefore practically a synonym for God. What then are we to think but that the Lord Jesus being named together with God and the energy of God, as a source of blessing, is also God, and that all the three august Beings here spoken of are bound together by the tie of a common Divine nature?

While this appears to be the just interpretation of the apostolic benediction, it must be owned that in the Pauline epistles a certain position of subordination seems to be assigned to Christ in relation to God. The most outstanding text in this connection is that in 1 Cor. xv. 28, where

the winding up of the drama of redemption is made to consist in the resignation by the Son of God of His mediatorial power into the hands of His Father, that God may be all in all. This is one of those grand comprehensive statements with which the apostle is wont to conclude important trains of thought. Like all other statements of the same type, it rises to the oratorical sublime; but while inspiring awe it leaves us in doubt. The spoken word makes us feel how much is unspoken. We are taken in spirit to the outermost circle of revelation, whence we descry all around an infinite extent of darkness.

A. B. BRUCE.

LOVE THE LAW OF SPIRITUAL GRAVITATION.

"THIS is My commandment," said Jesus, "that ye love one another as I have loved you"; "Every particle of matter in the universe," said Newton, "attracts every other particle with a force directly proportioned to the mass of the attracting particle, and inversely to the square of the distance," are the two monumental deliverances in human knowledge, and the Law of Love in the sphere of metaphysics is the analogue of the law of gravitation in the sphere of physics. The measure of ignorance in Science has been isolation when nature appears a series of unconnected departments. The measure of ignorance in Religion has been selfishness when the Race appears a certain number of individuals fighting each for his own hand. The master achievement of knowledge has been the discovery of unity. Before Newton, gravitation was holding the world together; it was his honour to formulate the law. Before Jesus, Love was preventing the dissolution of the Race; it was His glory to dictate the law. Newton found a number of fragments and left a physical universe. Jesus