PAUL'S 'IN CHRIST' - THE MYSTICAL THEORY

THESIS

BY

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Submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Theology

In the School of Religion and Culture

At the University of Durban - Westville

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December 2001

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PAUL'S 'IN CHRIST' - THE MYSTICAL THEORY ABSTRACT

In Paul's thirteen letters the 'in Christ' phrase, with its variants (in the Lord etc.), appears about 167 times. Since Deissmann's foundational study of the phrase over 100 years ago scholars have suggested many theories seeking to explain Paul's meaning in its use. Their findings range over several disciplines, but are inconclusive.

Our study takes a fresh theological look at the phrases, and seeks to test the hypothesis that *"Paul uses the 'in Christ' phrase principally in a mystical sense"*. Christian mysticism is defined as *"union with God through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit"*.

Firstly, eight models of mysticism are constructed from various disciplines and examined to give an overview of mysticism, i.e. historic (Judaism and Apocalyptic, Neoplatonic), anthropology (Synderesis), ecclesiastic (Eastern Orthodox, Holy Spirit / Charismatic), personal (Schweitzer, Calvin), and Postmodern. Jewish mysticism is found to exist from about 300BC in two forms - contemplative and chariot. Christian mysticism derives from Jewish mysticism and has the same goal - union with God.

Secondly, a study of Paul's background reveals parallels in his theology showing possible influences from contemporary sources. Thirdly, Paul's 'in Christ' phrase and its variants with different prepositions indicate that the phrase probably derives from the early church's baptism liturgy and focuses in particular upon the new creation which replaces the old. Fourthly, of the many theories advanced to account for the 'in Christ' phrase five are examined, all of which can make a contribution towards understanding the phrase better.

Fifthly, an original theory which is mystical is proposed in which Paul's 'in Christ' phrases are divided into those that relate to God's Work in Christ 66 (40%), and to Believers' Work in Christ 101 (60%). The first category phrases are indicative, objective and positional; the second are imperative, subjective and practical. The twofold division is typical of Paul's letter - writing style, with encouragement and practice following doctrine. Both categories are further subdivided.

Paul's theology is Christocentric as revealed to him after his conversion and call by Christ. The 'in Christ' phrase may be said to be the answer to all the problems of the

early church for it is axiomatic that God can accept nothing that is not in Christ. This is evident from Paul's outline of God's pre - history plan for His creation which is fulfilled when all things in heaven and on earth are united 'in Christ' . Since Christology takes precedence over other theological doctrines which are derived from it, so the 'in Christ' phrase may be seen as central to Paul's theology in pre - history, through time and into eternity again. As the analysis of mysticism reveals, it has many similarities with the 'in Christ' phrase, and both doctrines could be defined in the same way.

The mystical interpretation seems to provide the fullest understanding of scripture, and thus when Paul's phrase is examined mystically its true intentions seem to be revealed for the believer's lifestyle, for maintaining church unity and fellowship with fellow believers, and for providing the closest relationship with God through the beatific vision, mystical union, spiritual marriage or deification.

In church history the 'in Christ' phrase and the mystical element were slowly replaced by scholasticism and institutionalism, but from the beginning of the twentieth century the world -wide charismatic revival is restoring them hence the present phenomenal church growth and ecumenical outreach. The hypothesis that Paul uses the 'in Christ' phrase principally in a mystical sense may be said to be confirmed.

"All great religions have given rise to their own particular form of mysticism, which they have first of all attacked as a menace to the social order and then finally sanctified" (Berdyaev 1939: 131).

"In myself, apart from Christ, I am a sinner: in Christ, apart from myself, I am not a sinner" (Luther).

"It seems to follow that we have no right to dispute what the mystics tell us that they have seen, unless we have been there ourselves and not seen it" (Inge 1947: 161).

"His Majesty is not accustomed to paying poorly for His lodging if the hospitality is good" (Teresa 1976 / 80: 2: 172).

"I dearly love two little words, their names are out and in - Out of Babel, out of me; in God and Jesus in" (Deissmann 1957: 296).

"The nearer we come to Christ, the nearer we come together" (Moltmann 1976 The Passionist p.133).

"The soul that is united with God is feared by the devil as though it were God Himself" (John of the Cross 1964: 3: 231).

ABBREVIATIONS

The Revised Standard Version is used and also the 1993, 21st edition of Nestle's Novum Testamentum Graece, Grand Rapids, Zondervan. See Bibliography for additional works.

AEOR	1964	An Encyclopaedia of Religion (ed) V. Ferm Paterson, N. J. Littlefield Adams
CEDT	1991	Concise Evangelical Dictionary of Theology (ed) W. Elwell Rapids Baker
DBT	1973	Dictionary of Biblical Theory (ed) X Leon - Dufour London Geoffrey Chapman
DNTT	1975	The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (eds) S. Burgess and G. McGee, Grand Rapids Zondervan
DPCM	1993	Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Ministries (eds) S. Burgess and G. McGee, Grand Rapids Zondervan
DPL	1993	Dictionary of Paul and His Letters (eds) G. Hawthorne and R. Martin Leicester IVP
EB	1998	Encyclopedia Britannica (ed) P. Goetz Chicago Encyclopedia Britannica Inc.
EOT	1975	Encyclopedia of Theology: The Concise Sacramentum Mundi (ed) K. Rahner, N Y Seabury
ERE	1911	Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics (ed) J. Hastings Edinburgh T & T Clark
GBWW	1952	Great Books of the Western World (ed) R. Hutchins Chicago Encyclopedia Britannica Inc.
INST	1962	John Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion, London, James Clarke
IOCB	1972	The Interpreter's One Volume Commentary on the Bible (ed) C. Laymon, London Collins

JBC	1968	The Jerome Biblical commentary (eds) R. Brown, J. Fitzmyer, R. Murphy, Englewood Cliffs, NJ Prentice Hall
LBB / FBE	1974	The Lost Books of the Bible / The Forgotten Books of Eden N.Y. New American Library
NCHS	1928	A new Commentary on Holy Scripture (eds) C. Gore, H. Goudge, A. Guillaume, London SPCK
NDCE	1995	A New Dictionary of Christian Ethics (eds) J. Childress and J. Macquarrie, London SCM
OAB	1962	The Oxford Annotated Bible (eds) H. May and B. Metzger, N.Y. OUP
ODCC	1974	The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (eds) F. Cross and E. Livingstone London OUP
OS	1968 / 9 1982 / 7	Bouyer, L. History of Christian Spirituality vol.3 Oriental Spirituality . . . Tunbridge Wells, Burns and Oates
PCB	1962	Peakes Commentary on the Bible (ed) M. Black London, Thomas Nelson
SOED	1974	The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (ed) C. Onions Oxford Clarendon
ST	1947	Aquinas Summa Theologica, N.Y. Benziger Brothers
TDNT	1974	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (ed) G. Kittel Grand Rapids Eerdmans
TEOR	1987	The Encyclopaedia of Religion (ed) M. Eliade N.Y. Macmillan
TWBB	1963	A Theological Word Book of the Bible (ed) A. Richardson N.Y. Macmillan
UJE	1948	Universal Jewish Encyclopaedia (ed) I. Landman N.Y. Universal Jewish Encyclopaedia Company
Vine's	1991	Vine's Amplified Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words (ed) S. Renn Iowa Falls World Bible

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

It is important when reading a study, particularly one concerning mysticism, to know where the writer starts from, and also any presuppositions and governing principles of the study's contents (see Butler 1967: preface). Thus Gordon Fee (1995: 10) in his exhaustive study on the Holy Spirit in Paul's letters is satisfied that it is written by *"a New Testament scholar who is also a Pentecostal both by confession and by experience"*[1]. Alternatively, but this is not encouraged, writers may consult *"second-hand authorities, trying afterwards, from some extracts from the great masters, to confirm their statements"* (see Auguste Saudreau 1927: 16); e.g. the popular theologian Harvey Cox admits he is not pentecostal and, in consequence perhaps, reaches some conclusions which seem far from the truth, e.g. glossolalia is *"primal speech"*, a *"mystical-experiential protest against an existing religious language that has turned stagnant or been corrupted. It almost always takes place among people who are themselves culturally displaced and often politically and culturally disinherited. It is a form of cultural subversion . . ."* (1996: 82, 315).

1.1   Focus

Over a hundred years ago scholars began to ask why Paul in his thirteen letters uses the unusual phrase 'in Christ' with its variants as many as about 167 times.[2] Paul gives no obvious reason or explanation for this use. This presumed hiatus constitutes the focus of this thesis. The hypothesis is that Paul uses the 'in Christ' phrase principally in a mystical sense. Mysticism we define as - union with God through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

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[1]This thesis is in this category.

[2]We shall assume Paul's thirteen letters to be genuine. The word 'phrase' seems preferable to 'formula' for it is neither *"a set form of words,"* nor is it *"presented by custom or authority"* (SOED 1: 793). Throughout this study 'in Christ' will be used as including its 10 variants i.e. 'In Christ Jesus,' 'in Christ Jesus the Lord,' 'in Him,' 'in Jesus,' 'in Lord Jesus,' 'in the Lord,' 'in Whom,' and 'in the Beloved', 'in Lord Jesus Christ', 'in Himself'.

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The rationale for the thesis is the apparent lack of spiritual enthusiasm in many churches today. This state of affairs could be attributed in part to the failure of the churches to grasp and apply Paul's intention behind the use of the phrases, in so far as we can understand this phenomenon.

1.2 Historical Background

At Pentecost the church is endued with power and is galvanised into action with about 3 000 people being saved; the Lord adding to that number day by day (Acts 2: 41, 47). Peter tells believers (Acts 2: 38) *"Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ . . . and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."* Enthusiasm is apparent and the gifts of the Spirit are manifested as Christians continue honouring the name of Jesus Christ so charismatically and successfully that the council and all the Senate of Israel have to charge the apostles not to teach in this name (Acts 5: 21, 28).

In the course of time the enthusiasm in the early church, the mystical, the miraculous and especially the use of the 'in Christ' phrase, all begin to wane (e.g. miracles are less frequent in Acts then in the Gospels, and fewer at the end of Acts than at the beginning). What is really miraculous however is the victory of Christianity in spite of continual Jewish and Roman persecution, the latter of which Herbert Workman (1960) gives a vivid, scholarly account: - When Christians practise Gal.2: 20, claiming to be slaves of Christ, serving Him, as opposed to Rome and the Roman emperor as Master, they immediately lay themselves open to persecution, e.g. in the Thebias, according to Eusebius, a hundred martyrs a day were often sacrified, *"so that the weapons of the murderers were completely blunted"* (Workman 1960: 91). Christians are witnessing in a society which is thoroughly pagan in every possible way, and therefore to say 'Christ is Lord' instead of *"Caesar is Lord"* would be sufficient evidence to distinguish them from pagans and thereby to condemn them. *"Christianus sum"* is almost the only crime for which there is no forgiveness (Workman 1960: 49 - 51).

The enthusiasm of the early Christians is held in contempt by Roman and Jewish leaders; cf. the bluntness of Pilate, Festus and Agrippa while examining Jesus or Paul. Workman claims that for two hundred years Christian leaders are considered 'anarchists'

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and 'atheists' and hated accordingly. In a similar way manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit are seen as black magic. In fact the very operation of these gifts is itself an opportunity for Christians to be blamed, even for natural disasters and for the shortcomings of pagan religions (Workman 1960: 50, 63).

In spite of this oppressive environment the early church grows from strength to strength; and scholars seem to agree that as institutionalisation takes place, Pauline churches show no real distinction between charismatic and official functions (see Witherington who follows Broekhaus 1998: 160). Although the church continues to grow the vital mystical element is being lost, resulting in a church which is orthodox but spiritually limited in word and sacrament, (see Moltmann 1994: 204).

This results in nominalism, in members having a weak faith, with Christianity being taken for granted, and there being few manifestations of the Spirit (Leon Suenens 1975: 27 - 28). The use of the 'in Christ' phrase also suffers through the anti - Pauline attitude of Jewish Christians and, is to some degree lost after Origen's time through Greek theologians in the Church who, as James Stewart expresses it, have *"little inward sense for the Hebrew and biblical ideas"* basic to Paul's thinking (1952: 12). Religious experience here becomes relatively unimportant; asceticism develops, and with the increasing popularity of scholasticism, contemplation and prayer are reduced to science (Butler 1967: 125). Rahner suggests that later the Jesuit school also eliminates religious experience through its policy of emphasising the concept of sanctifying grace: in other words anything that could not be rationalised is superstition (see Comblin 1989: 16 - 17).

Kasemann paradoxically points out that *"the theological and practical conquest of enthusiasm was the first test to which the young church was exposed, and nothing less than its whole existence and future depended on its mastery of the problem"* (1978: 123). This is an accurate assessment, for throughout history we find individuals, groups, societies, even religions fanatically asserting their beliefs, e.g. the Montanism heresy. Paul counters this by giving advice on the practice and control of spiritual gifts, e.g. *"Let all things be done for edification"*, and *"all things should be done decently and in order"* (1Cor.14: 26, 40).

Rudolph Sohm (1841 - 1917), Lutheran jurist, is an example of extremism, believing that the church is wholly spiritual and fundamentally charismatic (ODCC

1286), an ideal which he claims is only realised twice - in the primitive church, where it is spoiled by the rise of the Catholic church, and at the Reformation, where it is spoiled by the state control of the Protestant churches.

Obviously a fine control needs to be continually maintained if the church is to do all it is empowered to do in Christ by the Holy Spirit (2Cor.13: 4). Christian enthusiasm, mysticism and ecstasy all appear to play prominent roles in the life of the early church, but when they lose favour, as Kees Waaijman writes of mysticism, they can be *"falsely labelled as quietistic, irrational and occult"* (see Mark McIntosh 1998: 8). However, by the middle of the twentieth century as we shall see they are restored to popularity and are *"articulating believers' experience of transcendence across life and religious boundaries."* Thus today we can charismatically celebrate the renaissance of the life - style of the early church and can better understand the part Christian mysticism and the 'in Christ' phrase play in the church's history. At the heart of the charismatic experience is the experience of the power of God in Jesus Christ (M. Clark and H. Lederle 1989: 43). Moltmann (1994: 313) cites an illustration, applicable to our present situation, of the three ages or churches showing Christian development, i.e. the Petrine church (Peter the law - giver) followed by the Pauline church (Paul the Elijah), followed by the Johannine (John the apostle of the future), *"as the Spirit is supposed to follow the word and the ministry."*

1.3   Scholarly Survey and Problematisation

Adolf Deissmann (1866 - 1937) makes probably the first serious study of the 'in Christ' phrase, which he publishes in 1892. This work is both foundational and influential. He sees the phrase as being both mystical (united to God) and locative (indicating space), expressing *"the most intimate possible fellowship of the Christian with the living spiritual Christ"* (1957: 140). The phrase originates, he claims, from non- Biblical Greek usage. Deissmann defines mysticism as *"every religious tendency that discovers the way to God direct through inner experience without the mediation of reasoning, and its essence is immediacy of contact with the deity"* (1957: 149). Firstly, although he admits that the phrase has a variety of shades of meaning, he may justly be criticised for being too rigid in believing the phrases all have a similar emphasis.

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Secondly, his explanation of Paul's Christ - intimacy as being the air we breathe (1957: 140) is nebulous (William Barclay 1972: 99) and could better be related to our spiritual environment (i.e. Spirit, cloud, glory), air being our natural environment (see Ralph Riggs 1977: 69; Stewart 1964: 197 - 198). Nevertheless Deissmann rightly sees Paul as 'reacting' in receiving mystic communion with God as a gift of grace, as opposed to acting and striving for absorption in God. Thirdly Deissmann's subjective approach fails to explain the social side of the 'in Christ' phrase (see Donald Guthrie 1981: 649n; Ernest Best 1955: 12). Albert Schweitzer carries on where Deissmann ends, emphasising both the mystical and the eschatological uses of the phrase, as we shall see.

Apart from Deissmann's attempt the 'in Christ' phrase does not appear to be given an exhaustive examination during the past century and a half. Alfred Wikenhauser admits his own study is not exhaustive (1960: 31). The somewhat superficial treatment that the phrase receives by scholars accounts for the many sources that need to be consulted in order to discover its true contexts and meanings. What is equally surprising is the general prejudice that seems to exist against Christian mysticism throughout the history of the church, though this situation is currently improving. Fear is often expressed that mysticism might lead to absorption into God, but nothing could be further from the truth as we shall see. Against this background several relevant trends may be discerned.

1.3.1 Holy Spirit Revival

Holy Spirit revivals place great emphasis on the Scriptural 'baptism in the Holy Spirit' experience, the rediscovery of the fullness of the gifts (1Cor.12 - 14), and the fruit of the Spirit (Gal.5: 22 - 23), as well as on ecumenism. Moltmann claims the ecumenical movement is *"the most important Christian event of the twentieth century"* (1994: 4), but it might be more accurate to give this credit to the Holy Spirit's charismatic revival. Nine years ago Stanley Burgess and Gary McGee estimate that the charismatics world - wide number over 500 million (DPCM 1993). Today, taking into

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account reports of revivals in Russia and China, charismatics could number 600 million[1]. The ecumenical movement on the other hand does not appear to have made very much progress, vis a vis the growth in Pentecostal churches.

Through these revivals the hopes and expectations of several theologians are partly fulfilled, e.g. Walter Hollenweger's hope that the Pentecostal movement would *"come to terms with the 'theological' work of the charismatic revival"* (1972: 269); Suenens's expectation of the full integration of *"pneumatic dimension of the church under its aspect of 'communion in the Holy Spirit'"* (1975: 19); Karl Barth's dream of a *"new theology which would begin with the third article of the creed"* (see Moltmann 1994: 1, who also foresees a *"new paradigm in pneumatology"*).

Paul writes that God *"has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth"* (Eph.1: 9 - 10). Our subject is here revealed as a Christocentric mystery.

Pastor Dr. Pablo Deiros is active in the 20 year old Argentine revival, which he sees as a *"combination of dynamic ingredients which moves the church to return to its theological roots in the Scriptures, accompanied by a missionary commitment in obedience to the Lordship of Christ and under the power of the Holy Spirit"* (see Peter Wagner and P.Deiros 1998: 44). The mystical element in this definition must be noted (cf. the above definition of mysticism). The classical Pentecostal movement may be dated from the revival beginning in Azuza Street Los Angeles in 1901, while the mainline or neo - Charismatic movement only begins in the 1960's, principally with Dennis Bennett in Van Nuys, California (see Bennett 1973). There is today no real difference in meaning between the words Pentecostal and Charismatic. In our study the latter is preferred, unless the context requires the former. Derek Morphew rightly notes that the Western world is now no longer so antagonistic towards manifestations of the Holy Spirit and the 'Toronto Blessing' (1995: 1); which we shall study later.

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[1]Jericho Walls Prayer Letter June - July 2001 p.44 estimates there are up to 60 million Christians in China.

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1.3.2 Pauline Theology

The renewal of interest in Paul's theology is partly due to the current world - wide Charismatic movement (see Rosemary Guiley 1991: 437). Scholars continually add to our understanding of Paul's theology, e.g. E.P. Sanders (Paul and Palestinian Judaism 1977), and Alan Segal (Paul the Convert 1990), although these writers do not examine the 'in Christ' phrase in detail. William Stegner however notes that *"contemporary scholarship is just beginning to explore Paul's mysticism"* (1993: 508). Segal's contribution is very evident here, as also in the allied field of the apocalyptic. A valuable resource is 'The Dictionary of Paul and his Letters' in which the editors challenge scholars by quoting a 1948 remark of W.D. Davies *"it has long been a matter of controversy among New Testament scholars how best we should interpret the theology of Paul"*, adding that *"the last several decades have seen no resolving of the matter and very few points of consensus"!* (DPL 1993: ix). They do however acknowledge areas of agreement concerning Paul's Jewish - rabbinic background and his conversion and call.

Fee makes a significant contribution to the role of the Holy Spirit in Pauline theology whom he accepts as the personal presence of God (1995: xxi). He realises that Paul's writings cover so much ground that it is impossible to discern the 'centre' of his theology. He criticises however both the justification by faith and the mystical 'in Christ' theories as inadequate to be the centre because of their limiting nature which excludes other metaphors of salvation. Unfortunately Fee gives insufficient attention to the mystical 'in Christ' theory, and his conclusion also that the eschatological Spirit guarantees the Christian's future in Christ, is debatable, or at least could be more correctly expressed.

1.3.3 Mysticism

Mysticism as we define it appears to be a vital part of the Christian church from its very beginning. In fact the early church makes little distinction between experience and doctrine (see John Welch 1987: 692 - 693). Throughout its history the Eastern Orthodox church with its threefold emphasis upon the work of the Holy Spirit, mysticism, and deification, continues to maintain this practice, so also, in essence, as we shall see, does the Pentecostal Church.

The goal of mysticism is union with God, but mysticism has failed to define this goal clearly hence McGinn's call for this *"hallmark of true mysticism"* to receive examination (1992: 368). Twenty - five years ago Karl Rahner admitted that *"so far no formal theology of unity has been developed"* (1975: 1787); and more recently E.C. Lucas asks *"what are we to make of the mystical experience of oneness? This is where the absence of any deep study or understanding of mysticism leaves us evangelicals at a loss"* (1991: 140).

Moltmann rightly discerns that *"as far as its doctrinal content is discerned, the theology of the mystics down to the present day does not seem particularly impressive"* (1994: 1). Similarly Fraser Watts and Mark Williams are *"disappointed that Christianity has kept its own contemplative tradition so hidden that most 'outsiders', and perhaps quite a few 'insiders' are wholly unaware of it"* (1988: 3). Richard Foster also notes *"that there are so few living masters of contemplative prayer"*, rightly concluding that because the church does not stress the importance of meditation and prayer enough there is much interest in Eastern meditation and Zen, Yoga and Transcendental Meditation (1984: 14). In this field Dr. Fritjof Capra even goes so far as to see parallels between the ways of physics and of the Eastern mystics, i.e. that matter is now being regarded as holistic and dynamic instead of purely mechanistic (see Ray Anderson 1993: 212; The Tao of Physics, London 1976; Ursula King 1980: 113). Likewise the strong religious nature of much of today's psychology is apparent (see Paul Vitz 1979). Darwell Stone writes of a *"need for a fresh treatment of mystical interpretation which shall distinguish between its arbitrary and its rational use"* (1928: 697). While this might be desirable, it would be difficult to meet this need. Bearing in mind Nikolai Berdyaev's observation that *"mysticism presupposes mystery"* (1948: 241; cf. E. Tinsley 1983: 225), we shall need in our study to explore every avenue relevant to the 'in Christ' phrase especially the mystical and the charismatic.

On the more positive side it seems true that down the ages mystics have not received the credit due to them, not only for the stand they take but also for the hope they show for humanity, e.g. 'The Cloud of Unknowing' claims that the state's safety depends on the number of contemplatives living in it (see Raynor Johnson 1959: 107). William James affirms that *"there is about mystical utterances an eternal unanimity*

which ought to make a critic stop and think, and which brings it about that the mystic classics have neither birthday nor native land. Perpetually telling of the unity of man with God, their speech antedates languages, and they do not grow old" (1959: 410). Similarly Walter Inge is *"encouraged by the undoubted tendency of able and independent thinkers to converge upon Christianity of the mystical type as the only hope for civilization"* (1947: 143). John Yungblut (1991: 193) has the same positive opinion *"the only authority to which the church can now turn with any confidence and credibility before the world, is the authority of that direct interior religious experience which is the peculiar testimony of Christian Mysticism"*. Several decades ago Teilhard de Chardin wonders *"if in an expanding universe mysticism would not burst the limits of narrow cults and religious rigidity and move towards an ecumenical future"* (see Sisir Ghose 1998: 26: 584). R.S. Ellwood claims that *"mysticism can finally be the only guarantor of any future to religion"* because it cannot be denied that people continue to have mystical experiences (1980: 187). Recent surveys show that 43% and 56% respectively of adult Americans and Britons have some type of mystical experience, but is it Christian? Thus it would appear that mysticism is currently very much in vogue and could become a meeting point for interfaith dialogue (see Heribert Fischer who follows de Lubac (1975: 1010) and H. Cox who follows Thomas Merton (1996: 208). Significantly with postmodernism in mind (which will be studied later) David Tracy discerns that a *"mystical - prophetic theology with many centres is being born throughout the globe"* (1994: 22). From the above it appears that a development is taking place with new confessional language, as Christianity continues to confess its faith to the world (see Dunn 1981: 58). To the above we must add Rodman Williams' vision of a world filled with the knowledge and glory of God . . . *"the supernatural the immediate communion of God with man in this world"* (1971: 38).

Recent discoveries by neuro - scientists heighten the importance of studies in mysticism, e.g. the identification of a *"region of the human brain that appears to be linked to thoughts of spiritual matters and prayer. These findings tentatively suggest that we as a species are genetically programmed to believe in God"* (see D. Trull 1977). In a challenging article, appropriately titled 'The God Spot', Trull refers to a *"God Module"* as a possible *"physiological seat of religious belief"*. This research originally

seeks to explain why epileptics suffer seizures which are often very religious and are accompanied with spiritual visions which emanate from a *"neural centre in the temporal lobe"* (D. Trull 1977). This is a field open for future research. Most mystics believe in human nature's 'apex' or synderesis, where the mystic union between the divine and the human can take place. This will later be examined. We are in full agreement with these affirmations on the creative role mysticism plays, and it is hoped that this study will contribute something towards a better understanding of the Christian issues mentioned above.

1.3.4 Cultic Influences

Ruth Tucker appropriately defines a cult as *"a religious group that has a 'prophet' - founder called of God to give a special message not found in the Bible itself, often apocalyptic in nature and often set forth in 'inspired' writings"* (1991: 16). The dust has already settled several of recent so - called 'prophecies', e.g. the end of the world scenario; the last day in the 20th century, when the eight planets were all lined up - May 8, 1999 (see Venkat Narayan 'End of mankind is nigh' in Sunday Tribune, December 22, 1997). Further 'prophecies' have been made however (see Michael Drosnin 1997: 136, 142; cf. John Gribb, Fire on Earth, 1996)[1].

Mysticism appears to play a creative role throughout church history, and it may be expected to play a greater role in the future, bearing in mind current trends like the Holy Spirit revivals and the renewed interest in Paul's theology, the mystical theory.

1.4 Procedure

Our procedure is as follows:

Chapter Two is an historical overview of eight models of mysticism ranging from Judaism through to Postmodernism, each one revealing one or more fresh insights into mysticism's nature or development. These are specially chosen to be a background to the study of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase. The Jewish and Apocalyptic model is foundational to both Christian mysticism and the 'in Christ' phrase. The mystical interpretation of

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[1]Drosnin predicts a world war by 2006 and an earthquake in Los Angeles in 2010

scripture is examined, especially God's immanence and His revelations to humanity, together with intermediaries between divinity and humanity. A supplementary model is designed for apocalyptic Merkabah mysticism. Dionysius' neoplatonic mysticism model is described, this being a very influential incursion of philosophy into the mystical thinking of the early church. The synderesis model is anthropomorphic and focuses upon human nature and its apex or point of contact with divinity. Church denominations are represented by the fourth the Orthodox model which concentrates particularly upon union or deification, which is the ultimate goal of humanity. The fifth and sixth models are associated with Calvin and Schweitzer and are personal, emphasising in particular union with God and eschatology respectively. The Holy Spirit the seventh model is a comprehensive survey of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in believers and in the charismatic movement and in the 'Toronto blessing'. The final, eighth model of Postmodernism sees mysticism in the face of the 'new age' movement where mysticism continues to play its vital role in avant - garde society. The comprehensive range together with the historical sequence of these models will be noticed. A ninth model could be envisaged, which would be neurological or electroencephalographical, recording results made in recent medical advances, and which could support or supplement the findings of this study.

Chapter Three is a study on Paul and some of the possible main influences on his personality and thinking. Any analysis of the 'in Christ' phrase might have little value without some knowledge of the background of the person mainly responsible for the propagation of the phrase. Hence we look at Paul's call and conversion, at Stoicism, Mystery religions, Gnosticism and the Qumran Community to trace any possible influence they might have had on Paul, though of course Judaism has the greatest influence.

In Chapter four all Paul's 'in Christ' phrases are examined and classified. The origin of his phrase is traced, probably through the 'in Adam' and 'in Abraham' phrases to the Christian baptism context. The variants of the phrase are also considered together with the preposition 'in' and other prepositions Paul uses in similar phrases. The results are all tabulated. The senses in which the phrases are used are also given critical attention, e.g. locative, spatial etc.

Chapter five is given to an examination of five theories of the 'in Christ' phrase suggested by scholars, i.e. ecclesiology, justification by faith, reconciliation, eschatology and the Lord's Supper. Union with Christ the goal both of the Christian and of mysticism is fully explored.

In Chapter six an original theory which is mystical is proposed in which all the 'in Christ' phrases are classified into two categories - God's work in Christ and Believers' work in Christ. The first category is subdivided into two - Chosen and Created in Christ, and Redeemed and Spirit - filled in Christ. The second is subdivided in three - Attitudes and Actions, Appeals and Associates. The 'in Christ' phrase is found to apply in Spirit - filled ways to almost every aspect of the Christian life.

The concluding Chapter Seven sums up the study as a whole, evaluates its aspects and confirms the hypothesis that Paul's 'in Christ' phrase is used primarily in a mystical sense, and that some of the phrases are used in other senses or in combinations of senses.

CHAPTER TWO
MODELS OF MYSTICISM

Scholars continually provide new definitions of mysticism but it is important for this study that as full a range as possible of mysticism in action be viewed preparatory to an analysis of Paul's 'in Christ' phrases. We shall now examine eight models selected from various personal and discipline sources.

Naturally the first model must be Jewish and Apocalyptic mysticism because herein lie the beginnings of both Jewish and Christian mysticism, and in a sense Paul's 'in Christ' phrase. Separate models will be suggested for Judaism and for the Apocalyptic. The philosophic influence will be represented by Dionysius' neoplatonic mysticism model. This influence is still apparent today. The synderesis model attempts to represent how mysticism may be ascribed to human nature. The fourth model concerns the Orthodox church which in its doctrine particularly emphasises the deification of its members. Calvin and Schweitzer's writings provide material for their contributions to mysticism with reference particularly to union with God and eschatology, to be assessed in models five and six. The Holy Spirit model number seven is a composite of the gifts of the Holy Spirit as manifested in charismatic churches. Attention is given here to the 'Toronto Blessing'. The final model on postmodernism attempts to show it's mysticism in the light of current theological trends in the 'new age'.

The various issues highlighted by these models will be collated in the conclusion to the chapter.

2.1   Jewish and Apocalyptic Mysticism Models

Although these two approaches to mysticism are inter - connected they will be examined separately.

2.1.1   Jewish Mysticism Model - Definition and Division

Our procedure will be to introduce, define and describe the subject and its division into types. A mystical appreciation of scripture will follow with special comment on the Psalms and the Song of Solomon. Separate sections will then deal with

God and His Name, God's Intermediaries and Union with God. Special studies of the Merkabah mysticism model and apocalyptic mysticism model will also be made.

The importance of mysticism's discipline is essential in to - day's hectic world. It is therefore encouraging that scholars are giving increasing attention to both Jewish and Christian mysticism (see Bernard McGinn 1992: 3; William Stegner 1993: 508 and Alan Segal 1990). Segal observes that *"our understanding of apocalypticism has changed enormously over the past few years by the renewal of research in noncanonical Jewish literature, by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and by the work of Gershom Scholem, who has shown that Jewish mysticism was a central part of apocalypticism"* (1990: 165). We agree with C. Morray - Jones who argues that *"Jewish mysticism must occupy a more central place than has previously been the case in any reconstruction of the matrices of Paul's experience and thought"* (1993: 178).

Some of the conclusions reached in the past by scholars in the field of Jewish mysticism would appear to be negated by more recent studies, e.g. Walter Inge, the former Dean of St. Paul's, asserts that *"the Jewish mind and character, in spite of its deeply religious bent, was alien to mysticism"*. He also claims that *"Israel's religion always maintained a rigid notion of individuality both human and divine, and that even prophecy, which is mystical in its essence, was in the early period conceived as unmystically as possible"* (1948: 39 - 40).

Similarly Claude Montefiore writes that Rabbinic Judaism's *"fervour, its ethics, its religious temper and its spiritual tone are generally other than those of the mystic who feels himself in God and God in him"*. Montefiore gives no evidence to support these statements, but, as W.D. Davies shows (1980: 13 - 15), both Abelson and Scholem prove that *"first century Judaism was not only acquainted with the joy of the Law, (against what Montefiore called Paul's pre - Christian pessimism), but also with the more ecstatic joy of the mystic"*. Ninian Smart's claim that *"the origins of Christian mysticism can more plausibly be sought elsewhere [than in the traditions of Judaism], in the rise of monasticism and the influence of Neoplatonism"* seems wide of the truth, as we shall see. Likewise his affirmations that there is *"little mysticism in the traditions of Judaism until the time of Christ and that there also seems to have been little in the experience of the earlier church"* seem unfounded (1967: 5: 424). It becomes more and

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more apparent also that the conclusions of scholars like Sandmel and E.P. Sanders need to be questioned, e.g. *"no form of Jewish mysticism has to do with achieving union with God"* (E.P. Sanders 1977: 220n).

Christian mysticism will be defined as union with God through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. This same definition will be applied to Jewish mysticism with the modification that 'Christ' will be replaced by intermediaries of God, because Judaism does not recognise Jesus Christ as the Messiah. Jewish mysticism begins with the intention simply to 'make contact' with God. Thus Gershom Scholem suggests that *"direct contact between an individual and God"* is a common characteristic in all mysticism (1974: 55). Leo Baeck makes a similar statement, arguing that mysticism attempts to go beyond earthly limits set by commandments, prayer, speculation and asceticism, and becomes cosmic piety (1970: 365 - 366). Similarly George Vajda advocates direct *"contact"*, admitting that *"the quest for God goes beyond the relationship mediated by Torah without ever dispensing with it (since that would take the seeker outside of Judaism)"* (1998: 22: 463).

Rabbi Louis Jacobs initially views Judaism as *"belief in the immanence of God"*, which he regards as the essential feature of all mysticism; the implanting of divine life within the human soul, the permanent presence of the divine Spirit accompanying or acting in fellowship with a whole body of persons or a whole race (1973: 63). Later, with more insight he sees Jewish mysticism as *"that aspect of Jewish religious experience in which the mind encounters God directly"* (1995: 359). Arthur Green's definition of Jewish spirituality is relevant here - *"life in the presence of God - or the cultivation of a life in the ordinary world bearing the holiness once associated with sacred space and time, with Temple and with holy days"* (1989: intro). Merkabah mysticism which will be studied separately later is defined as *"a perception of God's appearance on the throne as described by Ezekiel"* (see W.T. Stace 1973: 157). Thus Hilda Graef claims that *"to become a Merkabah rider meant to reach a state of ecstasy in which man came into contact with the unseen world"* (1966: 26).

Scholars probably agree that the Gen.1: 27 and 2: 7 texts are the foundation stones of Jewish mysticism; that is, God making Adam and Eve in His own image, and breathing into Adam's nostrils the breath of life, so he becomes a living being. Jacobs

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refers to Gen.2: 7 as the proof text for the '*divine spark*' which "*God blew into Adam*" (1992: 43 - 45; cf. Pr.20: 27) "*the spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord searching all his innermost parts*"; and Ec.12: 7, "*and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it*". Humanity thus has a double origin, being of earth and of God. Jacobs stresses this link between the human and the divine. Acknowledging Philo's scholarship Jacobs compliments him on being the first Jew, so far as we know, to teach that there is something divine in the human soul (Jacobs 1992: 43).

This leads to the two main streams of Jewish mysticism, Maaseh Bereshit, the work of the contemplative, and Maaseh Merkabah, the work of the chariot, which may be identified at least by the second century BC (see Samuel Wolk 1948: 8: 74). The contemplatives are dedicated to studying the Torah, while the ecstatics use various techniques to attain their vision of God. Merkabah mystics will be studied in detail later. Hans Kung, following Moshe Idel, calls these two types 'moderate' and 'intensive' (Kung 1991: 173). They could live together but are soon separated as Kenneth Kirk describes "*the Rabbi who sought his vision in meticulous examination and comparison of the sacred text, and the apocalyptic who hoped to attain it by supernatural manifestation in the ecstasy of a trance, part company finally and forever*" (1941: 21). This division to some degree still exists within Judaism - witness the Kabbala and the Hasidim - but it prefigures what is about to happen in the early Church. This will be referred to when we study the Christian Charismatic model later. It is only in recent times, as we shall see, that, as the Holy Spirit moves in revival, the division between those who are called 'traditionalists' and 'charismatic' is being healed, and thereby unity is restored.

A major factor affecting the development of Jewish mysticism is the very Torah itself which begins to be committed to writing probably in the third and second centuries BC. Here is God's holy word revealed to humanity by the Holy Spirit through Moses and the prophets telling about God, His nature and what He would have humanity be and do, now being written down to be preserved forever (see Moore 1966: 1: 235 - 237). Since prophecy is inspired and since it is now being written down it is logical to believe that all scripture is correspondingly inspired (1966: 1: 238). Later the law is identified with wisdom, and thereby accepted as being associated with the creation, with the result

that the universe is founded in the law (see W.Davies 1962: 706). Alien influence abounds and Pharisaism develops, continuing the identification of wisdom and Torah, which Hengel aptly calls a kind of 'Torah ontology' (1974: 1: 311). The continually increasing Diaspora could have made Judaism a world religion had it not been for the almost complete unity of religion and nationality, but, as we shall see, in the absence of the spirit of prophecy. Thus the growth of Jewish mysticism is stultified, and directed along other channels, including esoteric and occult interpretations of the Torah.

We agree with Mc Ginn that these scriptures may be seen in part as *"mystical books"* for they share the model lives of those like Abraham, Jacob and Moses, who may be called mystics, in that through their examples others also seek contact with God (see 1992: 4; Ileana Marcoulesco 1987: 10: 241). Throughout Judaism's history mysticism and Talmudic Judaism live together sometimes supporting and sometimes challenging one another in attempts to ensure holy living (Carmody 1996: 139). Since the Torah tells that humanity is created in God's image and likeness it follows that every Jew must seek to become *"like God"*, i.e. merciful and long suffering [1]. Naturally therefore the more one studies the Torah the closer one draws towards God (Neusner 1989: 172 - 173).

Strict observance of the Law binds the Jews together against any hostile environment; and brings salvation and freedom from the sins of the Gentiles, which could result in people actually seeing God, either in this world or in the next (see Kirk 1941: 21). At the same time it prohibits the Hellenistic reformers from bringing about change (W.L. Knox 1961: 98; Hengel 1974: 1: 308). Even force cannot win against *'zeal for the law '*, with the result that the only hope lies in eschatology (1974: 1: 312). Schweitzer stresses this truth in his book on the mysticism of Paul, as we shall see later.

God's chosen people tighten their hold upon the law as prophecy comes to an end and the canon closes and hope dims; but the psalms help to keep righteous souls

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[1]It came to be believed later that nothing is totally forbidden in Judaism, precisely because actions in and of themselves are neither good nor bad. Acts therefore become holy when the physical enjoyment of the body is used as a means to honour God. Thus *"a person will have to answer in heaven for all permitted things he could have partaken of but did not"* (Nachum Amsel 1994: 99 - 102).

alive (see Dt. 18: 16 - 18; Job 19: 26 - 27; Kirk 1941: 14).

Nevertheless the way is prepared for the Torah *"to become Christified"*as W.D. Davies aptly expresses it, e.g. *"I have laid up thy word in my heart"* (Ps.119: 10) and Jeremiah's New Covenant expectation *"I will put my Law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts"* (Jer.31: 33). It remains for Paul to complete this process as he pictures Christ, the New Torah, writing *"with the Spirit of the living God . . . on tablets of human hearts"* (2Cor.3: 3; W.D.Davies 1980: 225 - 226). Samuel Wolk summarises the situation - *"when the study of Talmud seemed arid amidst endless poverty and suffering, mysticism with its white light of nearness to God strengthened and consoled sorrowing Israel"* (1948: 8: 75).

2.1.2   Mystical Interpretation of the Old Testament / Torah

Darwell Stone defines mystical interpretation as explaining *"the additional or spiritual sense which is held to underlie the literal significance of persons or events or things or sayings"* (1928: 688; cf. McGinn 1992: 11 - 12).

No doubt ever since writing began it has been possible to interpret it in different ways, e.g. Charles Harris (1928: 696) gives allegorical interpretations of Homer's poems dating from as early as 525 BC. Thus, scripture may be interpreted in various senses. Aquinas approves Gregory's comment that scripture *"by the manner of its speech transcends every science, because in one and the same sentence, while it describes a fact, it reveals a mystery"* (ST: 1: 7). Aquinas here also identifies four senses pertaining to scripture: -

1.   Historical or literal, which alone can be used for Christian doctrine

2.   Allegorical, i.e. so far as the things of the Old Law signify the things of the New Law

3.   Moral, i.e. so far as the things done in Christ or signify Christ are types of what we ought to do, and

4.   Anagogical, i.e. so far as they signify what relates to eternal glory.

The 2nd, 3rd and 4th senses Aquinas classifies as 'spiritual'.

When Paul writes about Old Testament events being *"written down for our instruction"* (1Cor.10: 11) he implies that a spiritual sense is involved and not simply a

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literal and historical one. Ezekiel for example is commanded to *"propound a riddle, and speak an allegory"* (Ezek. 17: 2; cf. 24: 3). Likewise Paul explains that the story of Abraham's two sons and their two mothers is an allegory (Gal.4: 24). Similarly *"a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife"* (Gen.2: 24). *"This is a great mystery"*, says Paul, *"and I take it to mean Christ and the Church"* (Eph.5: 31 - 32).

There are many intensely personal mystical experiences in the Old Testament which, according to our definition above, involve a union of some nature with God, e.g. God's call of Abram (Gen.12: 1 - 3); Jacob dreaming of the ladder linking earth and heaven (Gen.28: 12 - 17); Moses seeing God's back while his face shone *"because he had been talking with God"* (Ex.33: 23; 34: 29); Elijah hearing *"a still small voice"* (1Kg.19: 12 - 13); the breakthrough into the Spirit world where *"the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha"* (2Kg.6: 17); and God's appearances to Isaiah and Ezekiel. (Is.1: 6; Ezek.1: 26 - 28).

2.1.2.1   The Psalms

Perhaps the fullest expression of mysticism in the Old Testament is found in the Psalms with their devotion towards the Temple where God dwells (74: 2; 11: 6; 26: 8; 84: 2), and reveals Himself *"my soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God?"* (42: 2). *"My soul clings to thee; thy right hand upholds me"* is a mystical wish for union with God (Ps.63: 8; cf. also Pss.73, 139; Graef 1966: 24). The word 'dabeq' means 'to cleave'; it is used in the same sense in Ps.91: 14 *"because he [God] cleaves to me in love . . ."*. Franken argues that the Hebrew word 'siach' (meditate) means being filled with the divine and thereby having a mystical experience (cf. Pss.145: 5; 77: 12; 143: 5; see Ringgren 1963: 56 - 57). A further illustration of this closeness between divinity and humanity is Ps.110: 1, where Scott interprets Christ as withdrawn into the divine nature i.e. sitting at God's right hand, and thereby, since we are God's people, and are hidden with Christ in God (Col.3: 3), we too are in God (E.F. Scott 1930: 63). Psalm 73: 22 - 25 is seen as describing the essence of the mystical life, *"nevertheless I am continually with thee; thou dost hold my right hand . . ."* (v.23; see Underhill 1925: 35).

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Some of the post - exilic psalms express an intimately felt presence of God, *"a longing that can only be called mystical"* for it is the desire to be united with God (Graef 1966: 24; see Ps.42; 63; 73; 139). Arthur Green rightly claims that the Psalmist is *"the original Western master of inwardness"* (1989: xiv).

The psalms are written mainly for the community, and thereby express a close communion with God. The temple service and the sacrificial meal link the community with God - *"my soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God?"* (See Ringgren 1963: 1, 4; Ps.42: 2). The psalmist shows a love burning with mystical fervour in desiring life that comes from God - *"how lovely is thy dwelling place."* Ringgren follows J. Steinmann here, in realising that, e.g. *"the courts of the Lord,"* and *"the living God"* are parallel, and therefore almost equivalent. *"My heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God"* shows that the psalmist's entire person is glorifying God (Ringgren 1963: 8; Ps. 84: 1 - 2). We come closer to the mystical relationship with God in Ps.63: 8 *"my soul clings to thee; thy right hand upholds me,"* Ps.91: 14 *"because he cleaves to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name,"* (Ringgren 1963: 58), and Ps.139: 17 *"how precious to me are thy thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them . . . when I awake, I am still with thee."*

The psalms continually point to the unity between God and humanity. The righteous thank God and the upright dwell in His presence (Ps.140: 13). Thereby God's love is *"upon us even as we hope in thee"* (Ps.33: 22). Thus the 'inwardness', of our human nature really comes alive in preparation for grace as opposed to law, and for a new covenant of love and a new heart in place of one of stone. Some of the post - exilic psalms express an intimately felt presence of God, *"a longing that can only be called mystical"* for it is the desire to be united with God (Graef 1966: 24; see Pss.42; 63; 73; 139).

A different aspect of mysticism is present in Proverbs, where wisdom is personified - *"the Lord created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old"* (Prov.8: 22; 1Cor.1: 24; 30; Jn.1: 1 cf. Col.1: 15 - 17; 2: 2 - 3; Rev.3: 14). This insight could have inspired both Paul to write of *"Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God,"* and John to develop his Logos doctrine. Here, however, wisdom calls

humanity to follow and to feed on her teaching, i.e. thereby reconciling humanity to God (see Graef 1966: 24 - 25).

2.1.2.2 The Song of Solomon

The Song of Solomon has a glorious history behind it, and is perhaps interpreted more widely than any other book in the Old Testament. It is called the 'Holy of Holies', for according to Rabbi Akiva (c50 - c135) it is the holiest book, being written by God and presented to Israel on Mt. Sinai (McGinn follows Scholem, here 1992: 20 - 21).

Interpreters see this book as a drama, or a collection of wedding songs, or a fertility - cult liturgy or an anthology of separate love songs (see Robert Dentan 1972: 324). There appears to be no agreement amongst scholars as to which interpretation is the correct one or indeed as to how the book comes to be included in the Bible, especially since neither God nor any spiritual or ethical idea is mentioned in the book.

The most favourable interpretation seems to be to see the book as the last alternative above, i.e. as a collection of stories of natural sexual love. Thus Charles Harris suggests that these love songs are included in the Bible because they are *"mystically interpreted as reflecting the mutual love of Jehovah and Israel"*; no one can deny that from Hosea downward this is an admitted truth (1928: 697; cf. Stauffer 1974: 1: 42; cf. *"This is a great mystery and I take it to mean Christ and the church"*, Eph.5: 32).

The intense and intimate union described in this canticle - *"my dove, my perfect one, is only one, the darling of her mother"* (6: 9); *"I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine"* (6: 3); *"I am my beloved's and his desire is for me"* (7: 10); *"who is that coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?"* (8: 5) - is both individual and corporate, both mystical and ecclesiological. This unity survives the 'valley' and the 'mountain top' experiences, and binds together so personally the bride and the bridegroom, the Church and Christ (see Louth 1981: 200). The poem is a victory praising God's power and love for the Body of Christ (see Stauffer 1974: 1: 42).

It is in Solomon's Song, which Origen regards as the seventh and highest of the songs of the Old Testament (Louth 1981: 201), that believers can find expressed exactly what they have been trying to put into words. They are not really erotic, but symbolise

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the love between the Divine Word, Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom, and the Church, the human soul, the Bride. Thus, *"O, that you would kiss me with the kisses of your mouth!"* is the Bride, the soul, thirsty for Christ (see Evelyn Underhill 1967: 137, 250n; James Pratt 1921: 418. S of S 1: 2 cf. Rev.21: 9 - 10). St. Bernard (1090 - 1153) who wrote no less than eighty - six sermons on the Song of Solomon, allegorically interprets the Bridegroom as Jesus Christ and the Bride as the Church, but when only one person is referred to he uses the Divine Word, the logos, instead of Jesus Christ. The reason for this is lest anyone say their soul is *"the spouse of the Lord"*, although such a claim would be justified (see Dom Butler 1967: 97).

The Song of Solomon attracts a mystical interpretation. The literal sense of the love relationship or even the marriage covenant between man and woman does not apply in such an interpretation. Nor does the way Judaism makes it into a *"hymn to the defiant and faithful love between God and His maltreated people"* (Ethelbert Stauffer 1974: 1: 42).

2.1.3 God and God's Name

Before investigating humanity's relationship to the divine we need to have as clear a knowledge as possible of God and of His Name. Paul blames pagans for not knowing Him because *"ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made"* (Rom.1: 20). Beyond this, all knowledge of God comes only by revelation. The Epistle of Barnabas confirms that because God revealed Himself to Christians they alone possess what no one else possesses (Moss 1961: 9). Aquinas explains the process *"the created intellect cannot see the essence of God, unless God by His grace unites Himself to the created intellect, as an object made intelligible to it"* (ST: 1: 52). Isak Husik gives the Jewish explanation, which is similar - *"there is a form of knowledge of God which is more than merely negative[1]; it is complete absorption in and communion with*

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[1]Werblowsky and Wigoder seem to prefer negative statements, e.g. saying God exists really means that *"His non - existence is unthinkable"* (1967: 159). In claiming union between God and humanity therefore we can say that we really mean that humanity's separation from God is unimaginable. This is correct strictly speaking.

Him. But this is no longer an intellectual act; it is a mystic invitation" (1948: 5: 5).
Although Husik is being extreme in using the words 'complete absorption' it is safe to
assume here that there is no loss of the individual's identity. We shall explore this union,
the capability both God and human beings have, *"of entering into communion with one
another"* (Graef 1966: 20) when we study union later.

2.1.3.1 God's Names in Judaism

It is probable that each of the tribes of Israel originally had its own name for
God, and that in time there was general agreement over the Tetragrammaton YHWH,
YAHWEH (see Simon Cohen 1948: 5: 6 - 7). El Elohim and Eloah are other words for
deity which, when applied to God raise Him to a level far above any other level (see John
McKenzie 1968: 737; cf. Rudolf Otto's 'Wholly Other').

Reverence for God's holy name, the Tetragrammaton later causes it to be
pronounced 'Adonai' (Sidney Browne 1928: 68; also Ex.20: 7: Lev.24: 16). Yahweh,
however is in heaven. His name powerfully expresses His authority and reign (Lev.18:
21; Ps.7: 17; Hans Bietenhard 1975: 2: 649). His is the name not to be taken in vain
(Ex.20: 7), and His is the face that is not to be seen, lest death should follow (Ex.33:
20). Thus God's names reveal firstly His power (Elohim, Gen.1: 1). Secondly His
holiness, authority and reign (YHWH, Yahweh, Ex.3: 15; Lev.18: 21) - thirdly, God is
His people's Lord / Master (Adonai, Gen.15: 2). Later, reverence again gives God the
new name 'En - Sof, the Infinite', signifying a God who is unknowable, impersonal and
hidden (see S. Cohen 1948: 8; Stace 1973: 177; L. Jacobs 1995: 295).

Judaism thus distinguishes between the impersonal En - Sof, God as He is in
Himself, and the personal God of the Torah who reveals Himself to humanity (see Stace
1973: 177, who follows Scholem)[1]. This revelation by God is our prime concern here,
and it takes place principally by God's name as we shall see. God's name is not to be
pronounced, not only because it might result in idolatry, (i.e. a god among gods) but also
in order to preserve His otherness and transcendence (see W. Davies 1962: 706; cf.

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[1]Stace later (p178) likens the 'dark' nature of the En - Sof and the 'light' nature of God's
revelations to the mystical theology of Eckhart and Ruysbroeck, i.e. knowing God 'in the
depths of this nothingness' (see Scholem 1974: 402).

things clean vs. things unclean). Before we explore this revelation we must understand the meaning of 'name'.

A person's name plays an important role in Hebrew society, for it involves character; therefore knowing a person's name implies knowing the essence of that person's being. Thus a person is not really known until their name is known (D. Russell 1970: 117; J. McKenzie 1968: 737). Defining name as *"expressed essentiality"*, and as containing mana, Bietenhard suggests human beings could be described as body, soul and name. Furthermore a name is not abstract, but contains power and will. Thus when a person's name is spoken that person appears or acts (Bietenhard 1974: 5: 243). Today we see people more as persons or selves than according to their names, although every name gives an identity (J. McKenzie 1968: 737). We see the power factor operating when Adam names the animals, thereby exercising his dominion over them, and God gives Jacob a new name 'Israel' (probably meaning God rules), indicating that the ten tribes will be His possession and people (Bietenhard 1974: 5: 253; Gen.2: 20; 32: 28; cf. Is.63: 19; 2Chr.7: 14).

God makes a significant statement in Ex.20: 24 *"in every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you"*. We have here what Abelson calls *"a kind of essence of the Deity Himself"* (see S. Spencer 1966: 180). In Ex.23: 20 *"I send an angel before you to guard you . . . for my name is in him"*, the angel appears like a man and is in God, or has God's name in Him. Adam Clarke claims Jesus Christ is meant here (1824: 1: 422), while Segal rightly foresees that a *"principal mediator figure who, like the angel of the Lord in Ex.23, embodied, personified or carried the name of God YHWH, the Tetragrammaton, . . . would become a central metaphor for Christ in Christianity"* (Segal 1990: 40 - 41).

One tradition traces worship of God back to the time of Enosh when *"men began to call upon the name of the Lord"* (Gen.4: 26). This implies that one may call upon God's name but not upon God Himself (see E. Muller 1946: 17). Hereafter we find God resident in heaven and also choosing places on earth where His name would dwell and have an effect identical to that of His personal presence, e.g. Ps.9: 10 *"Those who know thy name put their trust in thee"*

Ps.86: 12 *"I will glorify thy name for ever"*

Ps.25: 1 *"I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name"*

Thus also the Ark *"is called by the name of the Lord of hosts"* (2Sam.6: 2; cf. *"And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst"* Ex.24: 8). Similarly the Lord tells Solomon about the temple *"I have consecrated this house . . . and put my name there forever"* (1Kg.9: 3), but Solomon is sceptical *"but will God indeed dwell on the earth?"* *"Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built!"* (1Kg.8: 27; cf. v.13). In spite of God's re - assurances however when the Ark is later captured by the Philistines, it is believed that *"the glory has departed from Israel"* (1Sam.4: 22).

The mystical side of the work of the High Priest is seen on the Day of Atonement when he speaks the holy name, perhaps so quietly that no - one else can hear it, but which links divinity and humanity, and then he performs a Urim and Thummim rite (Ex.28: 30; see E. Muller 1946: 21).

Scholars are quick to point out that as God's proper name is spoken less and less so there is a corresponding increase in substitute names, and also finally in the hypostatisation of the name which would have its own independent power (see G. Moore 1966: 1: 430; Karl Kuhn 1974: 3: 93; Bietenhard 1974: 5: 258; 1975: 2: 650). Hypostatisation will be studied later in this chapter.

In conclusion Judaism, with reverence towards God, believes that God in essence dwells in heaven where, in majesty and glory he is inaccessible to human beings. On earth God dwells wherever He wills in His name. Consequently if God wishes to reveal Himself, those concerned will not lose their lives (cf. Ex.33: 20). Over the centuries Judaism would replace one name of God with another one, principally because of reverence. Thus the observance of the law becomes increasingly important in daily life.

2.1.4   God's Presence (Immanence)

Gordon Fee rightly discerns that what really distinguishes Israel is not the law or any other thing but it is God's presence (1995: 7). Scholars agree that God the Creator is everywhere present. Thus David rhetorically asks *"whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?"* (Ps.139: 7). God is more specific in his words to Moses *"in every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come*

to you and bless you" (Ex.20: 24). Throughout the Old Testament God's presence on earth is described, mainly anthropomorphically, while His actual appearances may be either in person or in other revelations, as we shall see.

2.1.4.1   God Appearing in Person

Finis Dake (1992: 63 - 64) records forty - two appearances of God, or of the Angel of the Lord, to human beings in the Old Testament, excluding those visions experienced by Ezekiel. This is surprising in the light of God's command to Moses *"you cannot see my face; for man shall not see me and live"* (Ex.33: 20). This law must have been in force earlier than here recorded, because according to Gen.16: 7, 13 after Hagar is visited by the Angel of the Lord, she exclaims to the Angel *"thou art a God of seeing . . . have I really seen God and remained alive after seeing him?"* Similar exclamations of surprise or shock are made by others including Jacob (Gen.32: 30), Gideon (Jg.6: 22), Manoah and his wife (Jg.13: 22), and Isaiah (6: 5). There is an element of mysticism in these awesome experiences; for a beatific vision is involved, which is a spiritual union with God, as we shall see later. Certainly there appears to be no evidence of any person dying, as would be expected after seeing God or His angel or hearing God's voice (see Ex.20: 19; Dt.4: 33, 35; 5: 24 - 26; Jg.6: 22).

The explanation for this could be that God may be seen apart from His glory, but that no one could see God in His glory.[1] As Wilhelm Michaelis rightly expresses it *"the holiness and majesty of God on the one side, and the unworthiness of man on the other, mean that man cannot see God without being completely destroyed"* (1974: 5: 332; cf. Is.6: 5; and Dake 1992: 64). Nevertheless all who are thirsty for God, will therefore enter the temple in order to see God's face (Ps.42: 2; 11: 7; 17: 5), i.e.: -

1.   To meet God personally, as one meets another person (see Gen.32: 30; Ex.33: 11; Num.14: 4; Dake 1992: 41). This is to fulfil a life's hope by contact or union with God in ultimate bliss (see Richard Bauckham 1994: 142). Job desperately longs *"to see God":* eventually he rejoices *"I had heard of thee, but now my eye sees thee"* (19: 26; 42: 5).

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[1]See the study above on the names of God (cf. Wolk 1948: 73; L. Jacobs 1995: 295).

2.   To visit the Sanctuary (Ps.42: 2)

3.   To be met by God while worshipping (Edward Lohse: 1974: 6: 775)

4.   To greet God's face while praying or studying (: 775)

To seek God's face may mean: -

1.   To pray to God (Erich Tiedtke 1975: 1: 586)

2.   To seek fellowship with God (: 586)

3.   To visit the sanctuary (Ps.24: 6)

The face is the most distinctive part of any person; it represents a person's presence; it paraphrases the whole person (see Vine's 1991: 283; Tiedtke 1975: 1: 585). Paul echoes this common Jewish theme when he argues *"now we see in a mirror dimly but then face to face"* (1Cor.13: 12; cf. Ps.17: 15). Perhaps Paul has Jesus' important beatitude in mind, i.e. *"blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"* (Mt.5: 8; see Richard Kugelman 1968: 271; Kirk 1941: 466). 2Esdras 7: 98 describes those in the seventh, greatest order who *"press forward to see the face of him whom they served in life and from whom they are to receive their reward when glorified"* (James Charlesworth 1983: 1: 540; cf. Rev.22: 3 - 4).

2.1.4.2   God Appearing in Other Revelations

On several occasions recorded in scripture God appears to human beings indirectly or in an object, e.g. *"The angel of the Lord appeared to him [Moses] in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush"* (Ex.3: 2; Acts 7: 30; cf. Num.12: 5); and *"the Lord went before them [the Israelites] in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light"* (Ex.13: 21; cf. *"the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him [Moses]"* Ex.34: 5).

It must be realised, as W. Davies shows, that worship in synagogues is taking place even before the exile in Babylon. While the Rabbis sought to sanctify all aspects of daily life, liturgical actions are also being sanctified through the 'Berakah,' the blessing - thanks giving, with its 'Tephillah of the Eighteen Blessings,' the core of which is *"instruct us, O Lord our God, in the knowledge of Your ways and circumcise our heart*

that we may fear You" (W. Davies 1980: 23 - 25; cf. D. Russell 1970: 44).[1]   Here
Davies sees the basis of Christian worship with the associated meal pointing beyond the
liberation from Egyptian slavery towards a divinising encounter with the King (without
any loss of individuality), *"the first fully explicit, fully defined 'mysticism'"* (1980: 31 -
32).

The (Shekinah) [2] glory of God leaves the Temple to be with the Israelites in exile.
Now a new element appears, as 1Enoch relates. In search of their King, mystics, both
Jews and Christians, are penetrating the very heavens, as we shall find in our study of
Merkabah mysticism (McGinn 1992: 17). God's glory can no longer be confined to the
earth. Thus Jewish mysticism becomes, in Leo Baeck's words *"a cosmic piety"* having
direct contact with God (1970: 365 - 366).

2.1.4.3   God's Glory

An understanding of God's appearance in glory is vital to an understanding of
Jewish mysticism and Paul's 'in Christ' phrase so we will examine this subject.

1.   Definition

Most scholars would agree that the simplest definition of glory is 'God's
presence' (Bruce Vawter 1968: 423; see also L. Brockington 1963: 175; Sverre Aalen
1975: 2: 45). More broadly, glory is God's revelation of Himself in salvation history
(Aalen 1975: 2: 45; Is.60: 1; Heb.2: 14), or better still, *"participation in glory whether
here in hope or one day in consummation, is participation in Christ"* (G. Kittel 1974: 2:
250). Donatien Mollat suggests the word has changed in meaning from 'weight' to
'importance' and 'opinion' to 'honour' resulting from a good opinion to 'reputation' and
'power' and finally to 'divine mode of being' (1973: 202; Gerhard Kittel 1974: 2: 247).
In addition to the above there is its 'brilliance' or 'brightness.' So Ezekiel writes of the

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[1] *"On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Beracah, for there they blessed the
Lord"* (2Chr.20: 26); cf. *"for everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be
rejected if it is received with thanksgiving: for then it is consecrated by the word of God
and prayer"* (1Tim.4: 4 - 5)
[2] We shall not study 'shekinah' separately for the word, meaning dwelling, used of God's
presence does not appear in the Old Testament and is basically synonymous with glory
(ODCC: 1269).

'brightness' of his vision and of *"the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord"* (Ez.1: 28), his very cautious language protecting God's presence, which is beyond description (see Segal 1990: 52).

"The whole earth is full of his [God's] glory" (Is.6: 3; cf. Num.14: 21), and Adam is crowned *"with glory and honour"* (Ps.8: 5; 1Cor.11: 7); but at the Fall he loses this glory (see Kittel 1974: 2: 246). Humanity's final goal therefore becomes the restoration of this glory (Aalen 1975: 2: 45; cf. 1Cor.11: 7), i.e. the mystical restoration of God's image, and thereby, righteousness in each person (Rom.3: 23).

In Merkabah mysticism we find too, an emphasis on faith. And under Hellenistic and eschatological influence Daniel writes *"those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament"* (12: 3). Thus, as glory expresses God's presence in Christ, Kittel can concisely write *"Eschatology consummates the divine action,"* i.e. vision is being mystically replaced by participation (Kittel 1974: 2: 250; cf. Mt.13: 43).

2.   Present Glory

Before Jesus, *"the Lord of glory,"* is crucified He reveals His glory continually in His life and actions, (1Cor.2: 8; Jn.1: 14; 2Cor.4: 6; Mt.17: 2) and later confirms that the glory God gave Him He has given to His disciples (Jn.17: 22). John and Paul agree, as John records Jesus saying that the Spirit *"will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it unto you"*; and, as Paul writes, *"the spirit is changing us from one degree of glory to another"* (Jn.16: 14: 2Cor.3: 18). Paul also commands his readers to do all they do *"to the glory of God"* (1Cor.6: 20, 10: 31; cf. 1Pet.4: 11). Faith is required in order to see God's glory in and through Christ. Therefore as believers exercise faith, the Spirit manifests God's glory in them. Is this not what Jesus is saying *"let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven"?* (Mt.5: 16).

God's glory is manifested in believers now (Rom.8: 29; 2Cor.3: 18); the predestined are called, justified and glorified (see Kim.1982: 319; Dan.12: 3). Bruce regards this present manifestation by the Spirit of glory for the believer as *"the most distinctive feature in Paul's doctrine of the Spirit,"* e.g. Gentiles have at last inherited the promise made to Abraham in receiving the substance of the promise, the Holy Spirit

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himself (Frederick F. Bruce 1982: 232; Gal.12: 3; cf. Eph.1: 13 - 14; 1Cor.2: 6 - 16).
Bultmann seems to think the greater splendour of the new covenant is not visible at all,
in spite of Paul's statement that it would be visible, (Bultmann 1952: 1: 334; Glory is
visible - Ex.16: 7; Is.35: 2; Lk.9: 32; Jn.11: 40; Acts 7: 8). This splendour is certainly
present in power as the gifts of the Spirit are manifested, but surely it is also present in
the lives of the Spirit - filled believers through whom those gifts operate, even though it
may only be spiritually discerned?

With regard to the power aspect it is true that 'glory' is simply the external
manifestation of God's power; as is evident in the miracles of the Exodus and the
resurrection of Jesus (see Fitzmyer 1968: 301; Ex.15: 7, 11; Rom.1: 4; 6: 4). Thus,
God's presence indicates His power to save; this is apparent throughout the Old and
New Testaments (see Bruce Vawter 1968: 423; Is.6: 3; 60: 1; Hab.2: 14; Mk.8: 38;
Rom.8: 18).

3.   Future Glory

The hope of the coming fullness of the glory of God is made sure by Paul's use of
the aorist tense in 'glorified' (Rom.8: 30). *"Most commentators [including Bruce,
Sanday - Headlam, Barrett and Murray] see the aorist as 'the prophetic past' by which
a predicted event is marked out as so certain of fulfilment that it is described as though
it had already taken place"*, (Kim.1982: 320). This seems the best explanation.

The fullness of Christ's glory is manifested in the future, when both body and
spirit are fully changed into the likeness of the glorified Lord, (see Wilfred Moulton
1909: 297; Rom.8: 18, 21). Where the king reigns there is his kingdom; and so where
the Lord rules over all the earth he will correspondingly be glorified and will indwell
everything (see Moltmann 1977: 32 - 33). Paul writes of this event in Phil.2: 10.

Stephen (Acts 8: 55) and Paul (Acts 22: 11) are given foretastes of this ultimate
glory; and after this revelation Paul is adamant that now he can glory only in *"the cross
of our Lord Jesus Christ"*, (Gal.6: 14 Paul's statement *"I will all the more gladly boast
of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me"* could be a prayer to
share in Christ's glory). Kittel summarises this truth - *"participation in glory whether
here in hope or one day in consummation, is participation in Christ"* (Kittel 1974: 2:

250). We find here another valuable clue to Paul's use of the 'in Christ' phrase in his letters, its close link with glory, power and the Spirit historically, redemptively and eschatologically.

4.   Conclusion

'Glory' might be called the last word and the last state in Christianity when and where God's full majesty is revealed. It distinguishes God from His creatures because it is what both creation and creatures are continually duty bound to offer to God.

Through sin at the Fall this endowment of glory with which humanity was created is lost, but its return in the fullness of time as humanity is restored to the likeness of Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, is continually awaited (Tit.2: 13). Simultaneously with this revelation an eschatological participation mystically enables believers to grow into the likeness of Christ, or better, to grow in glory in Christ, as the Spirit draws them, thereby uniting them in Him (Beker 1980: 282; cf. Bultmann 1952: 1: 335; Fitzmyer 1993: 79).

2.1.5   God's Intermediaries

2.1.5.1   Definitions

God's immanence in the widest sense, is the presence of God with His people at all times and in all places (see W. Davies 1980: 20- 21), a presence which is invariably described in anthropomorphic terms, Hebrew being such a concrete language. In time however, to preserve this immanence, to prevent any materialising of God's nature, or any idolatry by giving names to God (W. Davies 1962: 706) and to ensure the utmost reverence for and the fear of the Lord, anthropomorphisms are avoided, and terms like 'Shekinah', (the indwelling presence of God) come into use (Cyril Emmet 1909: 844; Jacobs 1995: 459). It would appear that as humanity becomes more and more aware of God's immanence so it becomes more and more unable to describe it. It becomes ineffable. Thus periphrases are used for God's name - 'Spirit,' 'the Word,' 'Wisdom'. Similarly as the Lord is in the pillars of cloud and fire (Ex.13: 21) so He is in the Shekinah glory, and in the temple for those seeking His face (1Kg.9: 3; Ps.22: 3; Emmet 1909: 844; Brockington 1963: 172 - 176; Moore 1966: 1: 419). The danger of this

circumlocution however is that it occasionally becomes personified as an individual being (Samuel Cohon 1964: 707), e.g. 'the word spoke' replaces 'God said', the word thereby becoming a semi - autonomous entity (Ringgren 1974: 308).

Christian theology, like all other objects, needs technical terms to express its meanings, as its experiences with heresies throughout its history confirms (see Moss 1961: 47). It is only in AD 381 that the Council of Constantinople officially formulates the Trinity as 'Three hypostases in one Ousia' (ODCC: 685). Today it is difficult to decide whether or not personifications or hypostatisations are being used in scripture. Table 1 gives the conclusions of thirty scholars on this issue in relation to wisdom. Almost everyone agrees that wisdom is personified, but very few that it is hypostatised. Ringgren compromises - that *"abstract concept becomes semi - autonomous . . . an almost independent entity, half - personified Hypostatization"* (1974: 309). Hengel (1974: 2: 98) suggests three interpretations of hypostasis: -

1. A divine characteristic or mythical person

2. A poetic expression

3. A poetic personification of a divine attribute.

A further interpretation is that it is *"objective reality as opposed to illusion"* or confidence, which in time became 'being' and, from the 4th century onwards a 'person' (ODCC: 685). This seems to reflect the true meaning.

Table One

Is wisdom personified and / or hypostatised in Scripture?

Scholar (30)	Reference	Personified	Hypostatised / Comment
C. Emmet	1909: 844 - 845	significant tendency	semi: - personal mediators
E. Bicknell	1928: 310	yes	wisdom identified with law
A. Guillaume	1928: 379	yes	yes only Job 28: 23
A. Morris	1928: 379	yes	no... preparation for Christianity

E. Muller	1946: 19	yes	actually existing divine beings
C. Moss	1961: 38	almost a separate person	
W. Davies	1962: 707	yes	
N. Porteous	1962: 159		yes in Prov.8
J. Rylaarsdam	1962: 446	yes	no
H.May&B.Metzger	1962: 778	aspect of God	metaphorically endowed with speech
E. Blackman	1963: 283	partial	
H. Graef	1966: 24	nearly personal power	
G. Moore	1966: 1: 415	yes	no
J.I. Forestell	1968: 500	yes	stands apart from God. Messianic
R. Murphy	1968: 494	yes	wisdom identified with Spirit
R. Dentan	1972: 309	poetic	
A.Barucq&P.Grelot	1973: 659	yes	
E. Stauffer	1974: 3: 114	hypostases and angels	carry out God's will
H. Ringgren	1974a: 99 - 100	hypostases develop into independent divinities	
	1974b: 309 - 310	yes	yes. Wisdom identified with law
G. Fohrer	1974: 7: 491	yes	yes
ODCC	1974: 1493		yes
M. Hengel	1974: 154n		disputed
J. Goetzmann	1975: 3: 1029	yes	
E. Bisen	1975: 1818	yes	yes
H.H. Esser	1975: 2: 442		yes... law mediates divine and human
Vines	1991: 870	yes	
Dakes	1992: 645	yes	
B. McGinn	1992: 19	yes	

E. Schnabel	1993: 968	disputed	no intermediate being
		wisdom of God	personified in Christ
D.Guthrie&R.Martin	1993: 366	yes	yes

'Hypostasis' is used about Christ who *"reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp (hypostasis) of his nature"* (Heb.1: 3). It is also translated 'assurance' (Heb.11: 1); 'confidence' (2Cor.11: 17; Heb.3: 14); and 'confident' (2Cor.9: 4). 'Ousia' appears twice in scripture (Lk.15: 12, 13) as 'property'.

In the Wisdom literature (Job, Pr., Ec., Ecclus and Wisdom) wisdom is more than poetic personification (a word that is not in scripture), but in places, e.g. Pr.8 and Wisdom 7 - 8, it becomes increasingly hypostatic (see ODCC: 1493). It is naturally subordinated to God, as Stauffer insists it should be (1974: 3: 98), and is to a degree realistically independent within Judaism (Ringgren 1974: 100). Jews thus continually seek to *"bring God to earth by such mediatorial agencies which were semi - personal and divine but not God, i.e. angelology"* (Emmet 1909: 845) and thereby enjoy God's presence on earth through His messengers the angels, His Word, His presence, His wisdom, His glory, and His Spirit (Ex.40: 34 - 35; 1Kg.8: 11). This is the background against which Paul derives his 'in Christ' phrase - as witness to Jew, Gentile and Christian alike.

We shall now look at the major intermediaries (i.e. angels, the word, wisdom and the Spirit) to see what contribution they can make to our understanding of Jewish mysticism. These metonomies for God are not strictly speaking mediators between God and man, though they intermediate in sharing God's revelation and carrying out His will, as Moses did in giving the Law to the Hebrews (Davies 1962: 706; Moore 1966: 1: 437). Paradoxically these attributes of God, as some of them have been described, represent immanence while denoting transcendence. If we trace the development of these intermediaries we shall find, that they lead back to God. Moltmann seems to recognise this when he sees God's Shekinah and the Holy Spirit as God's counterparts in God himself and wisdom as 'God's daughter' (Moltmann 1994: 12).

Christian scholars probably all agree that the main reason for the personification of these divine attributes of God is the unwillingness of Judaism to recognise the

revealed distinctions in the Godhead but rather to substitute intermediaries in their place, who are given semi - independent identity, and who even carry out the Messiah's functions, yet have no real substance outside of God (see W. Davies 1962: 706 - 707). The situation nevertheless is another ideal one for Paul to coin his 'in Christ' phrase thereby witnessing to his readers that Jesus is the Christ, the long - awaited Messiah. Thus, the mystical union with God now becomes a reality through Christ.

2.1.5.2 Angels

Angels are messengers or intermediaries between God and humanity. They are by nature and purpose *"ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation"* (Heb.1: 14). Angels should be seen as belonging to the world (as principalities and powers, Eph.6: 12) and as having a supernatural history of salvation with humanity, the goal of which is in Christ. Thus angelology is a part of Christology (Rahner 1975: 6). Furthermore human nature is superior to that of the angels, (see Eph.3: 10; 1Tim.3: 16; 1Pet.1: 12; in contrast to Ps.8: 6; Hab.2: 7; Rahner 1975: 8).

Throughout scripture angels bring help, revelations and interpretations to humanity (Ps.91: 11; Dan.3: 28; Mt.1: 20), and carry humanity's intercessions to God (Zech.1: 12; see J. Schofield 1963: 18), in line with Jesus' ministry on earth.

Angelology must be seen in the light of Christ's advent. Thus the groupings of angels as *"Sons of God (Job 1: 6), . . . Gods (Ps.8: 5), hosts of heaven (1Kg.22: 19) and God's ministers (Ps.103: 21)"* confirm that God is not alone (J. Schofield 1963: 18). Similarly the 'Angel of the Lord' appears in scripture about 60 times, each time with a special commission from God (e.g. Ex.3: 2). Bietenhard rightly identifies this angel as *"virtually a hypostatic appearance of Yahweh, the personified help of God for Israel"* (1975: 1: 101; see also Ex.14: 19; Num.22: 22). Donald Guthrie and Ralph Martin also believe the 'angel of God' is recognised as God (1993: 366; Gen.16: 7 - 14; 18: 1 - 22; Ex.3: 2 - 6). The 'Angel of the Lord' thus helps to preserve God's transcendence (see Ex.23: 20 - 24), and in addition, God's immanence as the angel appears to humanity. Kittel detects a change, as in time angels no longer act autonomously, but simply do what God tells them to do (1974: 1: 85).

The above factors play a part in preparing the early Christian church to

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understand Jesus' role as the pre - existent Son of God while at the same time remaining monotheistic (see Daniel Reid 1993: 23). As the Messianic age dawns we can understand why Paul *"scoffs at Spirits"* as he asserts the supremacy of Christ (Col.2: 10, 15, 18; Eph.3: 10). Paul could even be suggesting that the function of angels might *"be to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Rom.8: 38 - 39), having *"a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you"* (Gal.1: 8; see Fitzmyer 1968: 819).

We have reviewed the role of angels as intermediaries between God and humanity, thus preparing for the coming of Christ to whom they are responsible, and by whom they will ultimately be judged. The warfare between good and evil angels will continue until the end of this world. Until then humanity's place is 'in Christ Jesus our Lord'. Although the law *"was ordained by angels through an intermediary"* (Gal.3: 19), Paul is taught *"through a revelation of Jesus Christ"* (Gal.1: 12; cf. *"All who call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered"* Joel 2: 32); *"when necessity arises, a man should not call on Michael or Gabriel, but he should call on Me [God], and I will answer him"* (jBer.13a, see Kittel 1974: 1: 82). Paul pays the Galatian church a significant compliment for receiving him *"as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus"* (Gal.4: 14).

2.1.5.3   God's Word

When God speaks, action follows *"and God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light"* (Gen. 1: 3). God thus directs history as He continually speaks His word to His people and more especially to His prophets. *"The word of the Lord"* appears about 400 times in the Old Testament (J.Y. Campbell 1963: 283). Naturally, observing the variety of occasions on which God speaks, particularly in the Psalms and the prophets, the word is personified. Thereby also anthropomorphism and blasphemy are avoided. During the second temple period according to Sidney Tedesche (1948: 7: 167) when God was thought to be *"so spiritual and so far removed from the world that it seemed impossible for Him to deal with it directly"*, God's presence would be indicated by the use of the Aramaic words Memra or Dibbura. God's word can thus be seen as an emanation from Him, e.g. *"Your all - powerful word leapt from heaven, from the royal*

throne . . . " (Wisdom of Solomon 18: 15; Tedesche 1948: 7: 167).

J. Campbell describes this personification as literary and pictorial (1963: 283; cf. also Pss. 33: 6 *"by the word of the Lord the heavens were made";* 107: 20 *"He sent forth his word, and healed them";* 147: 15, *"He sends forth his command to the earth")* and they are certainly circumlocutions for God (see Moore 1966: 1: 419). But God's word may be seen further as having an independent existence, e.g. *"My word . . . shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose"* (Is.55: 11); and *"is not my word like fire . . . and like a hammer which breaks the rock in pieces?"* (Jer.23: 29). This hypostatic nature of God's word is developed further in Hellenistic Judaism (see ODCC 833; Moore is against the personal being concept 1966: 1: 419; cf. also Samuel Cohen 1964: 480).

There appears to be a progression in the use of God's word in scripture. Marianne Thompson suggests that the Jewish concept of agency is in the background of the gospel's presentation of Jesus, and that the chief agents are angels (Gabriel, Michael), patriarchs (Moses, Enoch) and God's attributes (word, wisdom) (see Marianne Thompson 1992: 377). This agency concept ('Saliah') is referred to in rabbinic documents, but according to Colin Kruse (1992: 28) not before the second century AD so it has little import for our study. Nevertheless it seems true to say that throughout scripture from the beginning (Gen.1: 3), God's word is personified in an increasing degree, especially since, being His word, it is true and therefore bound to be active (see David Johnson 1992: 482; Is.55: 11; 6: 9 - 10; 9: 8; 40: 8). Psalm 119 is particularly relevant here because of its teaching of the word being a lamp to our feet and a light to our path (v105; cf. v.130) reviving us (v.25); giving us hope (v.49); being unchanging as God is unchanging (v.89); giving life itself (vv.107, 154, 156). As Oesterley (1928: 35) points out, the uncertainty of this time must be appreciated *"the thought of the world having been created by the Wisdom of the world or by the 'Memra' ('Word' of God) was looked upon with suspicion; for there was a tendency to hypostatize Wisdom and the Word, thereby endangering, as was believed, the belief in the Divine Unity".* This contention, W. Oesterley rightly adds, would apply equally well to the coming Messiah, and possibly also to the second coming of Christ.

Philo (c20 BC - c AD 50), whom Bousset calls *"the first theologian worthy of*

the name ", and whose mystical union with God reached such a height (see Kirk 1941: 38), possibly influences or plays a role in the progression of God's word in scripture. No doubt following Herodotus's theory in the sixth century BC of the unchanging 'logos' ruling the world, Philo sees the logos as an abstract mediator or semi - personification between God and the universe (see Tedesche 1948: 7: 168; J.C. Lambert 1909: 550), as a half - way position between the Greek and the Biblical concepts (ODCC: 833). John completed the process in the full personification in Jesus.

2.1.5.4 Wisdom

Another intermediary between God and humanity is the personification of wisdom. At an early date in Israelite history wisdom is identified as an attribute of God. Job admits that *"with God are wisdom and might; he has counsel and understanding"* (Job 12: 13). Later Solomon sets out to instruct others in wisdom; the key to his teaching being *"the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction"* (Pr.1: 7; cf. Ps.111: 10).

In the 'Wisdom of Solomon' wisdom is described as *"a breath of the power of God, and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty"* who *"passes into holy souls and makes them friends of God, and prophets; for God loves nothing so much as the person who lives with wisdom"* (7: 25, 27, 28). This is descriptive writing, prophetic of what God has in mind for humanity.

Furthermore the 'Wisdom of Solomon' also gives a revelation of the coming Logos as wisdom's *"all - powerful word leapt from heaven, from the royal throne, into the midst of the land"* (18: 15; see J. Terence Forestell 1968: 497; Graef 1966: 25).

A different aspect of mysticism is present in Proverbs, where wisdom is hypostatised - *"the Lord created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old"* (Prov.8: 22; 1Cor.1: 24, 30; Jn.1: 1 cf. Col.1: 15 - 17; 2: 2 - 3; Rev.3: 14). This insight could have inspired Paul to write of *"Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God,"* and John to develop his Logos doctrine. Here, however, wisdom calls humanity to follow and to feed on her teaching, i.e. thereby reconciling humanity to God (see Graef 1966: 24 - 25). In Wisdom literature the mystical longing of humankind for union with God becomes more personal and appealing, *"I love those who love me, and those*

who seek me diligently find me" (Pr.8: 17). Similarly the Holy Spirit who continually inspires the prophets, is present amongst His people so much so that they pray with David *"cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me"* (Ps.51: 11). Union is the goal - *"wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul"* (Pr.2: 10). Against this background, believers will live in Christ Jesus because God made Him their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption (1Cor.1: 30; Col.2: 3). Feeding on wisdom's teaching reconciles humanity to God (Graef 1966: 24 - 25).

2.1.5.5 Spirit

No developed theory of the Spirit is given either in the Old or in the New Testament but in both there is an increasing awareness of His presence. We shall examine the Spirit as an intermediary between the divine and the human, noting especially any mystical evidence that is apparent, and which might have influenced Paul in his use of the 'in Christ' phrase.

In the Old Testament and in the Jewish apocalypses human actions are attributed to the Spirit but He is never described as a 'person'. This does happen however in the New Testament Apocalypse (D. Russell 1970: 155n). He may therefore be spoken of in the Old Testament as an activity of God that is hypostatised (Ringgren 1974: 93), or as an *"hypostasis, a personal angelic being,"* (Erik Sjoberg 1974: 6: 387). Scholars would probably agree with Eberhard Kamlah that the phrases the Spirit of God, the divine Spirit and the Holy Spirit mean in particular *"that spiritual reality independent of man which performed God's work on earth"* (1975: 3: 693). We may therefore see the Spirit as playing a vital role throughout the Old Testament as a mediator between God and humanity, thereby preparing the way for the coming promised Messiah. Let us look at some of the ways in which the Spirit does this work.

When God creates man He *"breathed into his nostrils the breath of life"* (Gen.2: 7; cf.6: 3; Ezek.37: 5), as a sign of His active presence in human beings as well as of unity both between Him and human beings and between all human beings (see Brian Gaybba 1987: 10). L. Jacobs finds proof of this mystical relationship with God in Dt.32: 9 *"for the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage"*, where

"God's portion of the soul the part that is divine is 'with' Him as part of His being with its branch, here below" (L. Jacobs 1992: 50 - 51).

Having thus established in the creation a point of contact, as it were, within each human being, it is easy to understand how God can mediate with each person through His Spirit. The Spirit thus becomes instrumental in inspiring humans to live exactly as God wills them to live.

Stanley Horton follows Barclay in rightly believing that history is dominated by *"spirit - filled men and women"* (S. Horton 1993: 412). Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph are spokesmen for God (Gen.20: 7; Ps.105: 15). Moses, Bezalel and Aholiab are spirit - filled (Num.11: 17; Ex.31: 2 - 3; 35: 30 - 31). The seventy elders receive some of the Spirit from Moses, which makes Moses wish that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them (Num.11: 17, 29). Similarly, the judges, the kings (Saul and David) and the true prophets are anointed or filled with the Spirit (2Pet. 1: 21). Micah declares that he is filled with power because he is filled with the Spirit of the Lord (Mic.3: 8). These mystical anointings and inspirations may be temporary, (e.g. Bezalel and Aholiab and all the prophets) or permanent, (e.g. Moses, Joshua and David).

Throughout the Old Testament period God is preparing His people, and the world, for the coming of the Messiah, for salvation, for the restoration of the image and likeness of God in people, and for the outpouring of His Spirit on all flesh (cf. Is. passim and Jl.2: 28).

Similarly the prophets are not all spiritual personalities, but they develop *"an unusual spiritual sensitiveness"* as they became God's messengers, extensions of His personality, 'mystics in action', as Hocking calls them (see S. Spencer 1966: 172 - 173). It would however seem unwise to distinguish prophets from mystics by saying the former's union with God is functional while the latter's is not. The function of the mystic's union with God might be evident (cf. Teresa of Avila) or it might not, but it is still there in some manner.

The Spirit is so much a part of the life of the prophets and indeed of the people that David has to pray *"cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me"* (Ps.51: 11). The true prophet displays a *"quickening of the spiritual*

consciousness, an awareness of the supreme reality of the transcendent" which Spencer attributes to mysticism (1966: 173). We find this overwhelming presence of God supremely in Isaiah and Ezekiel, for which the Holy Spirit is responsible. The prophet's intimate communion with God, or the revelatory power of God's word, enables them to do outstanding deeds (see James Muilenburg 1962: 480). Habakkuk's resolution anticipates Paul's 'in Christ' phrases, *"I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation"* (Hab.3: 18). According to Deissmann there are a great number of 'in God' or 'in the Lord' phrases used in a mystical sense in the Old Testament (1957: 146).

Seeing the prophets through their inspired lives we can with Arnold Tkacik claim them as mystics (1968: 345), but not for long, for the prophetic age fast gives way to the apocalyptic for various reasons: -

1   The oral is being replaced by the written. This dates back to the time of Ezra. The written word will be both authoritative and enable mystical meanings in it to be more readily discovered by a wider circle of readers (McGinn 1992: 12),

2.   Foreign influence, especially since Solomon's time, continues to influence Judaism especially through the occult,

3.   False prophets abound. The psalmist complains *"we do not see our signs; there is no longer any prophet"*, (Ps.74: 9). Similarly Zechariah speaks *"I will remove from the land the prophets and the unclean spirit"*, (Zech.13: 2; see D. Russell 1970: 74 - 78).

Although mysticism is stifled by all these changes taking place, and as even the Torah is interpreted in near - occult ways, it still *"with its white light of nearness to God strengthens and consoles sorrowing Israel"* (Wolk 1948: 8: 75).

In summary, Muilenburg comes close to the truth in writing about the prophets, and what he writes may apply to virtually all the Old Testament mystics, *"they know that something from without has entered into the prophet, and that his works are not his but Yahweh's;"* and - *"they felt themselves to be in intimate communion with Yahweh and believed that his 'life - soul' (nephesh) had somehow extended itself into their own lives, or that the dynamic power of his word lived on in their words, or that his revelatory power enabled them to perform remarkable acts."* (1962: 480). After the cessation of the prophetic voice of the Spirit, Judaism introduced a further concept - 'bath qol'

(Hebrew - daughter of a voice) indicating a means for God to continue to speak to His people (ODCC 143); e.g. *'there fell a voice from heaven "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken . . ." immediately the word was fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar'*, (Dan 4: 31, 33; see Moore 1966: 1: 421; L. Jacobs 1995: 47; Ringgren 1974: 308). W. Davies rightly suggests, that the rabbis expect the Holy Spirit to be present always, and available for everyone who *"used the right means"* (1980: 210). In the New Testament God speaks to Christ (Mt.1: 11; Mk.9: 7; Jn.12: 28), to Paul and to Peter (Acts 9: 4; 10: 13).

2.1.6   Union with God

We shall here seek to answer the question to what degree may Jewish mysticism be regarded as a union with God? Several of the influences upon Jewish mysticism have already been mentioned, and to date there is certainly no agreement among scholars about this union. Nevertheless recent scholarship (see Jacobs, Segal, Morray - Jones and others) points to both an earlier beginning of Jewish mysticism and a closer union with God than was formerly believed.

Gen.2: 7 is naturally the foundational text for the 'divine spark' which *"God blew into Adam"*, and which shows that there is *"something divine in the human soul"*, and therefore *"a man should consider himself as if the Holy One dwells within him"* (see L. Jacobs 1992: 43). Jacobs adds that this 'divine spark' doctrine is prominent in later Jewish Kabbalah thought.

Judaism believes that between God and humanity there is a vast or infinite 'gulf' (L. Jacobs 1995: 359; Scholem 1974: 56). Because of this gulf between Creator and creature Judaism, like Islam, may be generally described as dualistic (Stace 1973: 229), but that is not the full story.

2.1.6.1 Clinging / Cleaving - to - God

This first stage we might call the clinging - to - God stage, *"my soul clings to thee; thy right hand upholds me"* (Ps.63: 8). Here we find two different elements clinging together, but not uniting (see Ringgren 1963: 58). The Hebrew word above translated 'cling' is 'devekut' which according to Dan Cohn - Sherbok denotes the *"spiritual state of communion with God, achieved during prayer and meditation"*, and

is sometimes regarded as the highest degree of spiritual growth (1992: 114).[1] This is the closest term for mystical union which at the same time also reveals the distance between God and man. One's material being has been cast off and thereby one is in constant communion with God having one's heart with Him even while conversing with other people (Marcoulesco 1987: 10: 241; Werblowsky & Wigoder 1967: 114; Louis Jacobs 1973: 157 - 158). Jacobs here quotes Nahmanides - such a man (who is cleaving to God) is in heaven even while walking this earth . . . cf. *"and Enoch walked with God"* (Gen.5: 24). Later Jacobs writes that those attaining 'devekut' are plausibly being partakers of eternal life *"because they have made themselves a dwelling place of the Shekinah"* (1995: 123).

The question, how can one cleave to God when God is like a devouring fire? (Ex.24: 17) is answered by explaining that 'devekut' means imitating God's attributes of mercy and kindness. 'Devekut' involves 'Kavvanah' which means spiritual concentration, being so at one with God that all barriers between divinity and humanity are removed (see Werblowsky and Wigoder 1967: 114).

A further illustration of communion with God during meditation Ringgren attributes to Franken who interprets the word *"to meditate, siach"* as an expression for the person so filled with the divine that one can speak of a mystic experience (Ringgren 1963: 56; Gen.24: 63; Ps.119: 15, 23, 48, 78, 148).

As we have seen several scholars like Inge and Montefiore maintain Jewish mysticism in any form does not achieve union with God (cf. also E.P. Sanders 1977: 220n; Schweitzer 1953: 37; Ringgren 1966: 130). We suggest conclusions like these are based upon inconclusive or unsubstantiated evidence. Evidence of the existence of Jewish mysticism shows that mysticism exists at much earlier dates and among more classes of people than has been recognised, e.g. Scholem finds Jewish mysticism existing earlier than 300 BC (1974: 48); some Pharisees were mystics and the Essenes encouraged Jewish mysticism (see W. Davies 1980: 14 - 15; cf. p22).

Scholem sees this first stage as fundamental, for it is *"the ultimate goal of*

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[1] For further commands to cleave to God see Dt.10: 20; 11: 22; 13: 4; 30: 20; Jos 22: 5; 23: 8; cf. Gen.2: 24; Jer.13: 11; Ps.22: 15; 91: 14.

religious perfection . . . a perpetual being - with - God, an intimate union and conformity of the human and the divine will" and yet still retaining *"a proper sense of distance"*, or *"incommensurateness"* (1974: 123).

2.1.6.2 Knowing and Seeing God

The second stage is that of knowing and of seeing God. Hosea's prophecy (6: 4) *"my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge"*, does not refer simply to intellectual knowledge of God, but, as Ringgren points out, to an *"intimate association and familiarity"* with God (1966: 130). Judaism always believes in the immanence of God, this belief is fundamental to all mysticism (see L. Jacobs 1973: 630) and therefore we can understand Asaph's cry *"thou who art enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth"* (Ps.80: 1). Here we have the God of heaven, the supremely transcendent being, the supremely immanent God of His people, living with His people and being urged to reveal Himself (see Louis Bouyer 1982: 1: 20 - 21).[1]

We sense too the anxiety of the Merkabah riders in which the vision of God *"could go no further than to the perception of the glory of his appearance on the throne"* (Scholem 1974: 207). The Merkabah riders fail because they go only to vision but not to union with God; to the power, but not to the love of God (see Scholem 1974: 55; S. Spencer 1966: 176).

This stage is eminently Platonic, for vision is the essence of Plato's mysticism. Only once does he refer to union, i.e. when nous in action *"holds intercourse with that which really exists, and begets wisdom and truth"* (see S. Spencer 1966; Plato, Republic, Timaeus 90).

2.1.6.3 Union with God

The third stage is that of union with God through love. Wolk describes it as *"of direct, intimate touching of the Godhead itself; the votary loses himself and achieves a sense of union with the Infinite, the En Sof; he loses individuality and gains immortality*

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[1]Bouyer compares this cry with Paul's *"most Jewish of desires"*, *"to know God as we are known"* (1Cor.13: 12; Bouyer 1982: 1: 21; cf. Also W. Davies 1980: 21; 2Sam.22: 10 - 11; Ps.17: 11).

here and now" (1948: 73). If this be taken as Judaism's ideal picture of union between Creator and creature it must be criticized for being extreme; the creature cannot 'touch' the Godhead, nor can there be any *"fusion of self with divinity"* as Wolk writes prior to the above quotation. If however we accept the distinction made above between God, the En - Sof, the hidden God, and the God who is manifested, which as Stace suggests is made by Christian mystics like Eckhart and Rysbroeck (1973: 177), and which is similar to that between God with and without His glory, and to that between God Himself and His name, we can understand this union with God stage better. In a similar fashion *"to call upon the name of the Lord"* (Gen.4: 26) suggests that God's name only is available to humanity, but not His essence (see E. Muller: 1946: 16).

For fear of being blasphemous 'union' is only used later in the history of Jewish mysticism. The great traditional gulf between Creator and creature needs to be bridged (see Stace 1961: 158; Scholem 1974: 122 - 123). Consequently both Jews and non - Jews cannot describe their 'unio mystica' or mystical union with God, as a union, but must use some other expression, e.g. an *"ecstatic experience, the tremendous uprush and soaring of the soul to its highest plane"* (see Scholem 1974: 5; L. Jacobs 1990: 13 - 14).

Both Scholem and L. Jacobs however seem to agree that the unio mystica as defined by them *"is not entirely unknown even in a religion like Judaism"* (L. Jacobs 1995: 359). Later 'union with God' and even 'deification' will be occasionally used (see Stace 1973: 158).

In Jewish mysticism progress in union with God correlates with one's knowledge of God, which in turn correlates with one's love for God and for delighting *"in his commandments"* (Ps.112: 1). The Shema sets the goal *"you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might"* (Dt.6: 5; 11: 13; S of S.2: 5 *"for I am sick with love"*; cf. Mt.22: 37). One therefore continually 'pines' for God (L. Jacobs 1973: 159).

Several texts from the Torah are exegeted to show the close union (but never the fusion) of the human with the divine, e.g. Dt.7: 21 *"the Lord your God is in the midst of you, a great and terrible God"* is seen as implying that God is personally in the individual, i.e. God is the Soul of the soul (Scholem 1974: 110; Spencer 1966: 183);

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"for the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage". Dt.32: 9, suggests that all souls are one with God and come from Him; the divine part of the soul, i.e. God's part, is 'with' God's being, its branches remain here below (L. Jacobs 1992: 50).

In summary we agree with Segal that Jewish tradition elaborates upon various Biblical descriptions of God in human form, which are embodied, personified or carry the name of God YHWH, the Tetragrammaton, and that these become metaphors for Christ in Christianity, e.g. *"behold I send an angel before you"* points to Jesus Christ (see Segal 1990: 40 - 41; cf. Adam Clarke 1824: 1: 422; cf. Ex.24; Is.6 ; Ezek.1; Dan.7).

Scholem hints at this interpretation when he describes an 'inner Merkabah' which can only be visualised symbolically. Previously the rider's vision stopped at the glory of God's appearance on the throne, but now it is, Scholem guardedly writes, *"of the inside of this glory"* (Scholem 1974: 207). Marcoulesco refers to but does not elaborate upon the discovery of new layers in the mystery of the Godhead (1987: 10: 241), a further possible reference to this distinction concerning God.

2.1.7 Conclusion

Jewish mysticism has two basic strands, contemplative and chariot, both of which are cosmic, and therefore meet in Heaven. Its foundation stone is the knowledge that humanity is created in God's image, and since God is holy He expects humanity also to be holy. The Torah shows the way, for the Old Testament books are in part mystical giving models which can be followed. These books also contain allegories (see Ezek.17: 2; 24: 3; Gal.4: 24). Prophets are mystics inspired by the Holy Spirit who expect the return of the Holy Spirit to the community, for when the Messiah comes, there will be an inward law, covenant, circumcision and anointing.

At the beginning of the Christian era there appears to have been both an ongoing reaction against the inimical Roman empire of which Palestine was a province, and also continued in - fighting amongst the parties, which Josephus calls 'philosophies', i.e. Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes and Zealots (Ant.18: 1 - 6). The situation was very volatile and the emphasis was decidedly upon orthopraxis rather than upon orthodoxy (D. Russell 1971: 22), that is on the Halakhah, acting on God's will, rather than on defining His will (Jacobs 1995: 550). In fact Paul would continue this same Rabbinic

practice of dealing with problems as they arose, being particular rather than general, and organic rather than systematic - although these two were in Paul and were fast becoming one in Christ (Jacobs 1995: 550).

We can visualise the difficult task of the Rabbis during this fretful time as they attempt to interpret the Torah, with the intention of ensuring that all aspects of life are taken care of and sanctified. Jewish mysticism appears to make the task of Rabbis both easier and more difficult (Carmody 1996: 139), hence the existence of all the various semi - autonomous intermediaries mentioned above. The strong temptation to embrace Roman paganism was also continually present, and this powerful force, aided by Judaism's disunity, would result eventually in the destruction of the temple in AD 70 and the downfall of the nation (D. Russell 1970: 17).

The Mishnah says the *"the cloud and the pillar of fire were introduced to reveal and at the same time to veil, the presence"* of God (quoted by Kirk 1941: 12). We are reminded here of Jesus' reply to His disciples after they asked Him why He spoke in parables, i.e. to make known the secrets of the kingdom of heaven to His disciples; to reveal more to those who ask for more, but to hide these secrets from those who do not hear or understand (Mt.13: 10 - 17). Thus we find God commanding His chosen people not to see Him or they will die, and at the same time revealing Himself many times principally, we presume, to those really willing to break this law of God's. Jewish mysticism is encountering God at least spiritually, and perhaps visually, by going beyond His commandments, i.e. taking a short cut to God.

In this experience one would also appear to be going beyond oneself, which is the true meaning of ecstasy, and which is certainly something enjoyed by the Merkabah mystics. God makes us all in His image and likeness, and judging from His commandments and what He says to those to whom He appears, He expects us to be holy people as He is holy (Ex.19: 6; Lev.20: 7). It would appear that mysticism is the very life - blood of humanity's existence from the moment of creation when God places in each person an ardent desire to know, to see, to love, to be one with Him throughout each person's life, and then to be immortal or to be with God in heaven for ever.

It seems to have been generally accepted in the past that Jewish mysticism is satisfied with 'contact' with God, whatever form that contact might take (see Scholem

1974: 5; S. Spencer 1966: 179; Ringgren 1966: 130; E.P. Sanders 1977: 220n; Stace 1973: 158 etc). Today the situation appears to be understood differently. Graef glimpses this (see Graef 1966: 23), and Jacobs can boldly admit that *"the unio mystica is not entirely unknown even in a religion like Judaism which stresses the vast gulf between God and the individual soul"* (1995: 359). Wolk (1948: 8: 73 captures this mystical feeling of oneness, this *"fusion of self with divinity, in the ecstasy of love of God . . . a sense of union with the Infinite, the En Sof").* Helmut Ringgren (1966: 130) claims that there is no 'unio mystica' with the godhead because of the Old Testament concept of God, but he suggests that there can be an intimate association with God, (e.g. Ps.63: 8; 91: 14), or simply knowledge of our acquaintance with God (Hos.4: 6). There are several Old Testament texts which could support this union, e.g. *"am I a God at hand, says the Lord, and not a God afar off . . .?   Do I not fill heaven and earth?"* (Jer.23: 24). Graef rightly applies this text to all God's people, in whom He dwells by love, and who then respond with their whole heart (1966: 23).

2.1.8   Merkabah Mysticism

Maase Merkabah or chariot lore, which we shall now examine, is foundational to Jewish mysticism having been practised for over 1000 years (Gershom Scholem 1974: 5; David Bakan 1975: 69). It is derived principally from the visions of Ezekiel, together with the visions of Isaiah (ch.6), Daniel (7: 9 - 10), Micaiah (1Kg.22: 19); other Old Testament and apocalyptic theophanies make various contributions.[1] The earliest reference we have to it is Ecclus 49: 8 - *"it was Ezekiel who saw the vision of glory, which God showed him above the chariot of the cherubim".*

Merkabah mysticism is defined as *"a perception of God's appearance on the throne as described by Ezekiel"* (see W.T. Stace 1973: 157). Similarly Graef claims that *"to become a Merkabah rider meant to reach a state of ecstasy in which man came into contact with the unseen world"* (1966: 26).

In Merkabah mysticism we find a purely Jewish phenomenon which has been

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[1]Ezek.1; 3: 12 - 15, 22 - 24; 8: 1 - 4; 10: 1 - 22; 43: 1 - 7 for reference to further visions see P. Alexander 1983: 1: 246.

influenced by Platonism, Gnosticism,[1] Neoplatonism, and by Enoch, together with political and social forces, but having its roots firmly in the Old Testament (see P. Alexander 1983: 1: 238; Graef 1966: 26). One fundamental goal of this mysticism would appear to be to ascend or descend (see Ernst Müller 1946: 54) in the chariot into heaven and to see what Ezekiel sees, that is *"there was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like sapphire, and seated above the likeness of a throne was a likeness as it were of a human form . . . such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord"* (Ezek.1: 26, 28). So majestic is the scene that Ezekiel cannot describe it, but can only write of the appearance of its likeness.

Ezekiel has this vision in the sixth century BC before the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC when the kingdom ends, so he brilliantly links prophecy with apocalyptic, the presence of God with His transcendence. He names the new Jerusalem *"the Lord is there"*, promising believers *"a new heart . . . and a new spirit"* (Ezek.48: 35; 36: 26, see Arnold Tkacik 1968: 344 - 345).

At this historical turning point Merkabah emerges as central to Jewish mysticism (P. Alexander 1983: 1: 234; Bakan 1975: 69), not in opposition to Torah study but to counter - balance it, thereby giving it new life (Carmody follow Jacobs here 1996: 138, 152). As scholars suggest, trance - visions are not experienced solely by the key figures of the Old Testament but also by initiants in the groups or schools of the time (Kirk 1941: 15). Kirk adds that *"what is most significant about these experiences is that they find their culminating point in just such a vision of God as Ezekiel had enjoyed"*. This uniformity or pattern is to be noted. A Jewish mysticism school existed in Palestine before the first century AD and of which the master was Rabbi Jochanan ben Zakkai, 'the father of Merkabah mysticism' (Bakan 1975: 69; S. Spencer 1966: 177).[2] Thus Spencer writes of these 'Merkabah riders' as being organised into groups of mystics having their vision and ecstatic faculties specially trained, so they could make contact

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[1]There is an insignificant Gnostic influence in Merkabah mysticism (although Scholem describes it as 'Jewish Gnosticism'), because firstly the Merkabah contains no opposition to God, while in Gnosticism there is a conflict between the good power and the evil demiurge, and secondly ascents to heaven are made many times in the Merkabah but in Gnosticism the ascent is made only after death (see P. Alexander 1983: 1: 236, 238).
[2]For more on Jewish mystical schools see Joseph Dan (1989: 289 - 307).

with the spiritual world and perceive the divine glory (Graef 1966: 26; Spencer 1966: 182). *"A degree of asceticism is obviously evident throughout Judaism (cf. Dan. 10: 1; 4Ezr. 14: 37 - 40; W. Davies 1980: 14); fasting and prayer are preparatory to receiving ecstasy and the pouring forth of a "flood of understanding""* (Marcoulesco 1987: 10: 24; Kirk 1941: 15; Ninian Smart 1967: 5: 423). An esoteric, saintly, self - disciplined order of disciples called the Tzenuim (chaste ones) existed among the early Jewish mystics, but unfortunately information on the order is unavailable (see J. Minkin 1948: 7: 494). Among the reasons why so little Jewish mysticism material from the pre - Christian and early Christian eras has survived are the following:

1.   Secrecy is the order of the day; a factor which limits our understanding of the various Jewish beliefs and practices (Jacobs 1990: 12). *"Neither seek what is too difficult for you, nor investigate what is beyond your power. Reflect upon what you have been commanded, for what is hidden is not your concern. Do not meddle in matters that are beyond you for more than you can understand has been shown to you"* (Sirach 3: 21 - 23). Scholem writing about later Jewish mysticism argues that mystic beliefs were shared orally, to one person at a time, not plainly but cryptically so that the hearer needed to decipher the information (Scholem 1974: 119 - 120; cf. Jesus with His parables; Bakan 1975: 71).

2.   S. Ghose describes a Jewish custom which is that sharing one's personal mystical experiences with others is both *"improper and indecorous"* (1998: 26: 586; Wolk 1948: 8: 74. 2 Esdras 14 lists seventy documents which must be kept secret). Riders are also well versed in the law (Carmody 1996: 152). Much later Maimonides (1135 - 1204) would write that *"it was considered inadvisable to teach it [Maaseh Mercabah] to young men . . . they must have become moderate and settled, humble in their hearts, and subdued in their temperament; only then will they be able to arrive at the highest degree of the perception of God . . ."* (see Bakan 1975: 199). Mysteries should be revealed only to chosen mature disciples who would appreciate and be able to follow the techniques (Jacobs 1990: 12). Amongst the other ascetical techniques a 'yihud' is performed to drive away the demonic forces which seek to intervene (1990: 13).

2.1.8.1 Initiatory Model

Within Merkabah mysticism we can trace a model which will be compared later with other models of mysticism in support of our study of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase.

Firstly there is preparation, part of which we have already seen, through the asceticism, self - purification, the training of vision and ecstatic faculties, and the exorcism of demonic forces. The key note throughout this model is secrecy *"reflect upon what you have been commanded, for what is hidden is not your concern"* (Sirach 3: 22).

Secondly, there is the ceremony of the putting on, or clothing of the name *"in which one impregnates oneself with God's name by wearing a garment into which the name has been weaved"* (Scholem 1974: 77 - 78). This is echoed in the Secrets of Enoch *"anoint him (Enoch) . . . and put him into the garments of My glory"* (LBB / FBE 2: 89); and the Odes of Solomon *"put on therefore the name of the Most High, and know Him, and you shall cross without danger"* (2: 138). Scholem argues that this latter quote corresponds with Paul's *"put on the Lord Jesus"* (Rom.13: 14; 1974: 78; Kim is against this interpretation (1982: 253n).

Thirdly, the 'Merkabah riders' appear to be united in their mission by allegiance to a body which Jacobs describes as an *"organised fraternity"* (1990: 13 - 14). Paul could be influenced in his conception of the Church as the Body of Christ, by the reference to God's body *"a likeness as it were of a human form"* (Ezek.1: 26; Kim 1982: 10 - 11).

Fourthly, the candidates enter a state of ecstasy by calling upon the divine name and reciting hymns, e.g. the Kedushah Trisagion *"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts"* (Is.6: 3; Scholem 1974: 56). Candidates would now become 'righteous' (Mt.5: 8; Kirk 1941: 18 - 20).

The ascent or journey begins with an ascension through various halls, gates and heavens being assisted continually by mediating angels who overcome the inimical angels and who supply the necessary password, a magic name, enabling one to reach the throne. This is the mystical ascent into heaven (R. Hepburn 1967: 5: 423).

2.1.8.2 Ascent - Descent Model

According to Bakan the Merkabah ride is a *"grave matter of the highest*

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relationship between divinity and humanity" (1975: 199).

The apocryphal Ascension of Isaiah, probably a Jewish work with Christian additions of AD 150 (see ODCC 715 - 716) provides the elements of the Merkabah ascent (see Tabor 1986: 87).

1. A mortal is taken up to the highest heaven.

2. The ascent is an extraordinary privilege.

3. The way is fraught with danger and can only be successfully undertaken through divine permission and power.

4. There is a great distance between the earthly and heavenly realms with increasing beauty and splendour (or danger for the uninvited) as one moves up, and an increasing sense of alienation from the world below.

5. The ascent is a transforming experience in which the candidate is progressively glorified.

6. The climax of the journey is an encounter with the highest god.

7. One is given secret revelations, or shown mysteries.

8. The ascent is followed by a return to the world below to live on as a mortal.

9. What is seen and heard can be selectively passed on to those who are worthy.

10. The one who has ascended faces the opposition of lower spiritual powers after returning.

This journey can include a descent to where the dead are and where punishment takes place (see 1Enoch 12 - 36; Hengel 1991: 204).

One element missing in this model is the assistance given by ministering angels, the foremost of whom is Metatron, of whom we shall now make a study.

Obviously this ascent to heaven owes its origin to both Enoch and Elijah whom God chose to take to Heaven before they died on earth (Gen.5: 24; 2Kg.2: 11). Enoch is taken up by faith, we are told (Heb.11: 5), while Elijah later at Jesus' transfiguration reappears on earth (Mt.17: 3). Enoch and Elijah are often associated in apocalyptic literature. The many similarities in the lives of Elijah and Paul should also be noted.

2.1.8.3 Metatron

Metatron is a human being now superior to angels who can assist candidates in

their contests with inimical angels (see P. Alexander 1983: 1: 244). In 3Enoch 3 - 16 Enoch is identified with Metatron (Dunn 1989: 17). Out of all the possible explanations of the name Metatron, the most favoured is 'meta Thronon, behind the Throne' (Muller 1946: 53; Segal 1990: 43). Segal suggests that 'Synthronos', the original Hellenistic term, was softened into 'metathronos' to indicate inferiority.

He has several names - Prince of the Presence, Prince of the world, and the lesser Yahweh.[1] Ex.23: 20 - 21 is applied to him *"behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place which I have prepared . . .for my name is in him"*. His activities include being 'the scribe of the divine court', 'the keeper of celestial secrets', and 'the heavenly archetype of man' (Cohn - Sherbok 1992: 359). For fear of being accused of dualism, the position of Metatron is softened as also is Enoch's glorification (see P. Alexander 1983: 1: 235; Dunn 1989: 315n).

It is significant that Enoch is identified with Metatron when he ascends to the heavens, and if he here typifies the mystic's ecstatic experience, does the mystic then also share in Enoch's measure of deification? Support for this comes from the belief that the divine Spirit of Adam, the first spiritual being comes from Heaven to join the spirit of other righteous persons including Enoch. This theory can only be called speculative (see Spencer 1966: 180).

From the beginning even before God's command of Ex.33: 20, a great gulf is fixed between divinity and humanity, e.g. in the Merkabah texts God is pictured as dwelling in the seventh palace in the seventh heaven, and *"the distances between the different heavens are almost inconceivably vast"* (P. Alexander 1983: 1: 241). Nevertheless God is continually present in His creation working out His plan for humanity (F. Happold 1970: 109). We may say therefore that God is both necessarily transcendent (W. Davies 1962: 706) and immanent. This must be true for the immanence of God is a sine qua non for mysticism - *"the implanting of the Divine life within the human soul"* (Jacobs 1973: 63).

While the Merkabah is orthodox with respect to the Torah, ecstatic experiences

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[1]The numerical value of the Hebrew letters equals that of God's name Shaddai therefore deity exists in him (Graef 1966: 26; Dunn 1989: 17)

and revelations could pose a threat to the authority and sufficiency of the Torah, which is another factor affecting the development of Jewish mysticism (see P. Alexander 1983: 1: 234). On the other hand, as has already been suggested, the riders could bring new life to the practical side of the Torah being themselves experienced in the law (Carmody 1996: 152). In view of this the Rabbis could wish to keep the Merkabah mysticism alive for as long as possible (P. Alexander 1983: 1: 239).

2.1.8.4 Conclusion

Merkabah mysticism is derived from visions experienced principally by Ezekiel and Isaiah. It links prophecy with the apocalyptic and God's transcendence with His immanence[1]. It becomes central to Jewish mysticism and lasts about 1 000 years. It must be emphasised that Maase Merkabah was very highly respected by the educated authorities. No abuse of any nature was permitted lest heresy be involved (see G. Moore 1966: 1: 384). Furthermore its importance must not be underestimated. It promised immortality, and therefore periodic ascents were encouraged giving the Merkabah a prominent place in ancient life (see McGinn 1992: 14).

Two models are formed, the first being 'Initiatory', the second being 'Ascent - Descent'.

The Initiatory model parallels Christian baptism with its four elements - preparation and exorcism, putting on the name, joining the body, entering a state of ecstasy.

The Ascent - Descent model has eleven elements. Of particular importance in the ride is the Messianic figure of Metatron mediating between divinity and humanity, having prepared the ascent for Merkabah riders mystically to follow.

Jewish Merkabah mysticism with its experiences and revelations cannot play its full role principally because of the predisposition of the Rabbis towards the legal and exegetical. Thus there is no real union with the divine, but simply a vision. A vision however might be considered a type of union, e.g. ecstatic. The concept of union will be

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[1]Surprisingly Scholem finds virtually no immanence of God in Merkabah mysticism while Jacobs following Abelson finds belief in the immanence of God to be an essential part of Rabbinic Judaism (Scholem 1974: 55; Jacobs 1973: 63).

studied later. On a minor scale therefore it resorts to the practice of magic and theurgy.

Merkabah mysticism's role is to enable riders to: -

1. See the divine on God's throne (cf. 2Kg.6: 17) with the hope that this vision will be revealed to all the righteous; (Mt.5: 8).

2. Enter into the presence of the divine.

3. Receive comfort and reassurance.

4. Facilitate the work of the Rabbis.

Paul's Merkabah experiences give him inspiration for his Gospel to all the nations (see Morray - Jones 1993: 291 - 292; 2Cor.12: 1 - 4).

2.1.9 Apocalyptic Mysticism Model

Scholars agree that the apocalyptic period lasts from about 200 BC to about AD 200, a period of extraordinary change, principally through the life of Jesus Christ, and also through the lives of the apostles including Paul. Judaism is under influences from many directions - Hellenistic, Iranian, Babylonian, Mesopotamian and the Orient (see Pierre Grelot 1975: 18 - 19).

We shall enquire here about any influence apocalyptic might have upon mysticism and upon Paul, and shall attempt to construct a model of apocalyptic mysticism. After defining apocalyptic and looking at its literature we shall examine its origin and contents and thereby arrive at its mystic model.

2.1.9.1 Definition

Ringgren's definition of apocalyptic is essentially basic - *"speculation which often in allegorical form . . . aims to interpret the course of history and to reveal the end of the world"* (see Klaus Koch 1972: 33).

From this definition we may deduce that apocalyptic follows after prophecy. In fact the line of succession, according to Edward Bicknell (1928: 309), shows four 'ages' each having its own literary style and in succession one to another, i.e. prophecy is followed by legalism, which is followed by wisdom which is followed by apocalyptic. 'Speculation' takes the form of revelation through dreams and visions which are given and interpreted to human beings by angels (see McGinn 1992: 10; David Aune 1993:

27). These revelations are recorded in apocalypses. Thus we may also with Pierre Grelot define apocalyptic as *"the form taken by the literature of revelation in Judaism from the second century BC "* (1975: 16). McGinn gives a definition with more depth - apocalyptic is that *"in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient describing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, in so far as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial in so far as it involves another supernatural world"*. These revelations may be received *"in dreams, visions, by the soul leaving the body or by the body either in this life or after resurrection, "* (e.g. Dan.7 - 12; Zech.1 - 6; McGinn 1992: 14; Aune 1993: 27).

2.1.9.2 Apocalyptic Literature

The beginnings of apocalyptic literature may be found in the prophetic writings, (e.g. Joel 2; Is. 65; Ezek 38, 39) with their 'day of the Lord' references, but Daniel marks real apocalyptic writing (see ODCC 69). 2Esdras and the Revelation to John may also be regarded as apocalyptic (Morton Enslin 1972: 1106, 1109). Outside of the Bible Segal finds that *"the apocalyptic and pseudepigraphical literature is vast, with an enormous variety of ascension accounts, many different concepts (and perhaps techniques) of spiritual journeys"* (1990: 39).

It is significant that during this period, from the second century BC the Hebrew Bible is being formed as God's word moves from an oral to a written medium, and thereby the sacred text begins to reveal deeper mystical meanings (see McGinn 1992: 11). Only since the 1970's is critical attention being given to apocalypses as a separate literary genre and to their role in Jewish and in Christian mysticism.

These apocalypses are written by both Jewish and Christian writers pseudonomously. The authors here use the names of past heroes, e.g. Enoch, Abraham, Isaac instead of their own names for various reasons amongst which are the following: -

1.	The revelation of the law is considered complete and nothing further is accepted unless it is a new revelation from God bearing the name of a past hero;

2.	The apocalypse is sealed by the author until a certain directed time, and indication that the End is near (D.S. Russell 1970: 114);

3.	The apocalypse is the work of a traditional school of apocalyptists and might be

traced back to an early hero, cf. I *"spoke to Moses . . . I told him many wondrous things, and showed him the secrets of the times and declared to him the end of the times. Then I commanded him, saying, 'these words you shall publish openly, and these you shall keep secret'"* (2Esdras 14: 3 - 6; D.S. Russell 1970: 116 - 117);

4.   To show that prophecies are fulfilled;

5.   To avoid persecution by higher authorities (see ODCC: 69; McGinn 1992: 10; H - R Weber 1989: 40; Stuhlmueller 1968: 343).

2.1.9.3 Origin of the Apocalyptic

In the apocalyptic period Jewish mysticism begins to flourish, in fact mysticism is central to the apocalyptic (see Segal 1990: 165). The apocalypses first describe resurrection from the dead, (e.g. Dan 12: 2; 1Enoch 51: 1 - 5; see McGinn 1992: 18), and show that God is no longer confined to the Temple or to Palestine.

Several factors appear to be uppermost in the minds of the Jewish people as the apocalyptic age dawns. The effects of the exile and their being dominated by a foreign land, together with a mistrust of military oppression, help to instill a feeling of hopelessness. Hellenistic influences, varied and overwhelming as they are, bring confusion. The overwhelming power of Rome invading almost all aspects of daily life is difficult to contend with. Thus one understands their wish for a dramatic intervention by God to bring a new order, and to restore the Jewish identity which is now tarnished (see Aune 1993: 25 - 26; D.S. Russell 1970: 17). Hengel rightly points out the need here for the Jewish people to escape from the glorification of the past and the 'praise of the fathers', and to find a new future in tune with God's plan for them (Hengel 1974: 1: 194). Their expectation of the end plays a vital part in shaping their future - for a new religious movement is appearing. More than this - a new age is dawning as Paul reminds his readers (Rom.12: 2; 1Cor.1: 20; 2: 6, 8; see Victor Furnish 1968: 115).

Jews then and now may consider the present age to be really evil, but they also look forward to a future age, a golden age, which will come through the 'day of the Lord'. Thus many apocalypses are written during times of suffering for Israel, while at

the same time revealing the terror and destruction of the day of the Lord,[1] God's intervention in history, and, His ushering in for His people a new age of peace and prosperity (see Barclay 1974: 157, 161, 162; Furnish 1968: 115; Dunn 1993: 49; Gal.1: 4; 1Cor.2: 6 - 8; 2Cor.4: 4; 5: 17; Rom.8: 19 - 22; 2Esdras 4: 6 - 9). The crucial factor in this division as we shall see later is that *"the transition has already been made in effect for those in Christ"* (see Dunn 1993: 49; Stuhlmueller 1968: 343).

2.1.9.4 The Content of Apocalyptic

The subject matter of these apocalypses ranges over a wide variety of mysteries which may be classified as relating firstly to God and to heaven; secondly to God's plan for His creation; and thirdly to His plan for humanity (see P.M. Galopin and P. Grelot 1973: 16). We shall now examine these mysteries.

1.   God and Heaven

One of the goals of Jewish mysticism, as already noted in our study of Jewish and Merkabah mysticism above is to see God. This is particularly true of Merkabah mysticism, which arises from the theophanies given for example to Ezekiel and Isaiah (cf. 2Cor.12: 1 - 4). In the heavenly world we find hosts of angels surrounding God, and also demons in constant warfare with the angels (cf. Dan.10: 13; 2Cor.10: 3 - 4; Eph.6: 11 - 12). A form of dualism is apparent here; but in everything God is supreme, and in perfect control (Galopin and Grelot 1973: 17).

2.   God's Plan for His Creation

As prophecy, which has always been partly mystical, ceases [2] in Israel, a new written form of revelation, the apocalyptic, which is also in part mystical, takes its place (see Harold Rowley 1962: 484). In marked contrast to prophecy the apocalyptic stresses the symbolic, the global and especially the cosmic (see Stuhlmueller 1968: 343).

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[1]Here is a revelation of what can be expected on the day of the Lord: - *"earthquakes, tumult of peoples, intrigues of nations"* (2Esdras 9: 3) *"they shall plan to make war against one another, city against city . . ."* (2Esdras 13: 31).
[2]Texts showing the cessation of prophecy - Ps.74: 9; Lam.2: 9; Ezek.7: 26; Zech.13: 2 - 6; 1Macc 4: 46.

God's presence, the shekinah, is now found not only in the Temple as before, but all over the world and beyond it (McGinn 1992: 16 - 17).

In apocalyptic God reveals his plans to His mystics or seers usually by angels through dreams, visions or ascents of the type described in Merkabah mysticism. The 'interpreting angel' often figures in Jewish apocalypses giving interpretations of dreams and visions and also giving spiritual guidance (see Dan.7 - 12; Zech.1 - 6; Aune 1993: 25). God's plan is both temporal involving eschatological salvation, and spatial involving another spiritual world (see McGinn 1992: 14; Spencer 1966: 176). Eschatology plays a part in all the apocalyptic, but Harold Rowley rightly makes a valid distinction between the two, implying that when as expected, God acts apocalyptically to end history, then He will be the *"sole significant actor, God's perfect will inaugurates the Golden Age"*, (Rowley 1962: 484). Thus Aune contrasts prophecy as seeing the future arising out of the present, while apocalyptic eschatology sees the future breaking into the present (1993: 26). Perhaps the ministry of Ezekiel, who is called the father of Judaism, is the turning point; for in it Jerusalem falls (587 BC) as also does the kingdom and the threefold union of prophet, priest and king. Thus prophecy mystically becomes apocalyptic and God's transcendence in a sense becomes immanent (see Arnold Tkacik 1968: 344; C. Morray - Jones 1993: 184).

Recent work by scholars (including Ithamar Gruenwald and Segal) shows the close link, if not the identity as Segal claims, between apocalyptic and Jewish mysticism, especially Merkabah mysticism, (Segal 1990: 34, 38, 39, 267; Kreitzer 1993: 266; McGinn 1992: 20; 4Ezra 5: 24 - 26).

References to a mediator in the Old Testament from Gen.3: 15 onwards and including Dan.3: 25; 7: 13 are often seen by Christians as referring to Jesus, Son of God. There can be no certainty here and scholars like Moss may be speculating. As Moss points out, however, such an attitude is presumptuous; the most we can say is when they write *"such passages prepared the way for the full Christian revelation, but were not themselves early instances of the revelation"* (Moss 1961: 38).

Throughout the apocalyptic literature we find this hope for the coming Messiah, although it is expressed in a wide variety of ways (see Rowley 1962: 488). Various names are given to Messianic figures, e.g. Melchizedek and Metatron (see our study of

Merkabah mysticism above). Scholars are not unanimous in believing that Jesus plays a part in the apocalyptic tradition, e.g. Klaus Koch following W. Davies maintains that: -

A.   Jesus stresses ethics which is not connected with apocalyptic,

B.   Jesus' eschatological ideas come from the Old Testament not from the apocalypses, and

C.   Jesus is not an apocalyptic visionary but a rabbi (1972: 55).

J. Ziesler rightly answers these objections by pointing out the connections between Jesus and the apocalyptic not only in Qumran and 2Esdras but also in Paul (1990: 30). Paul refers to Jesus in several of his brief apocalypses.[1]

The coming of the Messiah is expected to herald according to God's plan the end of the old age and the beginning of the new. In Jesus, the Messiah therefore appears as the first fruits of the resurrection of the dead (1Cor.15: 23), the beginning of the last days of the world (Ziesler 1990: 30). Scholem expresses it well *"the secret lore of the Jewish mystics becomes the universal knowledge of the Messianic age"* (1974: 72); or as Bultmann puts it *"Jesus takes over the apocalyptic picture of the future . . . but what are the signs of the times? He himself, His presence, His deeds, His message!"* (1952: 1: 6, 7; Mt.11: 5). G. Bornkamm has a similar claim, i.e. what apocalyptic looks for is already present in the gospel (1971: 115).

3.   God's Plan for Humanity through His Spirit and Wisdom

The mysteries of God's plan for humanity are varied, and we shall now look at these against their background of hope and expectation (Ziesler 1990: 9 - 10; Rom.5: 2).

A fundamental purpose of the apocalyptic writings is to encourage and strengthen those who are in times of war or of difficulty, e.g. Daniel encourages the Jews being persecuted by Antiochus Epiphanes (167 - 164BC) (OAB: 1067; Morton Enslin 1964: 30). Hope is the essence of the apocalyptic and it lies in a revelation of God's plan for deliverance (Ziesler 1990: 9 - 10; cf. Rom.5: 2; 1Cor.6: 9 - 10; Gal.5: 21).

During this period the Jerusalem priests and non - priests shared new apocalyptic

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[1]E.g. 1Th.1: 9 - 10; 3: 13; 4: 13 - 18; 5: 23; 2Th.1: 5 - 12; 2: 1 - 12 (the 'Pauline apocalypse'); 1Cor.15: 51 - 57 (see Aune 1993: 31).

beliefs, e.g. in angels and in the resurrection (Stuhlmueller 1968: 343). God is found to be present everywhere, not only in the Temple; and thus the way is opened for the acceptance of Jewish and Christian mystics (McGinn 1992: 17).

While waiting for God to intervene (see R.B. Wright in J. Charlesworth1985: 2: 646), the apocalypses bring comfort and consolation (Beker 1980: 141). The literature brings ideas of rewards and punishment, of ministering angels, of resurrection and personal immortality (see Edwyn Bevan 1928: 7), and eternal fellowship with a living God (D. Russell 1970: 150).

At the same time however the consciousness of the birth of this new religious movement brings divisions - the priestly Sadducees are being separated from the lay, law - abiding Pharisees (see Stuhlmueller 1968: 342; Hengel 1974: 1: 253) and the saved are being separated from the damned (see Segal 1990: 160).

God here appears to be ministering to His people through various mediators, e.g. angels; word; wisdom and spirit as our study above of Jewish mysticism shows, thereby revealing His plans for them (see Hengel 1974: 1: 194; Ziesler 1990: 9 - 10). The apocalyptists truly believe they are commissioned and equipped by God to explain the purpose and meaning of God's plans for the world (D. Russell 1970: 97; William Oesterley 1928: 41).

4.   Conclusion

The apocalyptic gives humanity a glimpse into the spirit world where, as Paul confirms (Eph.6: 12) the real battles take place *"against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places"*. Ministering angels continually assist human beings in the interpretation of dreams and visions and empower them, thereby prefiguring the work of the Holy Spirit after Pentecost (see the Merkabah mysticism study above, also Aune 1993: 33; Dan.7 - 12; Zech.1 - 6).

There is a close union between Jewish mysticism, of which Merkabah mysticism is a part, and the apocalyptic, bearing in mind the difference in medium, i.e. meditation vs. writing. More importantly humanity, through the mediation of Messianic figures and of angels, is reaching into the spirit world into a new age and a new kingdom seeking union with God. Thus Paul after his vision of Jesus on the Damascus road knows that

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from now on the only way to God is through Christ. This is the foundation stone of our model of apocalyptic mysticism, a dualism which must be seen as both in time and in space.

The second element in our model is the expectation of God's reign on earth. God is always present with His people in an unlimited variety of ways. With the cessation of prophecy apocalyptic takes over, and the apocalypses with their deep mystical implications continually reinforce the divine advent expectation (see Segal 1990: 38). Eminent apocalyptists receive and interpret these revelations, with the aid of angels, continually encouraging the community, oppressed as they are, in their apparently hopeless situation. Stuhlmueller is probably right in stating that *"extreme apocalyptic contributed to the great Jewish revolts of AD 60 - 66 and 132 - 135"*, the latter being led by Bar - Kokhba (1968: 343). The Jews are involved in much warfare since Daniel's time, and the books of Maccabees describe their struggle for religious freedom and political independence, until the revolt of Bar - Kokhba (see Julian Morgenstern 1964: 460). So Hengel can describe this period as *"largely one of blood and tears"* (1974: 1: 194).

The third element in this model of apocalyptic mysticism is that 'the day of the Lord', (which is prophesied about several times in both Testaments) is near. This phrase heralds the second coming of Christ, which Barclay questionably regards as *"the most important doctrine in the Christian faith"*, noting that it is emphasised by Paul in all his letters, except Galatians and possibly Ephesians, as an essential part of the gospel (1972: 156, 164). We interpret the day of the Lord as beginning with the second coming of Christ which will be our focal point. What other events the day may include lie beyond the limits of our study.

In 1Th.4 probably his earliest letter, Paul first exhorts his readers in the Lord Jesus to please God more and more than they are doing (v.1). He goes on to describe how Christ will come again (see Dake 1992: 227): -

A.   *"The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God"* (v.16a; Jn.14: 1 - 3; 1Cor.15: 23). *"Jesus . . . will bring with him those who have fallen asleep (v.14), who will be given a glorious body in place of their lowly body"* (Phil.3: 21; 1Cor.15: 51 -

58).

B.   *"The dead in Christ will rise first"* (v.16; cf.Jn.5: 28 - 29 *"all who are in the*
tombs will hear his voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection
of life . . .").

C.   *"Then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in*
the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; so we shall always be with the Lord" (v.17).
When Christ comes in the clouds, believers will be given resurrection bodies, as the dead
in Christ were first given, and will rise up to meet Christ, i.e. *"When Christ who is our*
life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory" (Col.3: 4).

Jesus promises to prepare a place for all who believe in Him, and to take them to
Himself that where He is they may be also (Jn.14: 1 - 3). *"In Christ shall all be made*
alive . . . Christ the first - fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ"
(1Cor.15: 22 - 23).

The Thessalonian Christians expect Christ to return soon and they therefore ask
Paul to explain what happens to believers who die before the second coming. Barclay
well summarises Paul's reply *"the man who has lived and died in Christ is still in Christ*
even in death and will rise in him. Between Christ and the man who loves him there is a
relationship which nothing can break, a relationship which overpasses death" (1981:
203). The mystical content of the second coming event that is of the day of the Lord is
very evident. Scholars will never know when or how the world will end, but there is no
doubt about everlasting life in heaven for believers (D. Russell 1970: 150). After the
first coming of Christ Christians continually long for his second coming, and thus the
New Testament closes with the expectation *"Come, Lord Jesus!"* (Rev.22: 20).

In view of the role apocalyptic plays in both Jewish and Christian history further
investigation seems to be necessary here. James Stewart sounds hasty in claiming that
the influence of apocalyptic is 'overrated' (1952: 45). Apocalyptic's work in preparing
the way for the coming of Christ (see Oesterley 1928: 19) is extensive, as also is its role
as a source for Christian theology (H. - R. Weber 1989: 147). Equally important is D.
Russell's claim, which has much merit but which needs confirmation *"that tradition of*
apocalyptic is in fact Christian and not Jewish" (1970: 33).

2.1.10 Conclusion

Beginning with the 'divine spark' God places in every person we trace the development of Jewish mysticism, i.e. the union between God and humanity, and more especially the Jews, His chosen people, up to the first century AD. It remains for us to construct a model of Jewish mysticism.

When considering Merkabah mysticism an 'Initiatory Model' is proposed consisting of : -

1.   Preparation,

2.   Putting on clothing and the divine name,

3.   Being united in a fellowship or fraternity, and

4.   Entering a state of ecstasy.

This model, we noted, parallels the Christian Baptism model. A second Merkabah model is also proposed: -

1.   See the divine on God's throne,

2.   Enter into the presence of the divine,

3.   Receive comfort and reassurance,

4.   Facilitate the work of the rabbis.

The model for the apocalyptic is: -

1.   Close union between Jewish mysticism and the apocalyptic,

2.   Expectation of God's reign on earth,

3.   The day of the Lord is near.

The model for the Jewish mysticism as a whole: -

1.   Belief in one God (Ex.20: 2 - 3; Dt.6: 4), who is continually immanent in human experience, and who has a special relationship with Israel,

2.   Innate desire to see God's face and to enjoy union with Him by becoming a Merkabah rider,

3.   Live a holy life in His continual presence by keeping the Torah,

4.   Anxiously await the coming of the Messiah when a complete unio mystica will be experienced, that is when God reigns on the day of the Lord.

Comment on the last model above: -

1.   *"Belief in one God who is continually immanent in human experience, and who*

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has a special relationship with Israel". This is fundamental to Judaism, as also is the great gulf fixed between creature and Creator. This belief inspires Jews to continually 'make God immanent'. Hence we find the attributes of God and other practices being personified,[1] which is in effect the exact reverse of what Judaism was trying to do by preventing anthropomorphisms of any nature in order to respect God more (Cohon 1964: 707).

2.   Innate desire to see God's face and to enjoy union with Him by becoming a Merkabah rider. Much evidence in support of this we have reviewed in Deuteronomy and in the wisdom literature. The command *"you cannot see my face; for man shall not see me and live"* (Ex.33: 20); the fear of blasphemy if the great gulf between creature and Creator was to be bridged; the secrecy required of mystic knowledge and the fact that it was morally wrong to share or to reveal mystic experiences; and the restriction of initiation into mystic practices to mature persons all help to prevent the full development of Jewish mysticism.[2] Nevertheless becoming a Merkabah rider is a goal many must be anxious to attain - at least during the one thousand year period indicated.

3.   Live a holy life in His continual presence by keeping the Torah. Jews become holy by making God's name holy, and by not desecrating it (Nachum Amsel 1994: 102; Lev.19: 2; 20: 26; 22: 32). Mysticism plays an important role in both supporting and challenging the Rabbis to interpret the Torah so as to sanctify all the dimensions of life (see Carmody 1996: 139). The better one knows the Torah the more one becomes like God.

4.   Anxiously await the coming of the Messiah when a complete unio mystica will be experienced, that is when God reigns on the day of the Lord. Scripture gives so many anthropomorphisms, circumlocutions, periphrases, and personifications or hypostases (see Emmet 1909: 844) that it is tempting to apportion each one of the personifications either to God or to the Messiah or to the Spirit, e.g. all the wisdom texts find their definitive meaning in the Messiah (Andre Barucq and Pierre Grelot 1973: 660).

Assuredly the Holy Spirit is willing to guide into all the truth (Jn.16: 13), but in

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[1]E.g. Angels, Bath Qol, Glory, Shekinah, Spirit, Torah, Wisdom, Word.
[2]See Stace 1973: 158; L. Jacobs 1990: 12; Scholem 1974: 119 - 120; Wolk 1948: 74.

the Old Testament the specific function of the Holy Spirit is *"the impartation of prophecy or of Scripture"* (see G. Moore 1966: 1: 437). This fact must be taken into account regarding our definition of mysticism. We cannot therefore add a fifth clause about being obedient to the Holy Spirit, and in any event the united community, as mentioned above, is not yet ready for such a dispensation.

This clause, however, does point to the eschatological nature of Judaism. The Merkabah journey may be likened to the final journey at the end of one's life, as also the ecstatic experiences suggest immortality. A Jewish world kingdom seems to be expected (see Acts 1: 6; Hengel 1974: 1: 313).

After the victory of Christ, Paul can no longer think of the coming of God but rather of having eschatological hope in Christ, and of the judgment on the future Day of the Lord (1Th.5: 2; Rom.2: 16; 2Tim.4: 1; Aune 1993: 33). The stage is now set for the reign of Christ's kingdom. The secret lore of the Jewish mystics is fully revealed in Christ (see Scholem 1974: 72). The apocalypses prove that God is no longer localised in the Temple or in Palestine, and the Torah is permanently preserved in Scripture, which is about to be canonised. Christian mysticism is about to take over (see McGinn 1992: 22) and its Way, its Truth, and its Life, will all be 'in Christ' (Jn.14: 6).

2.2 Dionysius' Neoplatonist Mysticism Model

Although the majority of scholars might believe that Christian Mysticism begins with Paul there appear to be some who maintain it only really begins in the sixth century with pseudo - Dionysius the Areopagite. In order to find any contribution Dionysius makes to Christian mysticism we shall build a model of his mysticism after looking first at neoplatonism and second at his theology.

Adam and Eve's initial act of disobedience to God in a sense shows humanity's search for a life fuller than that on earth. Plato (427 - 347) expresses this awareness when he contrasts this world of sense and experience with a better world of 'forms' or 'ideas', which if they can be realised, will lift humanity from a state of becoming to one of possessing (see ODCC 1101). This change involves developing the intellect and will, while at the same time keeping in mind the ultimate goal of union with the eternal. Education is thus vital, for it enables truth to enter the mind not through external but

through internal sources within each person (see Richard Tarnas 1993: 43). This appears to be the approach of the early schools of philosophy of which the neoplatonic school later becomes dominant, being sponsored by emperor Julian (331 - 363) as a rival to Christianity (D. Hamlyn 1987: 87)[1].

2.2.1 Neoplatonism

It is generally accepted that neoplatonism originates with Plotinus (c207 - 270) about 500 years after Plato and Aristotle. At this time many traditions are competing for recognition, and authority e.g. the Platonists with their three hypostases on reality which neoplatonism took over and which we shall now examine; the Aristotelians and metaphysics; the Stoics and mutual relationships; the neo - Pythagoreans and their numerical principles of unity and duality; as well as teachings from other philosophy, mystery and mythology sources (see Werner Beierwaltes 1975: 1038 - 1039). As the neoplatonists come into ascendence, their intention is not simply to combine all these source materials, but rather to establish how they relate rationally to *"union with the divine origin"*.

Porphyry (Plotinus' biographer and disciple) writes that Plotinus' aim in life was *"intimate union with the God who is above all things"*, and that he actually achieved this union four times (1952: 17: vi). Thus neoplatonism's main aim is *"to provide a sound and satisfying intellectual basis for a religious and moral life"*, in the knowledge that the dualism between thought and reality is overcome (see ODCC 960). This is to be done through a triad of three hypostases, which are neither persons nor equals i.e.:-

1. The One, First, Good, Source who is the beginning and the end, all transcendent yet immanent because containing all things;

2. The Nous, Mind, Intellect, emanating or radiating from the One, the world of ideas, patterns and forms, the image of the One. It becomes a multiplicity, and is ultimately drawn back to the One; and

3. Psyche, World - Soul, Life of all life, the second emanation from the One, links the true world of being with the world of time and space and animates the

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[1]Later in 529 the Christian emperor Justinian forbad the teaching of philosophy in schools.

sensible world. This world - soul can both reach up into the Nous world, and also reach down and take care of the cosmos with which it is identified (Graef 1966: 17).

In this structure the Good must not be seen as God, for Plotinus although he is a brilliant mystic, is a pagan (Inge: 1947: 46n; Underhill 1967: 455). Neoplatonism has been interpreted as pantheistic, (Graef 1966: 16), but it is really only a philosophic structure with which Christian doctrines and beliefs can be compared. Christians have in fact sought explanations for their spiritual experiences from neoplatonism[1].

Plotinus wrote nine Enneads explaining his teaching :- everything has something of the Good, but the Soul possesses a life, and can also possess the Good *"if it orientates itself towards the Intellectual - Principle"* (Ennead 1, 1952: 17: 26). This is a basic neoplatonic truth, which is coupled with the necessary attribute of unity, without which a thing ceases to be what it is called (Ennead 6; 1952: 17: 353). The human soul has what mystics call an 'apex' which is *"continuously in the Intellectual - Realm"*, in which there is *"complete identity of knower and Known"* (Enneads 4 and 3, 1952: 17: 203 and 133). Neoplatonism is thus very positive; the body is like a tomb in which the soul is imprisoned but when the sensory and material aspects of a person's life are ascetically discarded, and only the Good remains, then the soul is temporarily deified and returns to its true and original state by a *"flight of the alone to the Alone"* (J. Brosse 1991: 159). Thus we can understand why Plotinus seemed to be ashamed of being in a body (1952: 17: v).

Greek gods were originally non - personal, but later transformation takes place and they first become spiritualised, but were then replaced by general concepts like 'world reason', 'the divine' and 'being', which gave creation and power to the world. Similarly Hellenistic syncretism recognises the existence of the same entities who are behind the different names. Neoplatonism is thus the climax of these tendencies - the universal One has no personality or existence, but is simply the being behind all

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[1]Henry Chadwick, claims, probably correctly, that in Platonism, which is allied to neoplatonism, Christians can interpret *"the entire pattern of creation, the Fall of humanity, the incarnation, redemption, the church, sacraments and last things"* (1998: 16: 259). Hence Inge calls Plato *"the father of European mysticism"* (1948: 78).

hypostases and emanations (see Johannes Schneider 1975: 2: 66 - 67).

Reality continually emanates from the One. At the bottom of the triad the lowest degree of power is seen as matter, which for Plotinus is evil having no being or order. At the other end of the scale the higher part of the soul is enabled to contemplate and, having no evil, to become eternal (see Graef 1966: 17). This identification with the One, the source of power, is effected through the intellect and will and is achieved through reversing the negative process which ultimately leads to matter. Here we find in action the mystical basis of neoplatonism (Hamlyn 1987: 88). We shall now look at its theology as described by Dionysius.

2.2.2 The Theology of Dionysius

Dionysius' chief works are ① 'Celestial Hierarchy', the nine orders of angels mediating God to humanity; ② the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, the sacraments and the deification way of purgation, illumination and union. Platonic in origin (see Inge 1948: 9) but scriptural *"Repent and believe"* (Mk.1: 15); ③ the Divine Names, the being and attributes of the One, and ④ Mystical Theology - a brief tract on the soul's ascent to the One (see ODCC 406). In these works Dionysius uses the language of the Mysteries, hence Christianity is a 'Platonic mysteriosophy' and the neoplatonic Good becomes 'Superessential Indetermination' (see Inge 1948: 105). Union with the One is here described for the first time in clear and precise mystery and neoplatonic terms. The mystical consciousness is examined, and many of Dionysius' terms become classic in mysticism e.g. the Absolute Godhead is described as 'Divine Dark', the Unconditioned, the negation of all that is (Underhill 1967: 457).

A basic element in Dionysius' theology is that humans cannot know the One. He is, as K. Barth claims of God in his earlier work, the *"altogether Other"*. Thus Dionysius proceeds to give the One all the positive attributes; but he then takes them all away because their only positive aspect is the assurance of knowing what the One is not like. Dionysius illustrates this by referring to Moses on the mountain entering into *"the truly mysterious darkness of unknowing"*, and belonging *"completely to him who is beyond everything"*, he is supremely united by a completely *"unknowing inactivity of all knowledge, and knows beyond the mind by knowing nothing"* (1987: 137 Myst Theo 1:

3; see Bouyer 1968: 2: 413).

Since only positive things come from the One it follows that evil must have another source i.e. it must be non - being - the absence of being where it should be (see Samuel Stumpf 1999: 143). Human beings can also become evil if they lose their goodness. Evil is thus mainly negative but does contain some good.

Although the One cannot be known he can be accessed; *"since there are many who are by his gift raised, so far as they can be, to divinization, it would seem that here there is not only differentiation but actual replication of the one God"* (1987: 67; Divine Names 2, 11; see M. Cox 1983: 74 - 75). This access is not direct, but is through two kinds of hierarchy i.e. heavenly angels or the sacraments of the church. Baptism introduces humans to the *"divine existence"*, *"and prepares them for the holy combats which (they) will undertake"* in the service of the One. This is the purgative stage. The eucharist enables believers to be perfectly one in themselves and to be united to the One, being *"led by the ministrations of the priests to the stable possession of the contemplative faculty"*. This is the illuminative stage (1987: 209 - 210; Eccles. Hier 3: 1; see Graef 1966: 118 - 119).

The highest stage of the mystical life is the unitive or mystical stage which is a threefold union of the soul within itself, with the angelic powers, and finally with the One, the *"Beautiful and Good"* (Divine Names 4: 9; see Graef 1966: 120). This ultimate union is an ecstasy of the intellect, but not of love, or of ignorance rather than knowledge, for it leaves all activities behind in surrender to the *"ray of the divine darkness"* (see J. Meyendorff 1974: 27; Graef 1966: 120 - 121).

Dionysius encourages his readers to continue *"applying yourself with all your strength to mystical contemplations, abandon the senses and the intellectual energies . . .and raise yourself in unknowing towards union, . . . it is purely by a free and absolute ecstasy out of yourself that you will be carried towards the superessential ray of the divine darkness"* (Theo 1 Myst 1: 1; see Bouyer 1968: 412). Here we reach the separation point between Plotinus and Neoplatonic spirituality, and that of Dionysius. Plotinus sees God as the One beyond all human affirmations, but for Dionysius the One is even beyond the One, and is calling the soul also to go beyond itself and all knowledge, and so to transcend and *"join him in the luminous darkness where he awaits*

it" (Bouyer follows Lossky here 1968: 2: 415).

Allied to union is divinisation, the ultimate stage of the scriptural goal of uniting and making like i.e. 'henosis' leads to 'theosis' as knowing leads to being (see Bouyer 1968: 2: 416).

Before Dionysius' neoplatonist mystical model is constructed his theology must be critically examined.

Dionysius is widely influenced by Philo, Clement, Origen and, especially in his cloud and darkness theme, by Evagrius and by Gregory of Nyssa's Life of Moses (see 1968: 2: 412). Furthermore Origen (c185 - 254) who was a student with Plotinus in Alexandria, wrote the first systematic theology of the mystical life, as well as the first theology of the image - relation between God and humanity - *"the soul is an image of God because she houses the primal image of God that is the divine Word"* (Dupre 1995: 10: 251; Graef 1966: 66). Therefore if the orthodox mystical route of union with God is already clearly described it is interesting that, about 300 years later, Dionysius writes something similar attempting to relate it to neoplatonic philosophy, especially when, as he might have known, Paul specifically condemns philosophy, (Col.2: 8 *"see to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit"*). It is significant too that he writes pseudonomously giving his work a somewhat spurious authority. Dionysius' style and content is too sincere to be labelled satirical, but he seems rather to be giving the best possible 'super' account of what neoplatonism can offer as an alternative choice to Christianity, and this at a time when Christianity is fast overtaking philosophy in its mission. His works have been extraordinarily influential. Only in the sixteenth century were his writings identified with neoplatonists, and thereby their authenticity was doubted (see James Taylor 1978: 301; contra Bouyer).

Dionysius' style is obscure, unemotional and without any feeling. He gives no visions and only refers to the One very symbolically. The Persons of the Trinity seem to play no part in his mystical theology; and he suggests that mystical teaching should only be given to mature persons. Graef suggests he could have been a monophysite (1966: 117 - 121). No doubt neoplatonists were hostile because their philosophies were challenged and rejected by the historical incarnation of Christ, and by the creation now being regarded as 'ex nihilo', as opposed to the One *"enticed away from his*

transcendent dwelling place and comes to abide within all things" (1987: 82 Divine Names 4: 13).

It must be admitted however that later contributions to neoplatonism e.g. by Proclus (410 - 485) with his triad of subsistence - procession - return, each degree of which is identified with a godhead, ontologically equate philosophy with theology (see Beierwaltes 1975: 1040 - 1041).

The two main pillars of his writings are first, the union between divinity and humanity, and second, the deification of those who progressively turn away from the material and sensory side of life. There is no fusion here because the soul continues to exist even after deification (see Kenneth Latourette 1964: 210). In summary humanity *"belongs to God and is one with him"*, but is exiled in matter and needs to be purified to return to the One, its source (see Enneads vi, 9).

Underhill accurately describes neoplatonism as a *"confused, semi - religious philosophy containing many inconsistent elements, appearing . . . before Christianity had conquered the educated world"*, and having a *"strong appeal to the spiritually minded; and also to those who hankered after the mysterious and the occult"* (1967: 455 - 456).

Apophatic or negative theology could be justified to predicate God's mystery or attributes (energies which penetrate the universe), or to express supersensitive inner and transitory experiences e.g. of darkness clearer than light, but with a qualification (see Smart 1972: 425; Underhill 1967: 17). By itself, as often happens, it has no substance unless combined with a corresponding cataphatic theology (Bouyer 1968: 2: 414). It is therefore condemned by many scholars (see Inge 1948: 111; Kirk 1941: 303n). Similarly Underhill sees the negative approach *"as involving belief in annihilism rather than transformation of self in God"*; and M. Cox calls Dionysius' speculations *"potentially inimical to the true spirit of Christian mysticism"* (see M. Cox 1983: 38).

Mystics and others are sometimes guilty of calling an experience 'ineffable' and then proceeding to describe it! Similarly Dionysius writes that the One is *"the cause of all things and yet Itself is nothing because it superessentially transcends them all"* (Divine Names 1, 5). If he means that the One is neither existent nor nonexistent but superexistent, then the One cannot 'cause' anything (W. Stace 1973: 290). Complete

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ineffability cannot be accepted. The answer lies not in exhaustive explanation but in the use of analogies which broaden the reader's understanding (see M. Corduan 1991: 96).

2.2.3   Mysticism Model

The foundation stone of Dionysius' neoplatonic mysticism model is the *"primordial union of the soul with God"* which enables the soul to be guided as it moves towards its goal of union and deification. The material and sensory world continually attempts to prevent the soul's ascent, hence the need for constant action against evil forces (see Dupre 1987: 10: 251 - 252).

The structure of the model is Dionysius's three - fold progress pattern which is scriptural and probably borrowed from Origen, i.e. purgation,illumination and union, illustrated respectively by baptism, eucharist and deification. In his preface to Dionysius' works Rene Roques points out that for Dionysius all reality is both hierarchic and triadic. His works are very influential spiritually.

Until the early church formulates its doctrines and protects itself against heresies it uses Platonic and neoplatonic terms which, where applicable, will later be Christianised (see Louth 1981: 198). It seems true to see philosophy as a preparation for the gospel for the Greeks in contrast to the law as a preparation for the gospel for the Jews (see John Hick 1998: 16: 324).

In conclusion Dionysius meets the need of many God - seekers at a time when the Patristic age is ending and the Greek gods are all being personalised. He offers a model of mysticism, which the Lateran Council of 649 approves, showing that God can only be described negatively or symbolically, but His perfections are available through various hierarchies. As a pagan theologian Dionysius' work is commendable, and many are carried away by his systematic thinking, but he gives his model no life or love, by ignoring the incarnation.

2.3   Synderesis Mysticism Model

The two mystical models already examined relate to the history of mysticism, the synderesis mysticism model we shall now construct relates to anthropology. Medical research is making tremendous advances particularly in the field of genetics, but also, as

indicated above, in neurology, the human brain's link to spiritual thoughts. Paul writes to the Galatians that he is *"again in travail until Christ be formed in you!"* (Gal. 4: 19). This spiritual birth will be referred to when we examine all the relevant parts of human nature especially the spark or apex of the soul which is called synderesis. A study will also be described of several mystics and their synderesis experiences, which in some way reunite them with God.

2.3.1   Human Nature

Human beings resemble other animals in having a soul, but differ from them in having a spirit. It is this spirit that 'died', as God said it would (Gen.2: 17) when Adam and Eve's disobedience caused the Fall. Partly as a result of systematisation and Greek influence, the Trinitarian nature of the human being came to be accepted. Thus Paul writes of body, soul and spirit (1Th.5: 23), which we shall consider in that order, bearing in mind the holistic nature of the human being, which cannot adequately be described in scientific terms (Rahner 1975: 1223). It could be that because the Church does not yet appear to agree upon a doctrine of human nature, psychiatrists and psychologists, amongst others, try to fill the gap - with questionable results (e.g. Sigmund Freud's id, ego and superego; Eric Berne's child, adult and parent).

At the outset it must be realised that the moment people believe in Christ by faith, and confess that Jesus is Lord (Rom.10: 9), they are crucified with Christ and no longer live, but Christ lives in them (Gal.2: 20). Their bodies become temples of the Holy Spirit within them. They are not their own; they are bought with a price (1Cor.6: 19 - 20), and are therefore members of Christ (1Cor.6: 15). Thus, when Paul writes *"may the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"*, he means that God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - dwells throughout the human being's nature - body, soul and spirit. Believers are new creations 'in Christ', united to the Lord, and have become one spirit with Him (see Morphew 1996: 30 - 31; 2Cor.5: 17; 1Cor.6: 17). In short, human beings as believers have entered into the realm of the Spirit, for faith is from God and in the Spirit (1Cor.2: 10 - 13; see Josef Sudbrack 1975: 1623).

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2.3.1.1 Body

Significantly in the New Testament, almost every reference to the natural body is negative, - e.g. Paul pommels his body (1Cor.9: 27); believers are being changed into his likeness (2Cor.3: 18); their outer nature is wasting away (2Cor.4: 16) and *"if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed . . ."* (2Cor.5: 1). Bultmann correctly discerns that humans are called 'soma' in respect of their being able to make themselves the objects of their own actions or to experience themselves as the subjects to whom something happens (1952: 1: 195). God gives them authority over their body, to control and to direct it. He wants them to realise that their bodies are *" not meant for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body"*, that *"it is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body"* (1Cor.6: 13; 15: 44).

In essence, the human body merges into the body of Christ, and then its purpose is achieved corporately, if not completely individually .[1] *"We are members of His body"* (Eph.5: 30).

It is the power of the Spirit that holds together in unity the body and its members (Eph.4: 3). On the eve of His passion Jesus said to His disciples *"it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counsellor will not come to you"*.[2]

2.3.1.2 Soul

The soul is the form of the body, or the self or person potentially having life within it, i.e. the seat of the personality's intellect or mind, emotions and will (Bultmann 1952: 1: 203- 205). Deut.13: 3 *". . . whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul"*, expresses the soul as uniting all the person's processes. It does not seem necessary here to study human intelligence.

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[1] Arnold Bittlinger comments that this change as described in the extra - canonical writings is not into Christ but into a social structure (1973: 55; 1Cor.12: 27).

[2] Jn.7: 3; Maurice Zundel writes expressively Jesus' *"humanity had in fact become a snare to them. The body which hid Him from their soul must be removed from their sight; this body to which though it was in the highest degree spiritual, their carnal ambitions clung to so obstinately"* (1945: 126).

1. Mind

Solomon's words are relevant (AV) *"as he thinketh in his heart, so is he"* (Prov.23: 7). No doubt remembering God's words to Isaiah (55: 8 - 9) Paul could write *"but we have the mind of Christ"* (1Cor.2: 16). He therefore encourages his readers (no less than six times) to *"be of the same mind"*, and to renew their minds that they *"may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect"* (Phil.2: 2; Rom.12: 2).

Obviously the more one's mind is renewed, the purer it will become. James Pratt in his excellent, though dated, psychological study, notes how several mystics cease thinking in order to achieve union with God, e.g. Meister Eckhart *"the emptier your mind, the more susceptible are you to the working of his influence"* (1959: 414). The important condition behind this process is identified by von Hügel *"only with the entrance of faith and its consequences into the mind and will of man, does this transcendent Spirit become an immanent principle: through His Spirit that dwelleth in you"* (Rom.8: 11; von Hügel 1961: 2: 321).

2. Heart

The *"new heart"* promised by God through Ezekiel (36: 26) came by Jesus Christ; but, sadly, this was not realised, as Isaiah had prophesied, and, to confirm this, Isaiah's words are quoted by both Jesus and Paul *"for this people's heart has grown dull . . . lest they should . . . understand with their heart . . . "* (Isa.6: 9 - 10; Mt.13: 14 - 15; Acts 28: 26 - 27). Principally because of its central position in the body, and its vital functions, the heart used to be regarded, as Bultmann agrees, *"to describe the self as a willing, planning, intending self"*: (2Cor.3: 14 - 15; Phil.4: 7) the word 'heart' is largely synonymous with 'nous' and is mainly used as a personal pronoun (Bultmann 1952: 1: 220 - 221; Ridderbos 1977: 119).

Certain Pentecostals believe scripture associates the Spirit with the heart, (see Rea 1974: 37; K. Hagin 1981: 3) but for the purpose of this study we need only note that the heart appears to be the controlling centre of personality, either to make its own decisions or to accept decisions made outside itself, which could well be functions of the human spirit (Bultmann 1952: 1: 338; quotes Gal.4: 6; 2Cor.1: 22; Rom.5: 5; cf. 8: 27 in

support of the Spirit received by the heart).

3. Will

James Hadfield defines the human will as *"the organized self in function, the self in movement"* (1955: 83). Free will is no doubt one of the most powerful gifts God has given us. Augustine is reputed to have prayed to God, *"command what Thou wilt, and will what Thou commandest"*. The human life - long task would therefore be to control the human will so that it conforms to, or becomes, the divine will. This union of wills, Watchman Nee claims is the *"most perfect union"* (1968: 3: 82 - 83). Similarly Sanday and Headlam describe union with Christ as *"an intense personal apprehension of Christ as Master, Redeemer, Lord, so persistent, so absorbing, so dominating that it comes to mean little less than actual identification of will"* (1971: 162). Both Teresa (1980: 2: 349) and John of the Cross (1964: 1: 243: 244) write of union with God as being union of will.

2.3.1.3 Spirit

Since, according to Bultmann, spirit is mainly synonymous with soul, life and self, and can also be described as nous, psyche and consciousness, and indeed the whole person (1Cor.16: 18), what is vital to know when the word is used, is the particular aspect of humanity which is being referred to (Bultmann 1952: 1: 205). What Paul means by Spirit, Bultmann defines as *"the eschatological existence into what the believer is placed by having appropriated the salvation deed that occurred in Christ"* (1952: 1: 335). This, however, does not go far enough. In fact it might well be a definition of baptism. A better definition of spirit is *"the intelligent and immaterial part of man or the human soul in general, whether united with the body in life or separated from it in death, and especially that aspect of it which is concerned with religious truth and action and is directly susceptible to Divine influence"* (ODCC: 1300). Without this 'Divine influence' how could, for example, *"the Spirit lead us into all truth?"* (Jn.16: 13). To write, however, as Bultmann does, that 1Cor.12 - 14 and 2Cor. especially indicate existing dangers of mysticism, is surely extreme (1952: 1: 163).

As we discover when dealing with Baptism, the Holy Spirit at conversion effects

a new creation, uniting the believer in Christ like a branch in a tree (Rea 1974: 100 - 101). Thus Paul can affirm that *"he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him"*,(1Cor.6: 17), and von Hügel can rightly say, *"we are not to think of Spirit and spirit"*, *"God and the soul, as two separate entities. His Spirit works in closest association with ours"* (quoted by Underhill 1946: 55).

This corporal as opposed to corporate union is well described by Fitzmyer as 'mystical' - *"the ontological reality that is the basis of the union is the possession of the Spirit of Christ"* (1968: 824). *"For by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body"* (1Cor.12: 13).

2.3.2   Synderesis / Synteresis

It is a fundamental truth that *"God is in all things by His essence, power, and presence, according to His one common mode, as the cause existing in the effects which participate in His goodness"*. Above and beyond this common mode, however, there is one special mode, belonging to the rational nature wherein God is said to be present as the object known is in the knower, and the beloved in the lover. And since the rational creature by its operation of knowledge and love attains to God Himself, according to this special mode God is said *"not only to exist in the rational creature but also to dwell therein as in His own temple"* (Aquinas ST: 1: 22; cf. St. John of the Cross 1964:1: 75).

This 'special mode' could be seen as the human spirit or as the *"apex of the mind"*; a concept arising in the *"Middle Ages"*, a spark which is consubstantial with the uncreated ground of the *"Deity"*, (see Inge 1948: 7). Through faith and baptism the Spirit comes to dwell in and guide the believer. There is a link between spirit and Spirit. We agree with Hanse (1974: 2: 819), that *"only individuals endowed with the Spirit in the Old Covenant and Christians have the Spirit . . . but only Christians . . . share in the one Spirit of God and of Christ"*. In support of this explanation the phrase 'having the Spirit' seldom appears.

Let us now take a close look at 'synderesis'. Earlier in this study we explored the meaning behind God's words *"let us make man in our image, after our likeness"* (Gen.1: 26), suggesting that the image is the endowment of the human with a spiritual nature, a meeting place between God and humanity. As expected, since we are dealing

now with something inherently mystical; a wide variety of names is given to this apex, which may be classified as : -

1.   Psychological, e.g. archetype of the divine image; subliminal consciousness, and

2.   Theological, e.g. centre, essence, ground, light or spark of the heart, mind, soul or spirit; divine immanence; supra consciousness of the spirit.

Many attempts have been made to explain synderesis, both psychological (e.g. William James and Jung), and theological (e.g. mystics and theologians from Philo onwards).

Before we pass over the psychological names as being beyond the scope of our study, a contribution by Carl Jung is relevant - *"the soul must possess some possibility of contact with God, that is, something which corresponds to the divine essence; otherwise no association could possibly have taken place. This corresponding quality described in psychological terms is the archetype of the divine image"*. As Happold clarifies, Jung regards an archetype as an organ of the 'prerational psyche', and it is associated with his attractive *"collective unconscious"* theory (1970: 50). Allied to this theory is William James' conclusion, after admitting the existence of the 'subliminal consciousness', *"the conscious person is continuous with a wider self through which saving experiences come"* (1959: 501 - 505).

2.3.2.1 Theology of Synderesis

It would appear that some of the knowledge Philo Judaeus (c 20 BC - AD 50) had was shared by Paul. Jacobs claims Philo was the first Jew, so far as we know, *"to teach that there is something divine in the human soul"* (1992: 45). A fertile, eclectic writer of philosophy, exegesis and history he gives central place to the 'Logos' as both creator and mediator between God and humanity. This view is shared by John's gospel. A deeply mystical person, he believes God really dwells in the believer, i.e. is immanent as well as being transcendent, and that the highest class of saints are those 'born of God'. His Judaism prevents him from going further into Christianity (see Inge 1948: 82 - 85; ODCC: 1083 - 1084; Underhill 1967: 454 - 455).

Divine immanence is defined as 'the omnipresence of God in His universe'. It must however, be accompanied by divine transcendence or it will be indistinguishable from pantheism (ODCC: 693, transcendence without immanence would result in deism).

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The importance of immanence would appear to be increasingly realised; for this divine element in a part of our being is not something potential, but is basal (see Inge 1948: 363). Is not Paul's encouraging claim relevant here *"therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation"* (2Cor.5: 17 - 18).

In 1969 Jacques Maritain coins the expression 'supra conscious of the spirit', which to our knowledge does not appear to have been taken up by anyone since then. He observes that psychologists focus upon human unconscious, identifying it with only the 'infra conscious' (1969: 49 - 50). There is, however, also and certainly more important, although ignored by psychiatrists, a 'supra conscious of the spirit'. Human intellect is a part of this, and inspirations come through it. It belongs to the higher part of the soul or spirit *"divinised in Christ by the Beatific Vision"* (see Underhill 1967: 304). Perhaps this theme could be given due attention by interested parties in the future. Aquinas saw synderesis as a natural habit common to everyone (1947: 1: 407), but it is doubtful if, as John Mc Neill implies, Aquinas considered it *"a residuum or remnant of man's unfallen nature"* (see 1964: 757).

There would not appear to be any connection between 'synderesis' and Paul's 'inner man' in his reference in Rom.7: 22 to *"delight in the law of God, in my inmost self"*, where conscience is ethically contrasted with passion (J. Willis 1909: 383). Nor could there be any connection in 2Cor.4: 16 where Paul contrasts outer nature with inner nature; but what about Eph.3: 16? *"That according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with might through his Spirit in the inner man, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith"* (Significantly Bultmann fails to mention this text!). We cannot, of course, answer this question, though Behm does make a valuable contribution - *"in the petition in Eph.3: 16 . . . the term (inner man) is also to be understood of man as the object of God's working or of the place in man at which the power of the Spirit meets and determines him. As used by Paul, the word always carries with it a suggestion, like the parallel 'the hidden person of the heart' in 1Pet.3: 4, of something which is concealed, and which works in concealment, in the innermost part of man"* (Behm: 1974: 2: 699). M. Barth after closely examining the context of

Paul's Eph.3: 16 text and giving sound criticism of Bultmann's anthropology concludes rightly that *"the inner man of Eph.3: 16 is Jesus Christ himself, rather than a part or function of each man's individual self"* (1974: 392).

It is significant that almost from the beginning of the Christian Church there is this belief in an apex or spark (scintilla) in human nature, perhaps in the human spirit, which serves as a point of contact between Creator and creature. This fact is proved true many times by the mystics in our study below.

2.3.2.2 Synderesis[1] in the Lives of Mystics - Table Two

It is important that this thesis has a practical side to it, for, as Trethowan aptly writes, *"theology loses its way when it forgets, either that it is God with whom it is concerned, or that it is our experience in which we find him"* (1975: 79). Accordingly a cross - sectional study of the writings of mystics over a period of about 1 500 years is made with particular reference to synderesis, the apex or *"mysterious ground of the soul where the mystic union takes place"*. Our purpose is to show how a mystic union between God and humanity takes place, assuming such a union is possible. An alphabetical list of the mystics chosen follows their writings, which are listed in chronological order of the date of death of each mystic.

1   The Views of the Mystics

Clement Of Alexandria d215 Theologian, refers in Strom 2.2. to *"Adyton (Adytum) the inaccessible sphere where the soul meets God"*. This is a sphere of darkness where God manifests Himself but cannot be seen. 'Adyton' is the innermost part of a temple, the secret shrine whence oracles were delivered (Graef 1959: 158).

Gregory of Nyssa d395 Bishop, believes the soul's eye could see the transcendent God but could not communicate what it sees. Gregory's kindred Deity doctrine suggests God's love is continually drawing each human soul to Him, because it belongs to Him (On the Soul and Resurrection) (Cox 1983: 69; cf. S of S 4: 9 *"You have*

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[1]See ODCC 1333 where the origin of the word is traced to a scribal error in Jerome's 'Commentary on Ezekiel'(on Ezek.1: 7) concerning the word for 'conscience', cf. Herman Hausheer (1964: 197 - 198). The names, dates and titles below are taken from ODCC.

ravished my heart with a glance of your eyes").

Jerome d420 Biblical Scholar, distinguishes between religion and philosophy. *"Plato located the soul of man in the head; Christ located it in the heart"* (Underhill 1967: 13). He first used *"the word Synderesis, the Scintilla Conscientia, which is not extinguished even in the worst sinners"* (Inge 1947: 45).

Augustine d430 Bishop and Doctor of the Church, relates God's image to the soul for it has the continually created power to respond to God's act which continually holds it in being as a person (De Trinitae xiv 5; Cairns 1953: 100). *"And behold, Thou wert within, and I abroad, and there I searched for thee . . . Thou touchedst me, and I burned for Thy peace"* (Confessions 10: 27; GBWW: 18: 81). Augustine holds that the mystical experience takes place in the soul's eye of the mind where its Maker is met (Graef 1959: 197).

Gregory 1 d604 Pope, believes the mystical union takes place in the eye of the mind, the highest point of the spirit *"illuminated by the resplendent flame of the uncircumscribed light"* (Graef 1966: 113 - 114).

Erigena, John Scotus d877 Philosopher, affirms that the soul can find God because at its centre the soul is God (Cox 1983: 77).

Hugh of St. Victor d1142 Theologian, sees the mystical union with the transcendent God taking place in the depths of the soul, the eye of the spirit (Graef 1966: 146).

Gallus, Thomas d1240 Theologian, maintains believers know God through the higher will (principalis affectio) (Cox 1983: 137).

Alexander of Hales d1245 Theologian, mentions 'synteresis' (Inge 1948: 360).

Bonaventure d1274 Theologian, defines synderesis as 'apex mentis seu scintilla' (Inge 1948: 360), believing that when the Holy Spirit's fire inflames one's inmost heart all intellectual activity will be left behind and the apex will be completely transformed into God (De Triplica Via 74, 76; Graef 1966: 172).

Aquinas, Thomas d1274 Theologian, states that *"all the powers of the soul are rooted in the one essence of the soul"*, i.e. in the spark (scintilla animae) or moral sense, as distinguished from the intellect (Aquinas ST: 1: 750; Inge 1948: 149, 360).

Eckhart, Meister d1327 Mystic, influenced by neoplatonism, claims that there is

a spark at the soul's centre where union between the soul and God takes place, and which is so like God that it is one with Him. Here, he says, *"God's ground is my ground, and my ground, God's ground"*. Eckhart was condemned by the church for blasphemous self - deification for his belief that this spark is 'uncreated', or, as he expresses it, *"the eye with which I see God is the same as that with which he sees me"*. This condemnation seems unjust, however, if we interpret (following Inge) the spark as really *"the grace of God, which raises us into a God - like state"*. (see Inge 1947: 45; 1948: 156 - 157, 361; von Hügel 1961: 2: 323). Elsewhere Eckhart is explicit that *"as fire turns all that it touches into itself, so the birth of the Son of God in the soul turns us into God, so that God no longer knows anything in us but His Son"* (Inge 1948:362).

Friends of God c1350 was a circle of Catholic Mystics including Eckhart, St. Hildegard, Elizabeth of Schönau, Mechthild of Magdeburg and Johann Tauler. Seeing themselves directly guided by the Holy Spirit they teach a destruction of self so that *"the Inner Light shines forth and the teaching of the Holy Spirit is directly imparted"* (Cox 1983: 103 - 106).

Theologia Germanica author unknown, written c1350 teaches a true union with God for purified, illumined believers *"When a person surrenders and abandons his own self, God enters with His own, that is His self"* (1980: 90 chapter 22). *"When true union with God takes place, deep in our being, the inner man is enduringly rooted in that union"* (1980: 97; chapter 26).[1]

The Cloud of Unknowing author unknown, published c1350 sees man *"in the higher part of the contemplative life . . . reaching above himself"*. The author commands, *"beat away at this cloud of unknowing between you and God with that sharp dart of longing love"*. Towards the end of the book the reader is congratulated, *"you are above yourself, because you have succeeded in reaching by grace what you could not achieve by nature. And that is that you are united with God, in spirit, in love, and in harmony of will . . . you and God, could be said at this time not to be two*

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[1]Cox (1983: 106 - 108) states that Martin Luther was greatly influenced by this book finding in it *"his own opposition to good works and his views on individual religion"*. See ODCC 1363. Bengt Hoffman translates this book which Luther himself published in 1518 (1980: xv; cf M. Cox 1983: 106 - 108).

spiritually but one. . . a God (1Jn.10: 34) . . . nonetheless beneath God" (The Cloud of Unknowing 1961: 64, 68, 133).

Tauler, Johan d1361 Mystic, writes of our outer man being united with the inner man in the created ground of the soul where *"God comes, and with His finger touches the well - filled vessel of His grace. The soul is now united to God without any intermediary, and loses itself in Him".[1]* In this place alone Tauler believes *"can be celebrated the 'marriage' from which the Lord comes"* (sermon on St. Augustine; Underhill 1967: 55).

Suso, Henry d1366 Mystic, apparently agrees with Tauler that the ground of the soul is uncreated and derived from God (Inge 1948: 363).

Ruysbroeck, Jan van d1381 Mystic, is called *"one of the greatest mystics whom the world has yet known, in whose works the metaphysical and personal aspects of mystical truth are fused, and attain their highest expression"* (Underhill 1967: 465). *"He sees and feels that the Father with the Son through the Holy Ghost, embrace each other and all the chosen, and draw themselves back with eternal love into the unity of their nature . . . yet the creature does not become God, for the union takes place in God through grace and our homeward - turning love . . . . . "* (Samuel cap xi; Underhill 1967: 422 - 423).

Ruysbroeck defines synderesis as the natural will towards good implanted in all, but weakened by sin. Natural union is the first cause of all holiness, but, being common to everyone, does not make people holy; it cannot be lost. 'Similitude' to God, however, can be lost, for it is the word of grace (Inge 1948: 360, 362). When mystics in the early church are compared with mystics in the Middle Ages, it is significant that the doctrine of divine immanence is increasingly emphasised. Union with God needed to be achieved by the soul, now it is inherent in the soul's essence (Inge 1948: 363; Underhill 1967: 100).

Julian of Norwich d after 1413 Mystic, understands that *"God is nearer to us than our own Soul; for He is [the] Ground in whom our Soul standeth, and He is [the]*

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[1]M. Cox (1983: 30, 109); and Inge (1948: 183 - 184) states that Tauler believed the ground of the soul to be uncreated but needing the created ground medium always to act upon it, i.e. thereby avoiding pantheism.

Mean that keepeth the Substance and the Sense - Nature together so they shall never disparate".

"Our nature, that is the higher part, is knit to God in the making. God is knit to our nature, that is the lowest part, in our flesh - taking: and thus in Christ our two natures are oned".

"He [Christ] is with us in Heaven, very Man, in His own Person, us up drawing; . . . and He is with us in earth, us leading . . . and He is with us in our soul, endlessly dwelling, ever ruling and keeping" (1934: 135, 138, 124).

Gerson, Jean d1429 Churchman and Writer, accepts synderesis as the apex of the effective faculties whose organ is intelligence, derived from God (Inge 1948: 360).

Nicholas of Cusa d1464 Cardinal and Philosopher, writes *"He [Christ] is grasped only when movement ceases and faith takes its place. By this faith we are caught up into simplicity above all reason and intelligence to the third heaven of pure simple intellectuality"* (Of Learned Ignorance; F.C. Happold 1970: 116).

Catherine of Genoa d1510 Mystic, writes *"God created the soul pure and full with a certain beatific instinct of Himself . . . in proportion as it (again) approaches to the conditions of its original creation, this beatific instinct ever increasingly discovers itself and grows stronger and stronger".* By departing from this instinct it grows malignant (Life 171 - 172).

John of the Cross d1569 Mystic, believes God lives permanently in the believer's soul (1964: 2: 190; 3: 193). The Word together with the Father and the Holy Spirit is hidden essentially in the inmost centre of the soul (1964: 2: 33). Activity of the Trinity in the soul produces knowledge of the divine essence and its attributes (1964: 3: 9). The more degrees of love the soul has, the more profoundly it enters God (1964: 3: 23).

Teresa of Avila d1582 Mystic, supernatural favours bring peace *"in a much more interior part (than the heart) like something of which the springs are very deep; I think this must be the centre of the soul"* (1980: 324).

Francis de Sales d1622 Bishop, find awareness of God's presence *"in the apex, the highest point of the soul, where the love of God is supreme, where it is chiefly practised"* (1962: 273).

Jakob Boehme d1624 Mystic, *"where is this naked ground of the soul void of*

all self...?" "Where the soul hath slain its own will and willeth no more anything as from itself..." ('Three Dialogues of the Supersensual Life', 71, quoted in Underhill 1967: 349)

Caussade, Jean de d1751 Writer, encourages *"let us live in the higher region of the soul where God and his will, produce an eternity that is always the same..."* (1962: 134).

Law, William d1761 Nonjuror and writer, believes the doctrine of synderesis. *"If Christ was to raise a new life like His own in every man, then every man must have had originally in the inmost spirit of his life a seed of Christ, or Christ as a seed of heaven, lying there in a state of insensibility, out of which it could not arise but by the mediatorial power of Christ... for what could begin to deny self, if there were not something in man different from self...? The Word of God is the hidden treasure of every human soul, immured under flesh and blood, till as a day - star it arises in our hearts, and changes the son of an earthly Adam into a Son of God"* (Inge 1948: 282 - 283).

2   The Mystics

Table Two

Alexander of Hales	d 1245	Gerson, Jean	d 1429
Aquinas, Thomas	d 1274	Gregory 1 (The Great)	d 604
Augustine	d 430	Gregory of Nyssa	d 395
Boehme, Jakob	d 1624	Hugh of St. Victor	d 1142
Bonaventure	d 1274	Jerome	d 420
Catherine of Genoa	d 1510	John of the Cross	d 1569
Caussade, Jean de	d 1751	Julian of Norwich	dc1413
Clement of Alexandria	d 215	Law, William	d 1761
Cloud of Unknowing	c 1350	Nicholas of Cusa	d 1464
Eckhart	d 1327	Ruysbroeck, Jan van	d 1381
Erigena, John	d 877	Suso, Henry	d 1366
Francis de Sales	d 1622	Tauler, Johann	d 1361
Friends of God	c 1350	Teresa of Avila	d 1582
Gallus, Thomas	d 1240	Theologia Germanica	c 1350

2.3.3   Conclusions

In spite of the limited nature of the study 11 conclusions may be made: -

1. Most if not all mystics would agree with Gregory of Nyssa that their experiences are difficult if not impossible to communicate.

2. Contradictions must be expected, e.g. Clement's 'darkness' against Gregory 1's 'light'. Mysticism thrives on the paradox.

3. In part or in whole believers belong to God (see Gregory of Nyssa), and are held together by Him (Julian).

4. God is continually acting both within believers (nearly all the mystics) and outside them (see Julian *"Christ . . . us up drawing"*, and Eckhart).

5. Believers' actions are inspired by grace (Cloud of Unknowing) and faith (Nicholas); intellectual activity is left behind (Bonaventure).

6. God's actions in the synderesis are Trinitarian (John of Avila).

7. The spark of synderesis is uncreated (Eckhart), though; to avoid pantheism, Tauler qualifies this by adding that there is a need for action by the created ground medium.

8. On account of the birth of Christ in believer, God knows nothing in them but His Son (Eckhart), and believers become His Sons (Law).

9. Because God is divinely immanent within believers, they are called to manifest this divine nature in their deeds (Theologia Germanica, Ruysbroeck).

10. Synderesis is the natural will towards good, but is weakened by sin (Ruysbroeck). Self - will must die (Boehme).

11. The more believers grow in love, the more they realise their original spiritual condition (Catherine), and the more they enter God (John and Francis de Sales).

Inge aptly describes the human condition, quoting Tatian (1948: 359 - 360), *"in the beginning the Spirit was a constant companion of the soul, but forsook it because the soul would not follow it, yet it retained, as it were, a spark of its power"*.

2.3.4 Mysticism Model

God creates human beings in His image and likenesss by breathing His Spirit into them, thereby giving them life. Throughout their lives God, who is Spirit (Jn.4: 24),

lives in human beings and continually communicates with them, principally through the uncreated Spirit He gives them. In His relations with His creation God is certainly not limited. Perhaps this is why the human personality is so complex, so that God can use any part or parts of human nature for His communication, i.e. body, soul, spirit, mind, heart or will. After the Fall when humanity died spiritually, Christ overcomes this death and invites every human being to share in His resurrection and to be born again (Jn. 3: 7) i.e. to be 'in Christ', 'united to the Lord', and become *"one spirit with him"* (1Cor.5: 17). This re - union of believers with God through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit is the ground or foundation of the synderesis mysticism model.

All human beings are not aware that God lives within them. (Augustine certainly admits that he was not; see Butler 1967: 44), and works within them, as David says *"for with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light do we see light"* (Ps.36: 9). Thus Christ being both finite and infinite, immanent and transcendent, human and divine, man and God, in every way edifies all believers i.e. those who have *"the first fruits of the spirit"*, who *"groan inwardly"*, who *"wait for adoption as sons"*, the redemption of their bodies (Rom.8: 23). Here can be seen the mysticism model being spiritually constructed as *"the spark of the soul, the fast - growing germ of divine humanity"* invades every corner of character (see Underhill 1967: 396). Ultimately, at the end of time, as Paul predicts, the apex will no longer exist, for Christ, who is the Alpha and the Omega, will be present in His fullness, He *"who fills all in all"* (Rev.1: 8; Eph.1: 23).

2.4   Orthodox Mysticism Model

The Orthodox church is a family of mainly Eastern European churches each one independent but all in communion and sharing the same faith (see ODCC 1012). After several centuries of controversy in AD 1204 the Orthodox (or Eastern, Greek, Greco - Russian) church separated from the Western, Latin church and has since undergone little change. In fact it claims today to be true to the faith and belief of the early church (see Brunner 1954: 95).

Three elements appear to be foundational in the life and mission of the Orthodox church - the work of the Holy Spirit, mysticism and deification. These will now be examined as we construct the Orthodox mysticism model, special attention being given

to deification, since the Holy Spirit's work and mysticism are dealt with in detail in relation to other models.

2.4.1   Holy Spirit's Work

Orthodox theologians stress the work of the Holy Spirit so strongly that the Western church accuses them of pneumocentrism. In turn the Western church is accused of Christocentrism[1] (See Burgess 1989 intro). It is senseless to compare one church with another when there is really only one church to which all Christians belong. The Orthodox church has never been a part of revolution or reformation, although in the 5th and 6th centuries the Nestorians (believing that Christ is two Persons, one Human the other Divine) and the Monophysite churches (believing that Christ only has a Divine nature) did split off from them (see A. Hastings 2000; 66).

The Spirit - empowered teachings of the apostles and the conclusions of the seven General Councils are paramount to the Orthodox church (Acts 2: 42; see Barbara Faulkner 1978: 323). The Spirit's activity throughout creation is being continually related to Christ. Thus the Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son thereby drawing believers through the Son to the Father, and thereby also enabling spirits to be tested (see Macquarrie 1975: 33; Smail 1988: 139). The filioque clause, which the Third Council of Toledo (AD 589) added to the Nicene Creed, could have been expressed more satisfactorily to all parties not as [who proceedeth from the Father] *"and the Son"* but as *"through the Son"*, i.e. as a candle (Father) lights a second candle (Son) who lights a third one (Spirit), (see Meyendorff 1974 60, 61, 93, 169; Smail 1988: 128; Schrenk 1974: 5: 1001n). This truth is fundamental to Paul's 'in Christ' concept because, as will be seen later it is through Christ that believers receive the Spirit and are 'in Christ'.

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[1]Scholars sometimes seem unjustly to set the Eastern church against the Western church as for example - being attentive (vs being still), stressing sanctification liberation, participation and resurrection (vs justification, dying of the old man, imitation and crucifixion); being always new through psycho - synthesis, and permeated by divine grace (vs needing no renewal, undergoing psycho - analysis, and ascending towards the divine); space (vs time). See Inge 1948 passim and other writers.

2.4.2 Mysticism

The second element in the Orthodox mysticism model is mysticism which Lossky (1957: 9) defines as the experience of Christians who are working out all that is their faith. Theology, he adds, is the expression of this experience for the benefit of others. Thus Orthodox mysticism is corporate rather than individual, hence Paul's reluctance to describe his own mystical experiences, *"I do not know, God knows"* (2Cor.12: 2 - 4; Lossky 1957: 21). Alexander Schmemann is in agreement here *"all genuine theology is mystical at root, since it is primarily evidence of religious experience"* (1963: 235).

Theology is understood through religious experience provided in a large measure by church liturgy and ritual as Russian Archbishop Piturim explains - *"the very complexity of the Orthodox liturgy constitutes a virtue, for the sheer wealth of ideas and feelings encompassed by the system assures that the church has omitted nothing from the sacred history of human salvation"* (1982: 201, 202, 207). Mysticism for the Orthodox appears to encompass the whole of life without any exceptions.

2.4.3 Deification

Deification does not appear to receive the attention it deserves, in spite of playing a prominent role in the history of the church. From the beginning it appears to be a problem not on earth but also in heaven. As it is Satan's ambition to make himself *"like the Most High"* (Isa.14: 14; cf. Ezek.28: 1 - 6), so he also tempts Adam and Eve to do something similar with their lives (Gen.3: 5). Hence the Fall of humanity, with pride as its cause, (cf. Satan's claim *"for in our world we have no God; but we all are gods; we all are of the light, heavenly, powerful, strong and glorious"* - The Second Book of Adam and Eve 1974: 64). However we interpret the Fall, its implications are clearly pointed out by Calvin in his commentary on Is.6: 5 *"until God reveals himself to us, we do not think we are [persons] . . . we think we are gods; but when we have seen God, then we begin to feel and know what we are"* (Institutes, 11,i). So Francis Huxley (1980: 294) reflects on the consequences of the Fall - *"the prophet, the warrior, the shaman, the yogi, the drinker of Soma - all in their different fashions make an assault upon the sacred to taste the nectar of the gods, the deathless drink"*.

Humanity is ever anxious to know about the future, and is daily seeking to find

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out 'what the stars foretell' through horoscopes, etc. It is not surprising therefore to realize that what really distinguishes gods from humans in the ancient world is the gift of immortality. Thus Paul writes that God *"alone has immortality"* (1Tim.6: 16), and consequently it follows that *"the gift of immortality is itself a deification"* (Inge 1948: 357).

The mystery religions are active in dispensing immortality - and thereby deification - being influenced by oriental culture with its emperor 'apotheosis' i.e. referring to the pagan custom of regarding people as gods (ODCC 77). Inge aptly comments that regarding God as immortal was *"as familiar to the Greeks as it was strange to the Jews"* (1948: 88 - 89). The first person to be declared god was probably Alexander the Great in 331BC. During the time of the early church the word 'god theos' is used casually to describe those having quasi - divine duties, i.e. rulers, judges, teachers and even heroes (see Inge 1948: 356 - 357;G. Prestige 1952: 73). A good example of this is the suddenness in which Paul and Barnabas, and later Paul alone in Lystra and Malta are called gods (Acts 14: 11 - 18; 28: 6). The coin the Pharisees and Herodians bring to Jesus (Mk.12: 16) probably bears the image of the emperor Tiberius and the words 'Divo Tiberio' (William Neil 1969: 377).

We shall not explore deification through the Old Testament although several relevant passages do influence Orthodox and mystical thinking, e.g. *"God the Lord of gods, hath spoken"* (Ps.49: 1 LXX); *"I say, You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you"* (Ps.82: 6); *"My beloved is mine and I am his"* (S.of S.2: 16; cf. also Gen.3: 5; Is.14: 12 - 20; Ezek.28: 1 - 17 referred to above); and Dan2.

2.4.3.1 Definition

It seems simplistic to define deification simply as becoming like God and being united to Him, or as *"the ceremony or social process which raises man to divinity"* (see Denys Rutledge 1964: 59; Paul Morrison 1964: 221), for it is a broad subject which is vital to Christians. Meyendorff gives a good definition *"the meeting of God's love and energy and of man's capability of transcending himself is what makes an encounter possible, a contemplation greater than knowledge to which the Fathers refer as the eyes of faith, the Spirit, or eventually, deification"* (1974: 13). Similarly Evdokimov sees

'theosis' as the soul being brought to life by the Holy Spirit so that it may be illumined by the holy mystery of the *"Three in One"* (see Chavchavadze 1970: 175).

The word 'deification' cannot be linked with pantheism or any human nature change firstly because pantheism is the belief that *"God and the universe are identical"*, and secondly because of the existence of death, and the fact that God is not only immanent but also transcendent (see Frost 1941: 116; ODCC 1027; Moltmann 1980: 79; Inge 1948: 117). Against this C. Dodd is willing to accept 'pantheism', if applied to the *"most intimate unity with God which is profoundly religious (and) . . . mystical"* (1954: 190).

2.4.3.2 The Deification Process

It appears that several elements participate in the process of deification. Earlier we refer to a 'spark' or 'apex of the soul' present in every human being which could be linked with the human spirit which is *"so akin to God that it is one with God, and not merely united to Him . . . the birth of the Son of God in the soul turns us into God, so that God no longer knows anything in us but His Son"*. These are the words of Meister Eckhart (c1260 - 1327) a mystic and forerunner of Luther's 'emphasis on faith', who is currently becoming an increasingly respected writer (ODCC 442; Inge 1948: 359). In other words, the Spirit seems to take over temporarily from human reason (see Stewart 1935: 166; Rom.8: 14, 16 *"all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God . . . the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God"*). So being filled with the Spirit is being filled with the divine life (Rahner 1956: 252), for *"if the soul were not essentially Godlike, it could never know God"* (see Inge 1948: 358).

An alternative understanding of the beginning of deification in the believer is to conceive of grace as eternal life within us (cf. *"The kingdom of God is within you"*, Lk.17: 20), and therefore as a real and formal participation in Deity. 'Unitive love' and hunger for God grows increasingly says Garrigou - Lagrange (1977: 16, 101) who here follows Aquinas. There is no basic difference between the two above explanations (i.e. whether we refer to 'Spirit' or to 'grace'), but what is significant is the fact that on this important doctrine as on many others scholars from both Western and Eastern churches think alike (e.g. Meyendorff 1974: 32; cf. also Prestige 1952: 74 - 75).

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In conclusion, believers are *"co - heirs of the divine nature, gods created after the uncreated God"* (Lossky 1957: 65). Something in their nature enables believers to know God, and thus be spiritually united with the Logos - Christ (see Berdyaev 1948: 134; Inge 1947: 45). Deification is made possible through the Incarnation and Pentecost. It is given to believers at baptism; it increases throughout their lives, and is fulfilled when they reach heaven. Humanity is thus regarded by Orthodoxy as a *"dynamic reality"* created in God's image and called *"to achieve freely a divine similitude"*, as Meyendorff explains (1974: 2).

2.4.3.3 Deification in the Early Church

The early church regards deification as of vital importance. Pannenberg rightly claims that deification's role determines the church's whole history of Christology (1968: 39); while Harnack confirms that it is referred to by *"all the Fathers of the ancient Church, and that in a primary position"* (see Inge 1948: 358). In the apocalyptic age, Philo and Josephus frequently use the word in their voluminous writings, and even Paul can confidently write of the present manifestations of grace *"through the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel"* (2Tim.1: 10). Here we find the new creation in Christ (2Cor.5: 17), who Himself refers to the deification 'theoi' of believers (Jn.10: 34 - 35; Graef 1959: 124, 172, 195).

While dogmatic theology emerges in the midst of heresies, the early Christian Fathers boldly proclaim that *"God became man, so that man might become God"*, a teaching which crystallises into *"participation in the divine nature and in the blessed immortality of God"* (J. Kelley 1977: 469; Inge 1948: 13; Hughson 1950: 38). Thus the *"first great Catholic theologian"* Bishop Irenaeus (c120 - c200) believes that the only life we live is life in God revealed through Jesus, who becomes fully human so that we might participate in His perfection (Against Heresies IV 20, 5, 7 and V 7, 1, 2; see Pannenberg 1968: 40; Clement 1994: 265; ODCC 713). Similarly Athanasius (c296 - 373) confirms that humanity's original destiny to participate in the divine Logos is now fulfilled through Christ (De Incarnation 1, 3, 13; Pannenberg 1948: 40; Clement 1994: 312; ODCC 101); and Cyril of Jerusalem (c315 - 385) sees the Spirit as *"the universal*

sanctifier and deifier" (Cat.4: 16; 16, 3; see Kelly 1977: 256; cf. 1Cor.3: 16 *"do you not know that you are God's Temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?"*; 15: 53; Rom.8: 12 - 15).

2.4.3.4 Theology of Deification

Christ comes to earth to 'undo' what Adam did, to reverse the curse God allowed to come upon all creation (Gen.3: 14 - 19; Gal.3: 13). God is thus immanent in Christ whose victory over the works of Satan by His death, resurrection and ascension into glory now enables believers to share in His divinity (see J. Maritain 1969: 15n; S. Hughson 1950: 42). Christ hereby invites believers into Himself to share in the *"blessed state of deification"* (W. Bousset 1970: 166). Adam's innocence is now *"resurrected in the sinner"* (J. Brosse 1991: 151) and the process of deification is completed as humanity in Christ attains its ultimate goal (Meyendorff 1974: 163, 165).

Christian deification is to be distinguished from all other types including the metaphysical and neoplatonic, for it is made possible by God's great love for His creation and it cannot take place apart from Christ who recreates us in Himself (2Cor.5: 17; OS 97 - 99). The perfection of this deification is naturally dependent upon each believer standing in Christ as decreed by God, *"until we all attain . . . to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"* (Eph.4: 13; OS 98 - 99; Pannenberg 1968: 40).

Peter's second letter is written to *"undergird faith in the second coming of Christ and to warn against false teachers"* (OAB 1478). Within these two causes, we suggest, can be found the real purpose of the letter, i.e. to remind his readers of their high calling in Christ, which he mentions in his first letter, so they will be equipped to handle the challenges of the last days (see Thomas Leahy 1968: 494). A very important passage in this letter, which concerns deification - 2Pet.1: 3 - 4 - needs to be closely studied, as we shall now do.

After wishing his readers grace and peace Peter immediately reminds them that they are given divine power through Christ to have life, to partake of the divine nature and thereby to have a place in heaven (see George Boobyer 1962: 1032; 2Peter.1: 1 - 4). These *"previous and very great promises"* are conditional to a godly life being lived (v.3) which is made possible as believers are called through the knowledge of Christ

(v.3).

Throughout His life Jesus exercises this 'divine power' (Jn.17: 2). To all who receive Him and believe in His name He gives *"power to become children of God"* (Jn.1: 12), and to overcome the enemy (Lk.10: 19; cf.2Cor.12: 9). Walter Grundmann (1974: 2: 310) visualises this power substantially, as mediating participation in the divine nature. He suggests there is a Hellenstic conception which enables mediation to take place by sacramental action, in precedence over the word and faith. This explanation has merit because firstly 'theios' only appears elsewhere in the New Testament in Acts 17: 29, a passage Grundmann rightly sees as 'Hellenistic Luke' (1974: 2: 310); and secondly Peter could be referring to baptism when he describes those without the power who are blind and forget that they are 'cleansed' from their old sins (2Pet.1: 9; Boobyer 1962: 1032; cf. Tit.3: 5; 1Pet.3: 21). The eucharist can also contribute here for it is described as 'the true transference of vital deificatory energy' and is, as also is the liturgy, *"a foretaste of the blissful union to come"* (Brosse 1991: 151).

Bearing in mind, as we have already suggested, the casual use of the word 'theos' particularly in Greek religion, we can agree with Herman Kleinknecht in his reasoning that *"if 'anthropinos' is often the antonym of 'theios', man as the bearer of creative and socially constructive power can also be called 'theios'"* (1974: 3: 122).

Peter's reference to 'knowledge' as applied to 'partakers of the divine nature' (2Pet.1: 3 - 4) implies that this participation already exists. Peter could be influenced by Gnosticism, as Helmut Koster suggests (1974: 9: 275), but he could equally well be influenced by Paul who writes of Christians who *"have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator"* (Col.3: 10). We cannot be certain that Gnosticism is really one of Peter's heresies (2Pet.2: 1).

Paul could also influence Peter in his statement that Christ *"called us to his own glory and excellence"* (2Pet.1: 3), for Paul also associates 'call' with glory (e.g. 1Th.2: 12; 2Th.2: 14; Rom.8: 28 - 30); but especially relevant is 1Cor.1: 9, *"called into the fellowship (koinonian)"* of *"the divine nature"*. For Paul, Christ is always the mediator, but he never goes so far as to speak of a direct 'koinonia theou' (see Friedrich Hauck 1974: 3: 804).

Peter's emphatic use of the word 'become' partakers (2Pet.1: 4) is

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eschatological, implying that we are 'already not yet' partakers (cf. Eph.2: 6; Jn.1: 12 *"become children of God"*; Thomas Little 1928: 655; Johannes Schattenmann 1975: 1: 644).

Leahy does not appear to do the phrase *"partakers of the divine nature"* justice by simply saying it is borrowed from *"Hellenistic philosophic and religious terminology"*, or that it is used to express the fullness of Christian life, or that the same idea is expressed differently elsewhere in the New Testament (1968: 495). His first two statements may be true, but the third is questionable, for the phrase has a very special meaning which we are trying to uncover.

Frost appears to be closer to the truth when he writes that the partaking *"is not of the essence but of the life and activity of God"* (1941: 96). It is according to Hurault (1988: 467), being *"called to nothing less than to share what God is"*. Perhaps the fullest intention of 2Pet.1: 2 - 4 is that of John of the Cross (1500 - 1569), *"for the soul to have participation in God, performing in Him, in company with Him, the work of the Most Holy Trinity . . . by reason of the substantial union between the soul and God . . .perfectly fulfilled only in the next life, nevertheless, in this life, when the estate of perfection is reached, a clear trace and taste of it are attained"*. John here maintains that, as the Father and the Son are united in love, so are the Father and the 'saints', who are *"truly gods by participation, equals of God and His companions"* (1964: 2: 169 - 170).

2.4.3.5 Conclusion

Our focus in this section is on deification, which is, like spiritual marriage, purely one aspect of humanity's union with God which we deal with elsewhere. S. Ghose summarises the situation well *"the alchemic undertone, in the man - God idea, has never wholly been extinguished"* (EB 1998: 26: 587): against Hans Kung who wonders whether reasonable people today want to become God, and suggests we should seek humanisation rather than deification (1991: 442). The overall message of scripture however seems to be what R. Vaughan (see Oxford English Dictionary 1989: 4: 403) calls 'return - deification', or the consummation of believers as, having come from God, they are now returning to Him. Jan van Ruysbroeck (1293 - 1381) follows Dionysius

with the same neoplatonic theme - *"regirato, the eternal cycle through which the soul moves out to God and back into Him"* (see E. Colledge 1967: 12: 764).

Believers can never become Christ (or God or the Holy Spirit), nor are they deified while they share in God's glory, or receive or manifest gifts of the Holy Spirit (see Cairns 1953: 41). Instead Christ invites believers into Himself (Bousset 1970: 166), and they are then in Christ through whom they can enjoy union, deification or marriage with God. Adam's original innocence is thus resurrected in Christ.

The controversial nature of this subject is that theologically and eschatologically believers may claim to be 'gods', but socially and politically such a claim would not, generally speaking, be acceptable. Throughout church history Christians reproach pagans for thinking they can make 'gods'! In the same way all believers can claim to be priests and kings (Rev.1: 6; 5: 10), but they seldom do this. L. Lovett (1993: 719) quotes three Pentecostals who claim to be god - Bishop Earl Paul of Atlanta - *"just as dogs have puppies and cats have kittens, so God has little gods"*; Kenneth Copeland of Fort Worth, Texas *"you impart humanity into a child that's born of you. Because you are a human, you have imparted the nature of humanity into that born child . . . you don't have a God in you. You are one"*; John Lake (1870 - 1935) Vice President of the Apostolic Faith Mission in South Africa 1908 - 1912 *"man is not a separate creation detached from God, he is part of God Himself . . . God intends us to be gods. The inner man is the real governor, the true man that Jesus said was a god"*.

The main danger in this 'Positive Confession' movement is that it can create pride that humanity is self - sufficient, and thereby capable of achieving salvation by itself through claiming its 'divine right' (see Lovett 1993: 719). Alister Mc Grath is correct in emphasising the need to distinguish God's will from our will, e.g. Copeland claims that Jesus said to him . . . *"don't be disturbed when people accuse you of thinking you're God . . .they crucified me for claiming I was God"*. The reasoning here is very subtle, as is Copeland's *"I didn't claim that I was God; I just claimed that I walked with Him, and that He was in me. Hallelujah! That's what you're doing"* (Believer's Voice of Victory Aug. 1988 p.8; see McGrath 1992: 302).

Scriptural warrant for Christians deification cannot be denied. 2Peter 1: 3 - 4 confirms this, as also to some degree does Paul's 'in Christ' phrase and John's first

letter, particularly verses 19 - 20 *"we are of God . . . and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life"*. And the alternative? John tells (v.21) - *"little children, keep yourselves from idols"*.

2.4.4 Mysticism Model

The three main elements of the mystical model of the Eastern Orthodox Church are its acknowledged corporate mysticism, its complete dependence upon the Holy Spirit and its conviction that deification is a spiritual gift to every believer. Paul's 'in Christ' phrase plays a fundamental, though not always a recognised role in the Orthodox church. Study of this model reveals a basic similarity between it and the present - day Pentecostal church, and also between the theologies of the two churches. Our hypothesis is given support here, as we shall see later.

What relation we now ask does this Orthodox's model of mysticism have with Paul's 'in Christ' phrase? At first glance it might appear that the Orthodox Church's pneumatology is more relevant and important than its Christology, but this is far from the truth. In fact the 'in Christ' phrase could well be described as the focal point of Orthodox Christology, if not of its theology, e.g. the Orthodox baptismal rite is Christ - centred and parallels that of Western Christianity in containing the following three stages:

1.   Christ forgives and heals, hereby delivering the baptizand from Satan,

2.   Christ conforms the newly created person to Himself, as *"the pattern and archetype"*, and

3.   The person is incorporated into Christ (OS. 1987: 43).

What is important in this rite is that each of these three stages includes both an ascetical and a mystical moment; the former being the baptizand's renunciation, commitment or personal contribution, the latter being the exorcism, unction, immersion or simply the accompanying grace (see OS 1987: 43 - 44).

Meyendorff concisely summarizes the Orthodox gospel *"Communion in the risen body of Christ; participation in divine life; sanctification through the energy of God, which penetrates true humanity and restores it to its "natural" state"* (1974: 146). Baptism thus places the believer in Christ, in Christ's body, the church. The actual

baptism service far from being a *"sacramental water - materialism"* is spiritual, as evidenced in the liturgy with its light and illumination rites (see OS 1987: 42).

Nowhere is the Orthodox expected to *"imitate"* Jesus. Instead there is a union with the believer in Christ and Christ in the believer (see Spencer 1966: 226). *"Mystical"* to the Orthodox means *"secret and invisible" (cf. mysterion)*. We invisibly share in our Lord's nature (physis, therefore it is a *"physical"* Body, though not material as believers' are, see OS.1987: 57). This union is an *"accidental"* one enabled by grace; thus Paul can write, *"the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Rom.6: 23; OS.1987: 58 cf. *"For me to live is Christ"* Phil.1: 21; Christ who is our life; Col.3: 4).

Orthodoxy stresses the substantive nature of this mysticism because Christ is the substance of our spiritual life, as He is our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption (1Cor.1: 30; OS.1987: 59). Basil the Great (330 - 79) identifies the fundamental flow of creation - *"the principle of all things is one, which creates through the Son and perfects in the Spirit"*. In other words as nature is imperfect until it is in communion with God and filled with the Spirit, so man being theocentric, is sanctified through participation in God's life (see Meyendorff 1974: 169). We define mysticism as *"union with God through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit"* a definition that seems to be particularly applicable to Orthodox theology. Lossky rightly discerns the paradox - *"Christian theory should have an eminently practical significance; . . . the more mystical it is the more directly it aspires to the supreme end of union with God - which is deification"* (1957: 9).

Gnostic influences are apparent here, i.e. *"God communicates Himself through his divine energies"*. It is in this way that believers can be deified and become *"partakers of the divine nature"* (2Pet.1: 4; Lossky 1957: 71; Corduan 1991: 99; Moltmann 1994: 232).

It seems that, the schism between Eastern and Western churches might not have taken place if all concerned had understood the filioque clause to mean that the Spirit proceeds through the Son. Given theological agreement, heretical proposals can more easily be refuted, and thereby political differences need not arise. Unity is a vital component in the teachings of Jesus and of Paul as will be discussed later.

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2.5   Calvin's Mysticism Model

John Calvin (1509 - 1564) was an influential Biblical scholar writing several commentaries and letters, but more as a spiritual writer than a theologian. He promoted a spiritual as opposed to a figurative mysticism in the area of praxis (spirituality in action), where many Christians today are coming together (see William Bouwsma in Dennis Tamburello 1994: 88, 102 - 106). Bouwsma seems right in suggesting that Calvin's orderly nature and his conviction that it is presumptuous to know things as God knows them, made him anxious over the ability of others to do more than merely practical matters, which could explain Calvin's complete reliance on the Bible (1998: 15: 436).

Calvin encourages us to follow Paul who writes *"I know a man in Christ"* (2Cor.12: 2), showing that he is looking to Christ alone, and has no concern with himself (1964: 156). We dare not have any *"conceit about our own dignity"* because eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord is a free gift (Rom.6: 23), i.e. *"We are clothed with the righteousness of the Son, we are reconciled to God, and renewed by the power of the Spirit to holiness"* (1972: 136). Creation makes us grateful and humble (Inst.2.1.1). Augustine and Bernard of Clairvaux (1090 - 1153) greatly influenced Calvin: Bernard being mentioned in the 'Institutes' 21 times (see Francois Wendel 1976: 127n). Tamburello in his penetrating study on Calvin and Bernard finds that they both express a genuine mysticism. He describes Bernard's union with Christ as a union in love, of wills, and Calvin's in the same way, though more with faith than love. Both writers express their mysticism in active love of God and neighbour, but Bernard emphasises contemplation far more than Calvin. It seems significant that Calvin did not write a commentary on the Song of Songs, the very book on which Bernard writes so much, but that Calvin in his Institutes quotes from Bernard's book on the Song of Songs more times than from any other book (Tamburello 1994: 103 - 104).

Throughout his work Calvin's spirituality and mysticism are evident. He is anxious that everyone should be involved in life, for *"what avails it, in short, to know a God with whom we have nothing to do?"* (Inst.1.2.2), and quotes Augustine *"it is to God we tend, and it is to men we go, and both of them are found only in Christ"* (Inst.3.2.1).

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Calvin frequently states that believers must be united with Christ for by themselves they can do nothing, but in Him they lack nothing, and therefore can have no excuse whatsoever for failing God. Perhaps he sums up this thought most expressively in commenting on the true vine, *"the heart of this comparison is that by nature we are barren and dry save in so far as we have been engrafted into Christ, and draw a new and extraneous power from Him"* (Jn.15: 1; 1961: 93). Thus humanity's barren and dry state is transformed in baptism which Calvin defines as *"the initiatory sign by which we are admitted to the fellowship of the Church, that being engrafted into Christ we may be accounted children of God"* (Inst.4.15.1).

We shall examine Calvin's writings - principally his 'Institutes' - in order to construct a mystical model. This task is made the easier because of the emphasis Calvin places on 'union with Christ' which, according to Tamburello (1994: 111 - 113), he refers to about 125 times in about 10 different ways: -

Engrafting	33	Union	9
Communion	19	One flesh / Spiritual marriage	8
Partakers of Christ	14	Union with God	8
In the Spirit	13	Growing together / Becoming one	8
Fellowship	11	Mystical union	2

Calvin seems to stress equally both the mystery and the majesty of God's work, and to capture these in the union in Christ to which he continually points mystically, we suggest. An illustration of this sums up humanity's existence *"truly it is a great mystery that Christ allowed a rib to be taken from himself, of which we might be formed; that is, that when he was strong, he was pleased to become weak, that we might be strengthened by his strength, and should no longer live ourselves, but he live in us"* (Gal.2: 20; Calvin Inst.4.19.35).

Calvin believes that God is the supreme Sovereign of the Universe who creates human beings in His image; that this image was almost destroyed after the Fall; and that believers in Christ *"have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator"* (Col.3: 10 cf. 2Cor.3: 18; Phil.1: 6; Calvin 1962: 1: 163; 169). So, in believers *"the more earthly life declines, the more heavenly life advances* (2Cor.4: 16; 1964: 63). Humanity's goal is *"is Christ Jesus"* (Phil.3: 14), and there

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must be no deviation from this goal or else there is no salvation (1965: 278 - 279). *"Because of the secret union"* between Head and members there should be consolation in having *"a sure pledge and first fruits in the Person of Christ of everything"* now lacked (1965: 143).

Calvin intends his Institutes to *"teach us 'piety'"*, which he regards as the source of religion, and which he defines as *"that unity of reverence and love of God which the knowledge of his benefits inspires"* (Inst.1.2.1.). And in this intention he certainly succeeds, and continues to exercise a wide influence.

2.5.1   Union

Union takes place in that part of the soul that has been regenerated or renewed, which Calvin calls 'spirit', because it bears the image of God (Rom.7: 18 - 23; Inst.2.11.26), or the inner man (2Cor.4: 16; 1965: 167; see Torrance 1977: 54). Paul describes this transformation, be *"strengthened with might through his Spirit in the inner man, . . . that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith"* (Eph.3: 16 - 17). Calvin confirms that *"we are partakers of the Holy Spirit to the extent that we share in Christ."* This is a fundamental truth for as the outer man declines so the inner man grows, or should grow, by being renewed every day (2Cor.4: 16; 1964: 63) as Christ brings every believer daily *"into close connection, until he becomes altogether one with us"* (Inst.3.2.24). We glory that God converts a vessel of clay into a temple of an immortal Spirit (Inst. 1.15.1.).

This union is Trinitarian. It takes place as God sends Christ who engrafts the believer whom the Spirit sanctifies (Inst.4.15.6). So *"not only Christ but the Father and the Spirit dwell in us . . . the Father and the Spirit are in Christ; and as in him the fullness of the Godhead dwells, so in him we possess God entire"* (Inst.3.11.5). Calvin several times refers to union with God (see Tamburello 1994: 93).

Remembering Calvin's account of the origin of evil (*"this malice which we attribute to his (the devil's) nature is not from creation, but from deprivation"* Inst.1.14.15), we can see how the image of 'engrafting' appeals to Calvin. It appears in scripture only six times in Romans (11: 17, 19, 23, and twice in 24) and means significantly, contrary to nature, i.e. like a wild olive branch being grafted into a

cultivated olive tree (v.24). *"Total depravity"* is generally associated with Calvinism (ODCC: 1387), but happily Calvin's work is free from any morbidity (see Torrance 1977: 20), perhaps because of his realisation that 'engrafting' leads to mystical union, i.e. by being engrafted into Christ believers can partake of all his benefits (Rom.5: 19; 8: 3, 4), become a member of him, and hence one with him (Inst.3.2.24).

Calvin makes only two references to 'mystical union', the first is an acknowledgment that Christ has honoured the Church with mystical union, the second is an acknowledgment that mystical union, *"the union of the head and members, the residence of Christ in our hearts"*, is assigned the highest rank, *"Christ becomes ours making us partners with him in the gifts with which he was endued . . . as we have put him on, and been engrafted into his body, he deigns to make us one with himself, and therefore, we glory in having a fellowship of righteousness with him"* (Inst.2.12.7 & 3.11.10).

No explanation is given by Calvin of this 'mystica unio', but scholars seem to agree, that it must be linked with being engrafted (Tamburello follows Kolfhaus here 1994: 85).

Elsewhere Calvin describes this union as *"a sacred marriage by which we become bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh and so one with him"* (Eph.5: 30; Inst.3.1.3). This was originally Adam's prophecy when God brought the woman to him (Inst.2.12.7). After these words Paul adds *"this is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church"* (Eph.5: 32; cf. Inst.4.19.35). In this connection Calvin refers to several texts[1] in which God addresses believers as a husband because of the similarity between the union with Himself, when he receives them into the Church, and marriage founded on mutual faith (Inst.2.8.18).

In 1Cor.6: 17 Paul writes *"but he who is united to the Lord becomes one Spirit with* him" which Calvin uses to show that union with Christ is closer, and therefore preferable to that of husband and wife, because believers are not only one flesh with Christ but also one Spirit (Calvin 1960: 131; Tamburello 1994: 88). Elsewhere Calvin suggests that believers are united more closely with Christ *"than are the limbs with the*

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[1] 2Cor.11: 2; Eph.5; Jer.3: 1, 2; 62: 5; Hos.2: 2, 9.

body" (see Wendel 1976: 235).

It is against this orthodox anthropological background that Calvin sees the believer as being 'in Christ', in union with Him, and enjoying the ultimate perfect 'mystical union', which we are considering. So by letting believers know their creation in God's image as well as their former miserable condition Calvin encourages them to show their gratitude and humility (Inst.1. 15. 1; 2. 1.1 - 2). This in turn leads to the only way in which believers can make spiritual progress in their lives which, according to Calvin, is by seeing the whole from the point of view of restoration or renovation in Christ (see Torrance 1977: 21).

Paul's doctrine is faith and love which come from knowledge of Christ (1964: 301), and Calvin also believes that grace comes from Christ alone; without which believers can do no good works (2Tim.2: 1; 1964: 305 cf. Eph.2: 7; 1965: 144). All Paul's teaching consists only of the simple knowledge of Christ in which is included the whole Gospel (2Cor.1: 19; 1964: 21). Referring to Col.2: 3 Calvin concludes that we are wise if we truly know Christ, and we are mad if we wish to know anything beside Christ for outside of Christ nothing is worth knowing (1965: 326; Inst.2.15.2).

Nowhere does Calvin suggest any absorption between the divine and the human, nor a union of equals nor a sharing of substance, though where the latter is mentioned in a few places it is not as a mixture of substances or an 'infused essence', as Osiander was suggesting, but the result of the power of the Holy Spirit (see Inst.3.11.5; Tamburello 1994: 87), i.e. *"Such is the union between us and Christ, that in a sense he pours Himself into us. For we are not bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh, because like ourselves, He is man, but because, by the power of His Spirit, He engrafts us into His body, so that from him we derive life"* (1965: 209).

2.5.2 Holy Spirit

As union in Christ is central to Calvin's teaching so Christ is the proper object of faith (1965: 301; 2Tim.1:13; Col.1: 4), and faith comes by the work of the Holy Spirit (Inst.3.1.4). In fact Calvin believes the Holy Spirit continually works in every person's life, principally to give faith (2Thes.2: 13; Inst.3.1.3,4). Here Calvin refers to the Ephesians being sealed with the promised Holy Spirit (1: 13), showing that the Spirit is

"the internal teacher" causing the salvation promise to enter their minds. We see this in action in Baptism and in the Lord's Supper (1965: 32), e.g. the Word, objectively, and the Spirit, subjectively, combine to give revelation to believers (see Warfield 1974: 82 - 83), while the Spirit opens up Scripture's hidden word (Inst.1.7.4). Again *"the Holy Spirit is the bond whereby Christ effectively joins us to himself"* (1Cor.6: 11, 17; Inst.1.7.4: 4.17.12) not exactly by bringing Christ down into believers' hearts, but rather by raising believers up from earth to heaven to be one in Christ, a union closer than that of husband and wife (see Wallace 1959: 20; Calvin 1960: 131). Thinking of Paul's claim *"It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me"* (Gal.2: 20), Calvin sees this union with Christ as twofold: - total justification with participation in Christ's righteousness, and being reconciled to God with partial sanctification, the latter continuing to 'grow' through the fruit and gifts of the Holy Spirit, as believers are drawn closer to Christ (Inst.3.2.1, 24; see Tamburello 1994: 87). Calvin gives a full description of this vital union - *"Christ pours Himself into us. For we are not bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh, because, like ourselves, He is man, but because, by the power of His Spirit, He engrafts us into His Body, so that from Him we derive life"* (1965: 209). Thereafter the believer continues to grow in Christ, as always through the Holy Spirit (Int. 3.11.5), thereby glorifying God (Inst.3.11.10).

2.5.3   The 'In Christ' Phrase

Calvin does not, however, appear to notice the frequency (167 times) of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase, or to treat the phrase as having any particular merit, e.g. in exegeting Phil.3: 8 - 9 *"I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as refuse, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him"*, Calvin explains that all that believers voluntarily give up and lose is not really lost at all, but received in Christ in whom they obtain and find all things including themselves, i.e. *"I had been lost, unless I had been lost."* Calvin's argument would be stronger, however, if he used the correct final phrase above, i.e. *"be found in him"* rather than the one he uses *"and may find them in him"* (1965: 274). Another example of his making a personal preference decision is seen in Eph.3: 12 where he prefers *'through whom'* to Paul's *'in whom'* without giving adequate reason, but thereby taking away real unity with Christ in that situation (1965:

164). A comparison with Phil.2: 1 strengthens the *'in'* interpretation. Calvin also refers at least six times[1] to Paul's 'in Christ' phrase as something *'added'* to what Paul had said before, as if Paul suddenly had a second thought that he wished to communicate, e.g. Phil.4: 2 *"I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord."* There could be no true agreement if they simply agreed. *'In the Lord'* therefore, is the essence of reconciliation for Paul, and not simply an addition (1965: 285). A further criticism is that at least four times[2] Calvin interprets 'in Christ' as meaning *'according to Christ'* or *'in the cause of Christ.'* Here again Calvin seems to ignore the implication of Christ's real presence, and to replace it with simply a rule or a law, e.g. Rom.9: 1 *"I am speaking the truth in Christ"* (1972: 191).

Nevertheless it seems that Paul's phrases are continually in Calvin's mind throughout his writings, only surfacing when special points have to be made. How else can we explain the emphasis he so frequently places on 'union with Christ', and his adamant *"so long as we are without Christ and separated from him, nothing which he suffered and did for the salvation of the human race is of the least benefit to us?"* (1962: 1: 463; Inst 3.1.1; cf. Louis Berkhof 1969: 447; Tamburello 1994: 87). Believers share in Christ's fullness and perfection, (Col.2: 9) *"for in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily"*. By ourselves therefore, says Calvin, we can add nothing to Christ's nature, or we accuse Him of imperfection (1965: 330 - 331), for we *"have come to fullness of life in him"* (Col.2: 10). If we have not done this, says Calvin, we take away from God's glory by looking above His perfection, and are also ungrateful and unappreciative of what we already have in Christ (1965: 331). Elsewhere Calvin again contrasts perfection in Christ with imperfection *"if the Son of God is not united to us He reckons Himself in some measure imperfect"* (1965: 138; cf. Eph.1: 23).

Similarly, commenting on Phil.4:19 Calvin remarks that because God is in Christ Jesus we can even call God ours (1965: 295); and, if our faith is true, we are able to appear calmly in God's presence (Eph.3: 12; Inst.2.2.15). This is boldness indeed. It was Paul's aim to *"present every man mature in Christ"* (Col.1: 28). Calvin exegetes

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[1]Rom.6: 23; 14: 14; Eph.1: 4; 2: 6; Phil.3: 14; 4: 2.
[2]Rom.9: 1; 2Cor.2: 17; Eph.1: 9; Phil. 1: 13.

this text *"wisdom is that by which we are presented perfect in God's presence, i.e. in Christ and nowhere else"* (1965: 323).

2.5.4   Mysticism Model

As the Holy Spirit gives faith to people, they hear the word and, as Calvin thinks, are engrafted into union in Christ. This process seems to be instantaneous; election, faith and engrafting belong together (Tamburello follows Kolfhaus here 1994: 86).

In this survey of Calvin's works we note the central role that Christ and union in Christ play, together with the Holy Spirit. Commenting on Paul's 'great mystery' acclamation Calvin says Paul implies that no language can do justice to this union between Christ in Heaven and believers on earth, for the mystery cannot be conceived by the human mind. He then concludes *"let us therefore labour more to feel Christ living in us than to discover the nature of that communication"* (1965: 210). This is the foundation of Calvin's mysticism model. Calvin is far too practical a person to stop there - witness his criticism of monks who claim to be holy and to be in the presence of angels when they are simply being idle (Inst.4.13.10). In fact the fourth book of Calvin's Institutes deals with relations between church and government.

Calvin's mysticism model, in summary, is complete union with God through Christ acknowledging the Holy Spirit's power to save and deliver all destined for salvation from Satanic depravity outside of Christ.

2.6   Schweitzer's Mysticism Model

With the intention of building a mystical model from its contents we shall here critically examine Albert Schweitzer's book 'The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle,' which was published in German in 1930 and in English in 1931. This book has been very influential; it is one of the most enigmatic theological books ever written.

Schweitzer (1875 - 1965) the eldest son of a Lutheran Pastor, earns doctorates in theology, philosophy and medicine, has a brilliant mind, is well known as a German theologian and author of several books, as a concert organist and interpreter of Bach, and a medical missionary in Lambarene in French equatorial Africa. He continually shares in his books his reverence for life; one of his earliest beliefs being Jesus'

conviction of the imminent end of the world (see ODCC: 1248).

Before he writes on Paul's mysticism Schweitzer is well aware of current thought about Paul's writings, as is evident from his earlier book "Paul and His Interpreters. A Critical History". Charles Barrett writes that Schweitzer begins two of his books with the words *"up to the present everyone has got their topic wrong: I will now tell you what is right"* (1975: 4). In spite of this bold assurance it is disappointing to find in his book several statements that are either questionable or completely wrong. These errors, for example Schweitzer's unbelief in Jesus' resurrection, and his belief that Jesus and Paul's eschatological expectations are an illusion (see Ridderbos 1977: 31), must affect the whole of his rationale, and thereby cause doubt in the reader's mind over the truth of Schweitzer's conclusions.

Admittedly Schweitzer's theological background is, thanks to dominant German scholarship since the Reformation, one of firm conviction over the centrality of Paul's righteousness of God as found in the doctrine of justification (see Scott Hafemann 1993: 674), so there is a desperate need for change. The seeds for this change are already sown particularly by Richard Kabisch and William Wrede (the key to Paul's theology is eschatology), and Deissmann with his emphasis upon Paul's 'in Christ' phrase and Christ - mysticism. Previously theologians like Gottlob Kaiser, who published his "Die Biblische Theologie" in three volumes in 1813, totally reject *"any kind of supernaturalism"* (see Gerhard Hasel 1993: 29), so it must take great courage to write about mysticism as Schweitzer does.

Schweitzer first wonders why Kabisch and Wrede have no successors, and then lays the foundation stone for his mysticism theory. Scientific theology, he writes, must strive after historical truth, otherwise what is spiritual in their study will not be sound even if it should appear so. Thus we must get to Paul's primitive - Christian, eschatological doctrine, which is on fire, before it loses its fire. Schweitzer claims his work will be sound and will meet religious needs (see 1953: preface). If only, he seems to feel, we can get our hands on Paulinism, as derived from eschatology, and before it is contaminated by Hellenism, then we will be able to understand Paul's relation both to his contemporaries and to the generations immediately following him (1953: 39). Schweitzer does admit, however, that Paul in his *"eschatological mysticism of the*

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'being - in - Christ' gives Christianity a form in which it could be Hellenized" (1953: preface).

We shall first discover how Schweitzer defines mysticism and then study his three basic characteristics of Paul's mysticism, followed by a look at sacraments, particularly baptism with its sub - sections body, dying and rising, rebirth, in Christ and justification.

2.6.1   Definition

Schweitzer[1] places Paul's mysticism between what he calls *"primitive mysticism"* and *"intellectual mysticism,"* i.e. between the magical mysticism of the Greek mystery religions with their various ceremonies and sacrificial meals, and the more intellectually conceived *"relation of the personality to the universal"* (1953: 1 - 3). 'Universal' stands here for God or Christ, because Schweitzer maintains that *"in Paul there is no God - mysticism; only a Christ - mysticism by means of which man comes into relation to God"* (1953: 3). Mysticism exists, Schweitzer writes, *"when one finds a human being looking upon the division between earthly and super - earthly, temporal and eternal, as transcended, and feeling himself, while still externally amid the earthly and temporal, to belong to the super - earthly and eternal"* (1953: 1).

Ridderbos concisely describes Schweitzer's Christ - mysticism as *"the way in which the church is involved in the death and resurrection of Christ, being with Christ, and in Christ"* (1977: 29).

2.6.2   Characteristics of Schweitzer's Understanding of Pauline Mysticism
2.6.2.1   Christ Mysticism but not God Mysticism

Schweitzer's first characteristic of Pauline mysticism, and hence of his model, is, as we have already seen in his definition, that it has no God mysticism in it, i.e. *"Paul never speaks of being one with God or being in God"* (1953: 3). Therefore humanity's mystical relation to God comes through a mystical union with Christ. Schweitzer here reveals his foundation stone for Pauline mysticism - *"I am in Christ; in Him I know*

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[1]Schweitzer gives 12 utterances of Pauline Mysticism - Gal.2: 19 - 20; 3: 26 - 28; 4: 6; 5: 24 - 25; 6: 14; 2Cor.5: 17; Rom.6: 10 - 11; 7: 4; 8: 1 - 2; 9 - 11; 12: 4 - 5; Phil.3: 1 - 11; 1953:3 - 4.

myself as a being who is raised above this sensuous, sinful and transient world and already belongs to the transcendent; in Him I am assured of resurrection; in Him I am a child of God".

Mysticism can claim, believes Schweitzer, that all things are <u>from</u> God and <u>through</u> God and <u>unto</u> God, but never that they are <u>in</u> God, that is until all things return to God at the End. Eschatologically, believers are in the world until the End, when the world returns to God. Thus Paul writes *"for from him and through him and to him are all things"* (Rom.11: 36); but he cannot add *"in him are all things"*. Stoic and thereby static mysticism does however add these words; but the dynamic Pauline mysticism cannot do so. Similarly Christ cannot deliver the kingdom to God the Father until He destroys every authority and power so that *"God may be everything to every one"* (1Cor.15: 24,28). This is so because today spirits still possess powers over human beings, and Paul's God - mysticism will take the place of Christ - mysticism only when these powers are given back to God (1953: 12).

Schweitzer believes Paul insists on a mysticism of being - in - Christ (cf.2Cor.5: 17; Gal.2: 20; Phil.3: 10) a belief which originates in *"an eschatological world view"* (1953: 13; cf. Eph.1: 3 - 5). The consequences of any God - mysticism, he suggests, would be nothing but a *"passive determination of man's being an absorption into God, a sinking into the ocean of the Infinite"* (1953: 378). He admits however that Paul does proclaim a being - in - God mysticism while speaking in Athens, and quoting the well - known Stoic mystical passage *"in him we live and move and have our being"* (1953: 6; Acts 17: 28), but he rightly claims that here Paul is merely becoming a Greek to the Greeks (cf. 1Cor.9: 19 - 23), and thereby *"proving the folly of polytheism and idolatry, to call the hearers to repentance and announce the coming of Christ as the Judge of the World"* (1953: 6 - 8).

In summary the Christ - mysticism which Schweitzer attributes to Paul is passive, collective, historico - cosmic and directed towards the 'End', as opposed to the Hellenistic religion's mysticism which is active, individualistic, mystical and directed towards the beginnings. In addition Pauline mysticism is unique and is expecting the end of the world (see 1953: 23 - 24).

Several scholars rightly criticise Schweitzer here, e.g. James Stewart writes *"the*

more any man comes to be in - Christ, the more he is 'in - God'" (1935: 170); similarly Lucien Cerfaux - God manifests His glory *"on the face of the risen Christ"* (1967: 371). It would seem that Schweitzer here majors on a minor issue.

2.6.2.2   The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ

Schweitzer's second characteristic of Paul's mysticism arises from the first. Believers in their mystical relation with God receive the Holy Spirit *"as the life - principle of the supernatural state of existence . . . now entered"* (1953: 294).   Thus God's Spirit unites with the human spirit or *"psychic corporeity"* (1953: 342; cf.374; see Victor Furnish 1968: 258). Schweitzer claims that Paul wants to ensure that the believer has no direct mystical relations to God by making no distinction between the believer possessing either the Spirit of God or the Spirit of Christ (1953: 5):-

> *"But you are not in the 'flesh, you are in the Spirit,' if the Spirit of*
> *God really dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of*
> *Christ does not belong to him"* (Rom.8: 9).
> *"And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into*
> *Our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'"* (Gal.4: 6).

In spite of this free interchange Paul never converts a being - in - Christ into a being - in - God (1953: 5). It is important for later consideration to note here that believers are also 'in the Spirit' which is one and the same state, and a form of manifestation of being - in - Christ (1953: 167, 355).

2.6.2.3   Eschatological Mysticism

Schweitzer's third characteristic of Pauline mysticism is its eschatological nature, and it is to Schweitzer's credit that he stresses the importance of this factor. Unfortunately he overstresses eschatology at the expense of his Christology, partly because, as he confesses, in his student days he was convinced that Jesus' plan for His Kingdom was eschatological, and that Paul was in full agreement with Jesus' teaching.

Jesus says to His disciples *"I am with you always to the close of the age"* (Mt.28: 20). He also says He is going away (Jn.16: 5, 7), and that He will return (Mt.23: 39; 24: 3, 27 - 51; 25: 31ff), but He does not say when. Therefore the disciples

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after Pentecost have to explain the gap between the 'already' of Christ's resurrection and the 'not yet' of the resurrection of the dead, the judgement of the world and the final consummation. Schweitzer suggests that these eschatological problems 'demand' the 'Pauline Mysticism' from which Paul derives the ideas of the 'Mystical Body of Christ,' 'being in Christ,' the quasi - physical character of the 'union with Christ,' the 'realism of the dying and rising again with Him,' and the absence of the concept of 'rebirth' in Paul (1953: 138). We shall examine these later.

In order to find support for his theory Schweitzer has to consult only certain of Paul's New Testament letters,[1] and also several documents giving the Jewish eschatological view.[2] His mysticism consists of a real, physical sharing of the elect with the resurrected Christ; that is a factual, objective being - in Christ through the Spirit, as opposed to an inner spiritual mysticism (1953: 100, 118; see Ridderbos 1977: 30). Scholars challenge Schweitzer's theology here, e.g. E. Ellis writes that *"Schweitzer's interpretation of Paul's eschatology as a makeshift expedient (and as a sacramental mysticism) is questionable"* (1979: 25).

Crucial to Schweitzer's theory is the suggestion he gives here, that the eschatological problems 'demand' the Pauline mysticism. This changes his view of mysticism completely. So Hafemann writes *"the title of Schweitzer's book is thus misleading, since for Schweitzer this mysticism was not the result of some immediate and timeless 'oneness' with Christ"* (1993: 675).

Schweitzer's theology is very unorthodox. He writes *"since Jesus expects the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom to take place immediately after his death"* (1953: 115). No! The kingdom comes with Jesus. Again Schweitzer writes, Jesus *"goes up to Jerusalem intent on compelling the rulers of the people to put Him to death"* (1953: 59). No! Jesus says *"I lay it [my life] down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down"* (Jn.10: 18).

Eschatological mysticism is an acceptable possibility as Schweitzer explains *"Eschatology undertakes to get rid of transcendence"*. It *"lets the natural world*

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[1]The Pastorals, 2Thes., Eph. & Col. are unacceptable (Schweitzer 1953: 52 - 53)
[2]Book of Enoch, Psalms of Solomon, Apocalypses of Baruch and Ezra especially (1953: 54 - 55).

dissolve into the supernatural, and sees this event as having its beginning in the dying and rising again of Jesus," (1953: 37). The mysticism Schweitzer is referring to however is not natural but spiritual and ethical (see Oepke 1974: 2: 422).

Likewise, as Schweitzer describes, from this conception flow the 'Mystical Body of Christ,' the 'being - in - Christ,' and 'union with Christ' (1953: 138). It is however questionable whether this union is 'physical' as Schweitzer claims (1953: 127 - 128). This will be referred to again later.

In summary Schweitzer makes an important contribution in discerning and explaining the eschatological framework behind Paul's letters with their continual expectation of Christ's return. Mysticism and the being - in - Christ are linked with their roots in eschatology and hence we agree with Schweitzer that *"when all is said and done, Pauline personal religion is in its fundamental character mystical".*

2.6.3   Sacraments

Schweitzer gives a general definition of sacramental as *"by partaking in some appointed contrivance, a ceremony thought of as having effectual powers, something related to a higher life is attained . . . the possibility that . . . ceremonies might be given a sacramental value in the sense that by them assurance of that which is future is given in the present, "* (Schweitzer 1953: 229). Elsewhere he states that *"all that is needed to make a sacrament is that the ceremonial act, carried out in a fashion willed by God, contributes to salvation, "* (1953: 21).

Christian sacraments come into existence with Jesus' death when the natural world ends and the supernatural world is about to begin. Eternal life is not offered, but is simply a sharing in what is being prepared (1953: 22 - 23). No doubt Paul accepts the sacraments existing in the early Church, and then links them with his mysticism of the dying and rising unto Christ (1953: 20). Thus sacraments, having Christ mysticism at their centre, can play an active part in his faith (1953: 22). Baptism and the Lord's Supper both initiate believers into the 'last times' thereby contributing to their salvation and building up their faith (1953: 22).

2.6.3.1   Baptism

Paul describes the consequences of being baptised into Christ Jesus as being *"baptised into his death"* and being *"buried"* with Him so that we *"might walk in newness of life"* (Rom.6: 3 - 4). In Gal.3: 27 the baptised are said to *"have put on Christ"*.[1] Thus Schweitzer describes baptism as the beginning of the being in Christ, and of the process of dying and rising again which is associated with it. This happens, Schweitzer believes, because baptism is performed in the name of Jesus Christ and thereby *"effects what the mysticism of being - in - Christ accepts as the effect of redemption"* (1953: 261).

The subordination of baptism to redemption implies that issues like the forgiveness of sins and the possession of the Spirit are simply *"partial manifestations;"* the mystical being - in -Christ is central to this preparation for participating in Christ's glory (1953: 261).

Believers first enter the mystical body of Christ through baptism, thereby enjoying fellowship both with Christ and with all other believers (1953: 116). This is a further consequence of the baptismal act, *"we were all baptised into one body"* (1Cor.12: 13). We shall now examine this 'body'.

A)   Body

How does Schweitzer arrive at his concept of the Church being regarded as the 'mystical body of Christ'? In this section we shall seek to answer this question.

Schweitzer, influenced by Daniel 7: 27 *"the people of the saints of the Most High,"* and Enoch 62, begins his analysis with those God *"predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first born among many brethren"* (1953: 102, 9; Rom. 8: 29). Following Paul's hierarchy, God - Christ - Man - Woman - *"the head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband, and the head of Christ is God,"* Schweitzer concludes that being - in - Christ means that there is no difference between us in nearness to God (1Cor.11: 3), therefore humanity is homogeneous for the first time since the Fall (1953: 10).

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[1]Dying means becoming unclothed: the late Jewish view (Schweitzer1953: 135; 2Cor.5: 1 - 9).

Thus Paul can claim that we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another (Rom.12: 5). So, Schweitzer asks, how does Paul use the word body as the extension of a person's being without explaining its real meaning? (1953: 116). Paul goes even further *"you are all one in Christ Jesus,"* i.e. a joint personality (Gal.3: 28; 1953: 118; cf.1Cor.12: 13). This mystic union enables Schweitzer to refer to the 'mystical body of Christ' from which nothing will be able to separate us (1953: 116; Rom.8: 39). All who die and rise again with Christ constitute this mystical body of Christ, the Church, the Elect, the Community of God, the predestined. This mystical sharing in and with Christ justifies both believers in Christ and Christ in believers (see 1953: 125; cf. 2Cor.4: 11). This reciprocity will be considered later.

It is the Spirit who gives believers the love and assurance that they are in the mystical body of Christ - *"the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death"* (1953: 167; Rom.8: 2).

Schweitzer is inconsistent in his understanding of the elect or the saved who constitute the body of Christ. *"The historic Jesus does not die for humanity as a whole . . . but for a definite number namely, those who are elect to the Kingdom of God"* (1953: 58; cf.105). Later (p107) Schweitzer adds that *"one who is not actually elect, but through his conduct enters into fellowship with Jesus, can thus acquire the right of an elect person to be with the Son of Man in the Messianic Kingdom* (see W. Davies 1980: 100).

B)   Dying and Rising with Christ

The realism of Paul's Christ - mysticism surprises Schweitzer. Instead of being static it is a real co - experiencing of Christ's dying and rising again, not once only but continually, *"for while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh"* (1953: 13, 17, 118; 2Cor.4: 11). This characteristic of mysticism has important consequences - the believer is *"freed from sin and from the Law, possesses the Spirit of Christ, and is assured of resurrection"* (1953: 3; cf. Phil.4: 10). Furthermore included in the mystical dying and rising again with Christ are the ethical and the sacramental elements. This is possible

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because we are not dealing with a metaphorical thought form, but with a *'quasi - physical'* concept (1953: 293 - 295). We shall now explore the issues of 'rebirth' and 'sacraments' before dealing with 'baptism'.

C)   Rebirth

Schweitzer notes that the expression 'rebirth' only appears in the deutero - Pauline letters, and attributes its omission from Paul's more genuine letters firstly to its frequent use in Hellenistic mystery - religions (1953: 13); secondly because it could have no place in Paul's thinking, which is so oriented to eschatological expectation, i.e. resurrection - mysticism as opposed to rebirth - mysticism (1953: 15); and thirdly the use of mystery - religions language would bring conflict between the Jerusalem community and the Hellenistic churches (1953: 31).

Schweitzer maintains that the birth metaphor (cf. Gal.4: 19; Philem.10), refers only to Paul being the father of their faith, not to their being born again. Similarly Paul's claim that he who is in Christ is a new creature (2Cor.5: 17; Gal.6: 15) is relative not to rebirth but to belonging already to the new world (1953: 13, 15).

Here again Schweitzer appears to be sacrificing the Christological for the sake of the eschatological.

D)   Paul's 'In Christ' Phrase

As we found with the 'body' image above so it is equally surprising that Paul gives no systematic explanation of the meaning of the 'in Christ' phrase - although he uses it about 167 times (Schweitzer 1953: 138). Schweitzer affirms that because the 'in Christ' phrase replaces Paul's 'in the flesh' phrase it must indicate an actual physical union between the believer and Christ. Scholars accuse Schweitzer of speculating here, and interpreting metaphorical phrases too literally (1953: 127; see E. Best 1955: 16; R.B. Hays 1983: 48).

An important issue is Schweitzer's contention that 'being in Christ' is simply an abbreviation for partaking in the 'Mystical Body of Christ' (1953: 122 - 123). This mystical body comes into existence after Jesus' death, when he expects the Messianic Kingdom to come, but it fails to come. So Paul claims that the Messiah will still appear

in the future, but by His dying and rising the resurrection of the dead has begun. This constitutes the mystical body in which the elect share a bodily presence with one another and with Christ. Paul's mysticism is simply the revelation of the pre - existent Church (the Community of God) which is dominated by the mystical body of Christ, whose members are in Christ (1953: 115 - 116).

In baptism the believer experiences an initial dying and rising again, together with a union with Christ and the other elect who are in Christ - *"you are all one in Christ Jesus"*. All this takes place because it is done 'in the name of Jesus Christ' who was buried and rose again. And thus the effects of redemption operate in Christ - the prime mystery of Christianity. *"This being in Christ is the prime enigma of the Pauline teaching: once grasped it gives the clue to the whole"* (1953: 19, 3; Rom.6: 3 - 4; Gal.3: 28). Amongst these blessings of redemption are faith and righteousness (1953: 206 - 207).

We shall now examine justification to complete this section on Schweitzer's mystical 'in Christ' phrase.

E)   Justification

Justification has been a controversial issue throughout Church history, and Schweitzer's understanding of it has been misunderstood. He regards it as a *"particular formulation of the fact of the incompatibility of Law and eschatology"* (1953: 205). His other equally controversial argument is that the *"doctrine of righteousness by faith is . . . a subsidiary crater, which has formed within the rim of the main crater - the mystical doctrine of redemption through the being - in - Christ"* (1953: 225).

Schweitzer's above statements have attracted much critical comment, e.g. Bruce (1977: 326), Oepke (1974: 1: 541n) and Ziesler (1990: 89) dispute justification being a 'subsidiary' crater by referring to Paul's missionary preaching in Romans particularly, but also elsewhere (cf. Galatians; Phil.3; 1Cor.6: 11). However, as Thiselton points out (1979: 134) Schweitzer is stressing that the eschatological approach is more fundamental, and therefore more important, than the juridical one. It is apparent though that Schweitzer is being extreme, like his unorthodox belief that Jesus' mind was obsessed by the eschatological certainty that the world would shortly end (see E.E. Ellis

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1979: 25; Barrett 1975: 5).

We shall examine justification again later. At this stage we can agree with
Furnish that Schweitzer gives justification too minor a role and that it is debatable
whether or not an ethic could be derived from it (1968: 259; Schweitzer 1953: 225).

2.6.4 Conclusion

We are examining Schweitzer's book on Paul's mysticism with a view to
establishing a model of mysticism as a guide in our study of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase.

Of the three foundation stones of Schweitzer's theory only one appears to be
well and truly laid, that is the eschatological mysticism stone. The other two, Christ
mysticism but not God mysticism, and the Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ, do not
appear to contribute towards the mystical model. In so far as baptism is concerned the
model is identical with the normal baptism model. Schweitzer makes a great
contribution to theology in the emphasis he rightly places on eschatology, but he also
brings a new vision to the 'religions geschichtliche' school (see Ridderbos 1977: 31).
According to Hafemann in spite of the work of Wrede, Deissmann and Schweitzer, and
W. Davies later, it takes a further thirty years at least before a paradigm shift can take
place regarding the centre of Paul's thought (see Hafemann 1993: 675).

A further result of this study is Schweitzer's idea of the origin of the 'in Christ'
phrase through baptism as a result of eschatological mysticism. We shall deal with this
later.

2.7 Holy Spirit Mysticism Model

In whatever way we define, the Spirit, whether as *"the breath of life"* (Gen.2: 7),
or as *"the power by which the Christian enters the Christian life, and the power in
which he lives the Christian life"* (Barclay 1972: 137), or as the *"constantly active
principle of ethical life"* (Oepke 1974: 2: 540), we are thinking of God in the person of
the Holy Spirit. Our intention here is to construct a model of the Spirit as we examine
His relations with humankind. This model will assist in our understanding both of
Christian mysticism and of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase.

2.7.1 Prehistoric Sealing with the Promised Spirit

In Ephesians 1: 13 - 14 Paul shares with his readers God's three part plan for the election, redemption and inheritance of humanity, and the ultimate reconciliation of the whole cosmos in Christ. In this pre - view of the history of the universe Paul writes that before actually creating the world God sees believers in heaven as: - blessed in Christ (v.3); chosen in Christ, holy and blameless (v.4); destined to be His sons through Jesus Christ (v.5); given grace in Christ (v.6); redeemed through Christ's blood, and forgiven (v.7); shown the purpose of His will in Christ (v.9); and His plan to unite in Christ all things in heaven and on earth (v.10); living for the praise of Christ's glory (v.12); and being sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, the guarantee of our inheritance (v.13 - 14; cf. Col.2: 2 - 10).[1]

Almost all the events described in this passage could refer indirectly to baptism, the event which is central to Christianity, as well as being the time when believers are now in Christ (cf. Phil.3: 10); in contrast to Judaism where baptism is only a preparatory ritual (see Segal 1990: 63). Thus, the model of the Spirit has a particular emphasis on baptism.

This prehistoric element of the model is obviously anticipatory. The Spirit will be God's agent in creation (Gen.1: 2); will anoint prophets, priests and kings, including the Messiah (Is.61: 1); will give Himself to humanity as a new heart and a new Spirit (Ezek.36: 26 - 27); and will pour Himself out on all flesh (Jl.3: 28). Jesus' life is perfectly submitted to the Spirit (see W. G. MacDonald 1993: 487), because *"the impression of the seal of God's image was perfectly displayed in Him"* (Basil, quoted by G. Lampe 1967: 250). Thus after the Fall when God's creation will be *"a good thing spoiled"* (John Baillie 1939: 22 - 23), believers who *"have borne the image of the man of dust . . . shall also bear the image of the man of heaven"* (1Cor.15: 49) when they are in Christ and Christ is in them, through the activity of the Spirit (J. Davies 1958: 17). Lampe, following the Fathers sees the Spirit as the *"seal that stamps believers, not with an outward brand . . . but with the divine image, the gift of the Spirit"* (1967: 249; H.

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[1] It is significant that in Eph.1: 1 - 14 there are no less than fifteen references to Jesus Christ, and nine uses of the 'in Christ' phrase. Paul's primary intention here is to thank God for all His blessings in Christ as he sees them both in retrospect and in prospect.

Ridderbos 1977: 400).

It is in baptism that believers will be restored to the perfect fellowship enjoyed with God before the Fall (Acts 2: 38; 1Cor.1: 13; Bultmann 1952: 1: 39). Paul gives no definition of baptism, thereby assuming that his readers fully understand the meaning behind his references to it, and also that, where applicable, they are all baptised (Rom.6: 3; 1Cor.12: 13). There are numerous definitions of baptism, e.g. *"a unique personal and sacramental act that confers 'being - in - Christ', which is the sum of Christian existence"* (Gregory Baum 1975: 67). Baum also quotes St. Clement's definition *"baptism is a bath that washes away sin, the free remission of the penalties of sin and illumination on the way of salvation. It perfects and seals us, transports us over the frontier of death into the life of Christ"* (1975: 69). We note here and will study later, this real unity between Christ and humanity. M. Green rightly suggests that Paul's favourite definition of a Christian is someone who is 'in Christ' (1975: 130).

It is difficult to isolate the several effects of baptism because they are all taking place more or less simultaneously (see Bruner 1971: 257; M. Green 1975: 132; Rea 1974: 186). Geoffrey Bromiley has a temporal approach - *"baptism tells us what has been done, what is being done and what will be done for us and in us"* (1992: 239). M. Green favours the instrumental approach - *"the human side, the divine side and the Churchly side"* (1975: 132). The majority of scholars (e.g. Bultmann 1952: 1: 136 - 140; Ridderbos 1977: 397 - 404), however, appear to follow their personal understanding of the event without the fullest regard for the process as a whole. We shall follow the spiritual sequence as closely as we can.

2.7.2   The Convicting Spirit

Jesus says that the Holy Spirit *"will convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in me"* (Jn.16: 8 - 9). We see this happening first at Pentecost. When Peter finishes speaking, his hearers are *"cut to the heart"* and ask the apostles what they should do. *"Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit"* replies Peter (Acts 2: 37 - 38). This conviction may be seen in action several times (e.g. Acts 16: 29 - 30; Rom.1: 16; 1Cor.14: 24 - 25;

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Phil.1: 6; Col.1: 13).

There is naturally no limit to the ways in which the Holy Spirit may convict human beings, but it is evident that for both Luke and Paul faith is stirred up principally by the inspired proclamation of the Gospel (e.g. Rom.10: 17; see Dunn 1973: 94). This faith leads to conversion, baptism and to being in Christ.

Repentance, and thereby cleansing and purification from sin, is a vital part of baptism in order that Christ *"might present the Church to himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish"*(Eph.5: 27; 1Cor.6: 11). All past sins are forgiven (2Pet.1: 9) and the Holy Spirit gives power over the tendency to sin, that is, over original sin with which all human beings are born, so that one's conscience is purified *"from dead works to serve the living God"* (Heb.9: 14; see Moss 1961: 341).

This first phase of the baptismal event may be seen as preparatory - the Holy Spirit convicts of sin and of righteousness, and makes each candidate holy 'in Christ' as the old passes away and the new is created - *("if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old has passed away, behold, the new has come,"* 2Cor.5: 17). The Sacrament of baptism is initiated by the combination of the spiritual means of divine grace with the response of human faith (see Stewart 1935: 173; A. McNeile 1920: 303). It seems correct to identify this gift of divine grace received in conversion with the Holy Spirit (see Dunn 1973: 94 - 95).

In other words, in this element the Holy Spirit is used by God to draw souls to Christ (Jn.6: 44), for it is God's will that all will be saved (Jn.3: 16; 1Tim.2: 4 etc.). We shall later discuss the origin of the 'in Christ' phrase, but many scholars believe that it is first used in relation to the baptism event.

2.7.3 Historic Sealing with the Spirit

Believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit when the divine image in which they are created (which was mentioned earlier), is restored (Eph.4: 30; cf. Jn.6: 27, on the Son of man *"has God the Father set his seal"*). Paul refers to circumcision as a seal (Rom.4: 11), and a 'seal' was also used by the mystery religions to describe initiation, so it is difficult to trace its real origin (see Bultmann 1952: 1: 138).

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The seal of the Holy Spirit however is better described as the fruit produced by the gift of the Spirit which shows to others that the person concerned is decisively sealed by the Spirit and is now the Lord's property, (see Ridderbos 1977: 400; Bultmann 1952: 1: 137, 162; Lampe 1967: 259). Thus Paul claims that the Corinthians are the 'seal' of his apostleship in the Lord (1Cor.9: 2).

Perhaps the most crucial aspect of this sealing is Paul's assurance that we are sealed *"for the day of redemption"* (Eph.4: 30), i.e. the lives of the sealed are protected against evil influences until the Lord returns. God *"has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins"* (Col.1: 13 - 14). An exorcism takes place; evil spirits are driven out; and the baptised enter Jesus' kingdom and are under His protection.

The faith shown by those being baptised, (e.g. Mt.28: 19; Mk.16: 16; Acts 2: 41), and their repentance lead to their being sealed as the Lord's property, when the Trinitarian name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is pronounced over them in the name of (by the authority and command of) Jesus Christ (Mt.28: 19; Bultmann 1952: 1: 137; see P.C. Nelson 1981: 45 - 46).

Deissmann defines *"in the name of (someone)"* as describing *"the setting up of the relation of belonging"*. Applying this definition to baptism, Heit - Müller suggests that baptism in the name of Jesus signifies the setting up of the relation of belonging to Jesus (see G. Beasley - Murray 1993: 60). This definition points in the right direction, but the use of the word 'belonging' fails to capture the full intensity of the believer's relationship to Jesus. The Hebrew use of the idiomatic 'in the name of' is similar to the Greek and means basically 'with respect to'. P. Billerbeck illustrates its use as Jews baptised pagan slaves 'in the name of slavery'. When freed they would be baptised 'in the name of freedom'. Similarly offerings would be made in the name of the offering, (i.e. its intention); in the name of God (for His sake and glory); in the name of the altar fires (that they be properly kindled); in the name of the sweet savour (for the delight it gives to God); and in the name of the good pleasure of God (in obedience to His will). Here Beasley - Murray follows Billerbeck rightly concluding that in baptism Jesus is named over the baptised (Jas.2: 7), whom the Lord then appropriates as His own, and

the baptised then call on the name of the Lord (Acts 22: 16), and by faith accept Jesus as Lord of their lives (1993: 61). Paul summarises the sealing process: *"It is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has commissioned us; he has put his seal upon us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee"* (2Cor.1: 21 - 22), i.e. as a guarantee of inheritance, for all who are now in Christ.

Christian baptism involves immersion in water, the ritual use of which is probably a common practice in all religions (see Moule 1968: 72). Tertullian (c160 AD) captures the mystical aspect of baptism in the early Church, *"the bliss of the oath of allegiance taken in the sacramental water . . . the conscious and blessed beginning of the Christian life, a new birth and a rebirth in the image of Christ, accomplished by bathing in water while a few words were uttered. With all the simplicity of a divine act, in contrast to the pomp of the initiation rites in pagan religions, the washing of water with the word"* (Eph.5: 26) *"brought about something incredibly magnificent, the life of eternity"* (see Baum 1975: 66). As the Spirit of God at creation moves over the waters sanctifying them as the *'well spring of all holiness'* in preparation for Jesus' baptism in the waters of the Jordan and His anointing by the Spirit, so through baptism, the Christian's original sin and personal sins are washed away, and through grace there is a sharing of the divine nature in Christ (see Suenens 1975: 40 - 41).

Here we find the real essence of baptism. Through dying to the world 'with Christ' the candidate, whether immersed in or sprinkled with water, is 'in Christ'. The old world with its sin, sickness and death is replaced by a new creation of union and life (Rom.6: 11; 1Cor.15: 22; 2Cor.5: 14, 17; Ziesler 1990: 97). Our old self, writes Paul, is crucified with Christ, *"so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin"* (Rom.6: 6). Having died with Christ, we shall also live with him (Rom.6: 8), and therefore *"it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me"* (Gal.2: 20).

Paul reminds his readers of what happens to them in baptism *"you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Spirit of our God"*(1Cor.6: 11). In dying and being buried with Christ, they rise to a new life of righteousness in Him (H. Kennedy 1959: 151; M. Erickson 1992: 351). Now sharing God's life in Christ (Rom.6: 11) believers can live Christ's life (Gal.2: 20; Phil.1: 21;

Francois Amiot 1973: 42). The mystical nature of this union with God is progressively being revealed by the Spirit.

2.7.4 Baptised in the Holy Spirit

The final stage of the baptismal process is the baptism of believers by Jesus in the Holy Spirit. When this event is mentioned for the seventh and last time in the New Testament Paul writes, *"for by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body - Jews or Greeks, slaves or free - and all were made to drink of one Spirit"* (1Cor.12: 13). In the context Paul is describing *"spiritual gifts"* (v.1), and in this pericope he emphasises the oneness of the Spirit who gives these gifts to believers in the body and who as Jesus baptises them, now drink of this one Spirit (see Rea 1974: 146 - 147).

At Pentecost Christ baptises the church in the Holy Spirit, and the same Holy Spirit, whom Jews believed had left Israel with the last of the prophets, now begins building the church (see Bultmann 1952: 1: 41). The believer, baptised by Christ in the Holy Spirit, is here fully equipped with power to do Christ's work. This is the prime purpose of Pentecost - to receive power to be Christ's witnesses (Acts 1: 8), i.e. *"to drink of one Spirit"*.

Reviewing these four baptismal events and the variety of metaphors Paul uses to describe being born into God's family, that is into Christ, it is difficult to argue against this birth being seen as mystical. Oliver Greene aptly refers to the Holy Spirit as being the *"attending physician"* at this birth through the Word (1979: 166; Jn.5: 24; Eph.2: 8 - 9; Rom.10: 17; 1Pet.1: 23). Similarly Ralph Riggs (1977: 63 - 64) counts seven distinct terms used to describe what happens after salvation, and even although some of these terms are virtually synonymous, there are significant differences in their uses.[1] The several references to the 'in Christ' phrase must also be noticed. But most significant about this whole 'birth' is its principal consequence - Union in Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit which accords with our definition of mysticism.

Having repented and having died with Christ to sin the believer is now baptised and is *"alive to God in Christ Jesus"* (Rom.6: 11). Having died with Christ believers

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[1]The other six are Mt.3: 11; Mk.1: 8; Lk.3: 16; Jn.1: 33; Acts1: 5; 11: 16.

will also live with Him (Rom.6: 8), for they are incorporated in Christ as His members (see Aquinas ST: 2: 2411). This union in Christ is possible because the baptised persons are now dead to sin; all their sins are forgiven, and they are spiritually regenerated – (Rom.6: 3 - 4; see Aquinas ST: 2: 2388). While conversion is the conscious turning of a person to God, regeneration is usually the subconscious ontological reality, which begins one's life in grace, i.e. union in Christ (see Moss 1961: 343; Fitzmyer 1968: 821; Mascall 1959: 86). Regeneration here implies the person's removal from the curse of original sin by grace through justification, and translation into a redeemed community, a re - created human race (Mascall 1959: 86, 83, 79). The effects of original sin however are not removed, but in the new realm in which the person is now living, healing can take place and supernatural virtues can be manifested (Mascall 1959: 83; Gal.2: 20; 2Cor.10: 5)[1]. Aquinas aptly writes of believers in Christ being incorporated in Him mentally, but after they are baptised they are incorporated in Him corporally (ST: 2: 2412).

In order to describe this transformation of the person now baptised into Christ, and who is a Christian, Paul refers several times to *'putting on Christ'*, or putting on a new man or a new nature (Rom.13: 14; 1Cor.15: 53; 2Cor.5: 3; Gal.3: 27; Eph.4: 24; Col.3: 9 - 10). Paul could be influenced here by Old Testament occasions in which people were clothed with, e.g. salvation, righteousness, or the qualities of others (2Chr.6: 41, Job 29: 14; Is.61: 10; Zech.3: 3ff; cf. Dt.8: 4) or by the Greek mystery religions and their regal robes (Fitzmyer 1968: 243) or by the custom of undressing and dressing during the baptism service; or by actors in theatres who 'become' the characters they are playing (cf. Dunn 1973: 110; 1993: 119). Paul's command, however, is strong, *"put on the Lord Jesus Christ"* (Rom.13: 14), and Dodd rightly sees him referring here to *"incorporation into the mystical Body of Christ"* and encouraging his readers to live accordingly (1932: 210). We are reminded of Augustine who in a fit of despair over trying to lead a good life, hears a voice telling him to *"take and read"*, and after reading this passage of Paul *"as though the light of assurance had poured into my heart, all the*

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[1] Guthrie 1981: 646n quotes G. Beasley - Murray *"baptism saves not because water washes dirt from the body, but is the occasion when a man is met by the Risen Christ!"* Further he speaks of the grace offered in baptism as being *"the gracious act of God Himself".*

shades of doubt were scattered" (Confessions viii 12). Augustine becomes a new man in Christ.

A. Wikenhauser supports this interpretation of the passage as being mystical, applying it sacramentally to both individual and corporate conduct (1960: 45). The old man or nature is dead, as we have seen; the new is in Christ and cannot therefore be described using earthly terms (see Guthrie 1981: 657). Thus we can say with Calvin that putting on Christ is the fulfilment of our baptism in Christ (1962: 2: 515). *"The new man,"* N. Dahl goes so far to describe as, *"an eschatological entity, corporate and pneumatic, nearly identical with Christ himself"*(see Ridderbos 1977: 63n).

An important factor here which is sometimes overlooked is the command, which is present tense, plural in number and passive voice, addressed to individuals and to groups of people *"be filled with the Spirit"* (Eph.5: 18; see K. Wuest 1978: 33 - 34; the command is sometimes already, or about to be, fulfilled).[1] It is apparent that God wishes all believers to be continually being filled with the Spirit, for the Spirit is given without measure (John 3: 34).

In several letters Paul stresses fullness, contrasting it in different ways, e.g. he remembers Timothy's tears and longs to see him and to be *"filled with joy"* (2Tim.1: 4). At the beginning of his letter to the Romans (1: 29 - 31), Paul writes of unbelievers who are *"filled with all manner of wickedness . . . "*, but he ends his letter (15: 14) feeling satisfied that his readers are *"full of goodness, filled with all knowledge . . ."* Similarly he prays that the Philippians (1: 11) may be *"filled with the fruits of righteousness which come through Jesus Christ"*, and be in *"full accord"* and in humility (2: 2) having the mind which was in Christ Jesus, who emptied himself in humility and was therefore highly exalted (2: 5 - 9). He also plays with words contrasting Christ having his fullness of God, with the Colossians (2: 9 - 10) having their fullness of Christ (see E. Scott 1930: 43 - 44).

At Pentecost the gift of the Holy Spirit is promised to all called by God (Acts 2:

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[1]E.g. John (Lk.1: 15); Elizabeth (1: 41); Zechariah (1: 67); Jesus (4: 1); 120 brethren (Acts2: 4); Peter (4: 8); Christian community (4: 31); Seven men (6: 3); Stephen (6: 5; 7: 55) Paul (9: 17; 13: 9); Barnabas (11: 24); disciples (13: 52); Ephesian church (Eph.3: 19; 5: 18).

39; cf. Samaria 8: 17; Damascus 9: 17; Caesarea 10: 44; Ephesus 19: 6). Christ is the Baptiser in the Holy Spirit and the Head of the church *"Who makes everything complete, and Who fills everything everywhere [with Himself]."* (Eph.1: 23 Amplified).

Michael Green rightly suggests that in the Old Testament the Spirit of God is not very focused, being attributed instead to strength, wisdom, ecstasy etc., while in the New Testament it is the *"fully personal embodiment of the Godhead . . . localised in Jesus"* (M. Green 1975: 51 cf. Ex.31: 3; Judg.3: 10; Joel2: 28). No doubt, partly because of his Jewish background, and partly because the Spirit is really God's gift, Paul writes more often of the Spirit of God than of the Spirit of Christ (over 16 times to 3, See Fee 1993: 668 - 669; Wikenhauser 1960: 70). But perhaps his most important reason for doing this is the general belief that *"God would pour out His Spirit on the coming Messiah and His people"* (D. Whiteley 1974: 124 - 125). As we know, this is exactly what happens, so Paul can now almost equate the indwelling Spirit with *"the indwelling Christ"* or, *"the belonging to God in Christ experience"* (Whiteley 1974: 126; cf. Dodd 1932: 124). Paul's action here is vitally important, because he connects 'spiritual' experience to the revealed Jesus Christ instead of to any other artificial magical source (Dodd 1932: 124; 1Cor.15: 45). In Christ and in the Spirit always live alongside one another.

In summary, it seems that the believer receives at conversion *"the Spirit and life of the risen exalted Christ"* (see Dunn 1973: 95; Acts 16: 7; Rom.8: 9; Gal.4: 6; Phil.1: 19). By using several different phrases somewhat interchangeably (cf. Rom.8: 8 - 11), Paul appears to be stressing especially the principal functional role of the Spirit of Christ in the believer's salvation.

2.7.5   In the Spirit

The experiences described above together constitute the baptism event, and although we have separated them, they essentially take place simultaneously. Baptised believers are now both in Christ and in the Spirit; but before they are in the Spirit they are in Christ. To be in Christ is to be born again, to become an adopted child of God, to become a member of Christ's family the church. (We shall study this event in detail later.) Thus Paul confirms that anyone *"who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him"* (1Cor.6: 17; cf. *"You are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, if the Spirit of*

God really dwells in you " Rom.8: 9). We look now at what it means to be in the Spirit.

Table Three

Frequency of 'Spirit' and Spirit Phrases in Paul's Letters.

Letter	Number	In the Spirit	Holy Spirit	Spirit of God His Spirit	Other	
1Th.	5	1	3	0	0	
2Th.	4	0	0	0	1	2:8 Jesus Breath
1Cor.	39	9	3	6	0	
2Cor.	18	3	2	5	0	
Gal.	18	7	0	0	1	4:6 Spirit of His Son
Rom.	34	7	5	3	1	8: 9 Spirit of Christ
Philem.	0	0	0	0	0	
Col.	2	1	0	0	0	
Eph.	15	6	2	2	0	
Phil.	4	2	0	1	1	1:19 Spirit of Jesus Christ
1Tim.	4	1	0	0	1	3: 16 Christ in the Spirit
Titus	1	0	1	0	0	
2Tim.	3	0	1	0	0	
Total	147	37	17	17	5	

Table[1] Three above shows the frequency of appearance in Paul's letters of references to ① Spirit, ② 'in the Spirit', ③ 'Holy Spirit', ④ 'Spirit of God / His Spirit', ⑤ 'Spirit of Jesus / Christ / His Son'. Paul's letters are listed in what is thought to be chronological order. The Holy Spirit is not referred to in Philemon.

Of particular interest to us in this Table are the 37 uses of 'pneuma' with the Dative case, i.e. 'en pneumati' and 'pneumati', of which 32 do not have an article and 5 do have one. Almost two thirds of these are in Galatians, 1 Corinthians and Romans where Paul is concerned with the part the Spirit plays in the lives of his readers (see Fee 1995: 23). At the outset Paul's language must at times be seen as fluid or flexible, so we can claim that when referring to divine activity Paul is always referring to the Holy

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[1]For certain information in this Table we are indebted to Gordon Fee (1995) and W.Herbert Brown (1973).

Spirit. Fee rightly implies that the Holy Spirit is intended to some degree by Paul in almost all the pneuma passages, and if there is any doubt the translation can sometimes be 'S / spirit' (e.g. 1Cor.5: 3, 4; 6: 17; 14: 14, 15; Col.2: 5; 1995: 24 - 25). Thus Fee concludes *"that Paul can put 'pneumati / en pneumati' side by side with 'sarki / en sarki', where the latter can mean only 'in / by the flesh', is the clear evidence that Paul also - and always - by this formula means 'in / by the Spirit'"* (Fee 1995: 24; cf. Rom.12: 11).

In other words the baptised are set free to *"live in the Spirit"*, and are thereby commanded also to *"walk in the Spirit"* ('pneumati', Gal.5: 16, 25). What is Paul's point here? In Mk.1: 23 we read of a man *"in an unclean spirit"* who is healed by Jesus. We can say that the man is possessed by an unclean spirit who takes over his life. In the same way Paul quotes possibly from Lev.26: 12 and Ezek.37: 27 *"I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God"* (2Cor.6: 16; see OAB 1401n; cf. Num.27: 18). He explains here how he can refer to believers as *"the temple of the living God, an illustration he first uses in 1Cor.3: 16, where he also reminds the Corinthians that God's Spirit dwells in them"*. Christ's promise *"I am with you always . . ."* (Mt.28: 20) is hereby fulfilled, confirming that believers are 'children of God' (Rom.8: 16), and that the Spirit in their hearts is a guarantee of what God plans for them (2Cor.1: 22; see Guthrie 1981: 654). We may also with Wikenhauser point to Philo's references to those *"inspired and full of God"* as *"thought wanes and leaves the tower of the soul, but the divine spirit has entered and made his dwelling there"* (1960: 77; cf. Judaism's Shekinah or glory presence among His people, see F. Hauck 1974: 4: 576).

Fee summarises the relationship well by interpreting Paul's statement Christ lives in him as *"Christ lives in me by His Spirit"*, acknowledging the ongoing work of Christ in his life that is being carried out by the indwelling Spirit (1995: 838). This helps us understand better Jesus' first words to Paul *"I am Jesus whom you persecute"* (Acts 9: 5). So the Spirit both creates humanity, and draws believers into Christ in the new creation, a spiritual union which is called the Mystical Body of Christ (see Wikenhauser 1960: 74).

This union in the Holy Spirit enables believers both to be fashioned into Christ's image and to receive the gifts of the Spirit, which we shall now consider, which equip

believers to bring forth fruit for God's glory.

2.7.6   The Gifts and Phenomena of the Holy Spirit

A gift may be defined as a concrete manifestation of the love of Christ (Bittlinger 1974: 17), or as a *"Spirit - given ability for Christian service"* (Leslie Flynn 1988: 21). Paul gives several lists of gifts of the Spirit all of which we may safely assume are particular for the congregation he is addressing and thus they all differ from one another. Furthermore none of the lists is exhaustive.[1]

The functions of the various gifts naturally depend upon the nature of the gifts themselves, but over and above these, the gifts will convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment; guide believers into all truth; declare the things that are to come; glorify Christ; and build up the community and its members, i.e. for the common good (Jn.16: 8, 13, 14; 1Cor.12: 7). Paul sets out to encourage the Corinthians, who are no longer worshipping idols, but are now by the Holy Spirit saying *"Jesus is Lord"* (1Cor.12: 2 - 3). Paul continues to encourage by stressing both that there are extensive gifts of the Spirit in contrast to the more singular experience of the Corinthians, and that there are diverse manifestations of the Spirit within the unity of the church, as there is diversity within God's unity (see Fee 1995: 159, 160). We need not attempt to classify the various gifts, as so many scholars do, in so many different ways, because it is evident that Paul is focussing more upon the gifts being manifestations of the activity of the Spirit in the church.

2.7.6.1 Perfection

Paul admits that he is not yet perfect but that he is pressing on *"toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus"*, (Phil.3: 12, 14). The Greek word 'teleios' translated 'perfect', means complete, having reached its end in terms of maturity and goodness (Vine's 1991: 595). The word also carries with it the idea of totality; God's 'whole' will must be done (Gerhard Delling 1974: 8: 73, 74). According

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[1]Spiritual songs (Eph.5: 19; Col.3: 16) could be added to the list while Flynn (1988: 31) suggests celibacy (1Cor.7: 7), hospitality (Heb.13: 2), missionary endowment and martyrdom (Phil.1: 29).

to Barclay 'teleios' also means *"baptised persons who are full members of the Church as opposed to those who are still under instruction"* (1981: 65; cf. Phil.3: 12, 15).

If then the seed of perfection is planted in our heart at baptism when we become a new creation in Christ and walk in the Spirit as the gifts of the Spirit are manifested through us, we will move in Christ *"from perfection to perfection"* (William Macquarrie follows Henry Jones 1975: 320). The indicative - imperative principle will apply, *"you must be perfect, as your heavenly father is perfect"* (Mt.5: 48), or, as Paul modifies it, *"make holiness perfect in the fear of God"* (2Cor.7: 1).

2.7.6.2 The Toronto Blessing

In the first five years of its existence over three and a half million people visited what is now called the 'Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship' (TACF) in Toronto Canada. Senior pastor John Arnott says this in October 1999. What is this blessing? Let us try to answer this question. The TACF is not a particularly large church having about 2000 members who are scattered around Toronto, some of whom might even worship in other churches. Thus we can describe it as a global fellowship whose mission is simply *"to walk in God's way and to give it away"*. The 'Toronto blessing' is simply receiving God's presence, which is very real at TACF. Apart from the daily prayer meetings and services, seminars and revival meetings as well as many conferences each lasting a few days are held every year. In 2000 AD the scheduled conferences include: - Pastor's conference, 6th Anniversary, Healing School, Fresh Wind, Prophetic School, The Bride of Christ, The Party is Here, Releasers of Life Equipping School, Catch the Fire, Healing Life's Hurts, and Bible Week.

TACF is truly a church to which the average person comes in order to *"catch the fire and to pass it on"*. Martyn Percy (1998: 281 - 282) likens visitors to TACF as pilgrims coming not to respect a shrine (e.g. Lourdes), or a holy place, or holy relics, but to participate in a revival rally (e.g. New Wine). He also makes a perceptive comparison between Azuza Street as a 'shrine' to early (1901) Pentecostalism which had visitors from all over the world, and Toronto as *"the same to postmodern revivalism"*.

Before we examine its phenomena it will be helpful to look at some of the factors responsible for the current charismatic movement. World - wide changes are

taking place in major ways through technology principally in electronics, computers and communications. Change is everywhere. Thus in the mid 1980's Tony Walter and Steve Hunt detect church goers seeking *"a church that isn't churchy"*, and complaining about *"dry - as - dust biblical expositions"* in need of revival. Here they quote Cartledge's suggestion that *"charismatics are caught between fundamentalism of modernism and experientialism of post modernism"*. This could be true of TACF with its personal and global mission. The fifth item in their Statement of Faith is *"we believe the Holy Spirit lives in us as believers and brings love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self - control into our lives. He works in and through us with his charismatic gifts"* (Gal.5: 22 - 23; 1Cor.12: 7 - 11; see TACF weekly leaflet; T. Walter and S. Hunt 1998: 219 - 220). Unfortunately some critics like M. Percy do not appear to be aware of this Statement of Faith, for he writes about 'Toronto Blessing' believers who *"basically separate themselves from the rational self, only to rediscover themselves again in a reinvigorated emotional state, which has been achieved by buying into a rhetoric of passion, intimacy and fulfilment"* (1998: 286). This is far from the truth.

Many come to TACF because they are hungry and thirsty for the Lord, for, as John Arnott admits, each person who is saved, anointed, or healed now says *"I'm more in love with Jesus than I've ever been before"*. Marc Dupont sees TACF first, as refreshing the weary and sending them out as God's people to do battle; and second, as welcoming prodigals home to the Father's party (1997: 100). The danger of Satan and the demonic is now being more fully realised, hence the church's emphasis upon spiritual power, with which alone these battles can be fought.

How can we *"test the spirits to see whether they are of God?"* (1Jn.4: 1). In evaluating the charismatic movement and discerning the genuine from the false, we must ask: -

1. Is Christ its centre, and is Jesus being lifted up? (1Cor.12: 3)
2. Is it creating a greater hunger for God and His word?
3. Is it leading people to love God and one another more? (1Cor.13)
4. What fruit is being produced? (Gal.5: 22; Mt.7: 19 - 20; see W. Boulton 1995: 58; Robert Culpepper 1977: 15; John Kilpatrick 1997: 111 - 112).

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The TACF appears to answer these tests more than satisfactorily.

In addition to the gifts of the Spirit (see above) there are at least thirteen other ways in which the Holy Spirit may express Himself through believers, which may be called phenomena of the Holy Spirit: -

1.	Falling on the floor (slain in the Spirit), Ez.1: 28; Dan.10: 9; Mt.28: 4; Rev.1: 17; 4: 10; and sometimes being unable to move.

2.	Shaking, Jerking or Trembling, (Jumping, Rolling), Dan.10: 7; Ps.99: 1; 114: 7; Jer.5: 22

3.	Groaning and Travailing, (Animal Noises), Rom.8: 26; Gal.4: 19

4.	Deep Bowing, Ez.10: 1; Ps.35: 13 - 14

5.	Heavy Weeping and Crying, Neh.1: 4, Ez10: 1; Joel2: 12; Ps.126: 5 - 6

6.	Laughing, Pr.17: 22a; Ps.126: 1 - 3

7.	Being Still or Solemn, Ps.25: 5; 27: 14; 37: 7a; 131: 12

8.	Being Drunk in the Spirit, Acts2: 13; Eph.5: 18

9.	Having Visions and Dreams, Joel2: 28b; Acts10: 9 - 17, (cf. also Dupont 1997: 153 - 161; F. MacNutt 1977: 189 - 224)

10.	"Lifting holy hands", 1Tim.2: 8; Ps.134: 2; 141: 2

11.	Clapping hands, Ps.47: 1 (Riggs disapproves of clapping hands in church. Referring to Jn.5: 44 and 1Cor.10: 22, Riggs warns readers not to make God jealous by clapping and thereby honouring the flesh in the worship of God 1977: 184). Liturgies have changed dramatically since 1949 when Riggs' book is first published.

12.	Dancing in the Spirit, Ps.149: 3; 150: 4 cf. 2Sam.6: 14. God accepts David's praise and dance.

13.	Loud Shouting, Ps.98: 4; 47: 1; cf. Lk.19: 39 - 40. When Pharisees tell Jesus to rebuke His disciples, He replies "if these were silent, the very stones would cry out". (with acknowledgments to John Kilpatrick 1997: 112 - 117; and Ralph Riggs 1977: 176 - 186).

All the above, including manifestations of all the nine spiritual gifts (1Cor.12: 8 - 10) have been personally witnessed more than once at TACF and elsewhere, as well as seeing members of the congregation receiving gold dust on their heads or arms, and one person showing a gold tooth received from God. Reports in various church newsletters

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also describe rain falling within church buildings and oil appearing on the hands of worshippers.

1.   John MacArthur

John MacArthur, a Greek scholar and author of over twenty books, strongly criticises the charismatic movement. His criticisms deserve to be examined, particularly as we construct the Holy Spirit - mysticism model.

Dispensations

MacArthur is a dispensationalist who believes, as he says, in *"a system of biblical interpretation that sees a distinction between God's program for Israel and His dealings with the Church"* (1993: 327). Dispensations he sees as *"different administrations in the eternal out - working of God's purpose"* (1993: 273). Seven dispensations are recognized (French Arrington 1993: 247) - innocence, conscience, civil government, promise, law, grace and the kingdom. The origin of Dispensationalism is unclear. Morphew (1991: 140) suggests it originates in Scotland with Edward Irving (1792 - 1834), while G. Grogan (1978: 303) says John Darby (1800 - 1882) who also formed the Plymouth Brethren, is the founder, although some of its elements may be found in Augustine's writings. Arrington (1993: 247) claims it begins to flourish with the rise of the charismatic movement. There are in fact similarities between the dispensationalist and the charismatic; first, they are both pre - millennialist, emphasising the second coming of Christ to be followed by the rapture, the tribulation, the millennium and the judgment; and second, the seven dispensations provide charismatics with God's easy - to - follow plan of the world (Grogan 1978: 303), which C.I. Scofield made very popular.[1]

Allied to dispensation are cessationists, who also believe God deals with humanity in dispensations, some with miracles and some without (see Morphew 1995: 3). Here Charismatics and Dispensationalists part company, for the former hold dearly

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[1] Alfred Eade gives a detailed study of the dispensations in his 'The New Panorama Bible Study Course' 1959, Eastbourne Victory.

to the *"varieties of gifts"*, *"varieties of service"*, *"varieties of working"*, and the manifestation of *"the Spirit for the common good"* (1Cor.12: 4 - 7). Against this MacArthur and other dispensationalists believe that the miracles recorded in the Bible take place only in three periods - *"in the days of Moses and Joshua; during the ministries of Elijah and Elisha, and in the time of Christ and the apostles"*. Other recorded supernatural events are merely incidental (see MacArthur 1992: 112 - 114; Deere 1994: 253).

Holding these views MacArthur cannot believe that in this, the church age, there could be any apostles, or any signs and wonders, gifts of the Spirit or warfare against Satan and demons. Nothing is needed in terms of revelation, vision or prophecy, nothing, other than Christ. We just need to resist the devil and to obey what we already have (see MacArthur 1991: 39,87 - 88, 215 - 216; 1992: 124, 109 - 110, 135). Thus MacArthur accuses charismatics of over - emphasising miracles, signs and wonders, thereby misrepresenting the Holy Spirit as *"some sort of divine magician who moves in ways that are always seen, felt or heard"* (1991: 104). The essence of the Holy Spirit's work, he believes, is internal and sanctifying (1991: 104). Perhaps MacArthur's strongest criticism against charismatics is that they tend *"to test doctrine by experience instead of the reverse"* (1992: 17).

MacArthur defines mysticism as *"the idea that direct knowledge of God or ultimate reality is achieved through personal, subjective intuition or experience apart from, or even contrary to, historical fact or objective divine revelation"* [1] (1991: 181). Mysticism's authority therefore comes according to MacArthur (1991: 32), from *"a self - actualised, self - authenticated light rising from within"*. This modern mysticism, he believes, which is now in the church, is opposed to Christian theology, being both irrational and anti - intellectual and thus *"in direct conflict with Christ and Scripture"* (1991: 32, 182).

Furthermore, he says, varieties of this type of mysticism are propagated by *"careless and untrained people"* who claim to receive private visions from God, to

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[1]MacArthur can be very extreme in his definitions, e.g. *"an ascetic is someone who lives a life of rigorous self - denial as a means to earn forgiveness from God"* (1991: 187).

interact with angelic beings, or to travel to heaven and back resulting in *"signs and wonders"* and *"a false gospel that promises health, wealth and prosperity"*, but which in reality is a *"gnostic revival"*. Consequently, instead of people asking *"what does the Bible mean?"*, they ask *"what does the Bible mean to me?"* (MacArthur 1991: 33, 180). The answer to this, MacArthur writes, is to do what Paul does when the Colossians are confronted by Gnosticism, remind them that their sufficiency is in Christ, *"you have come to fullness of life in him"* (Col.2: 10).

It is difficult to reconcile MacArthur's rejection of mysticism with his emphasis upon *"the Spirit's internal sanctifying work, which is the essence of His ministry"* (1991: 104). Elsewhere he writes *"through the new birth, the Spirit makes a new creation in Christ"* (2Cor.5: 17), *"taking up residence in the believer and transforming that person's thinking and behaviour"*. *"Perspectives and values change and the focus shifts from self to Christ"* (1991: 47); and again *"believers enter into an eternal oneness with Christ, Christ Himself, indwells them"* (Col.1: 27) *". . . and we will reign with Him as joint heirs"* (Rom.8: 17). Can we not detect mystical thinking here? MacArthur is very steeped in the use of the 'in Christ' and 'Christ in us' phrases, which he sees as very significant. In his book 'Our Sufficiency in Christ' (1991) he refers to at least twenty - five of these phrases. Here he appears to be more orthodox.

2.   Response to Dr. MacArthur

To answer MacArthur's condemnation of the charismatic movement it seems right to assert at the outset that he simply cites many abuses of the spiritual gifts by charismatics without attempting, as one would expect, to enter into dialogue about them, e.g. he devotes almost a whole chapter titled 'How do Spiritual Gifts Operate?' to describing abuses, without even attempting to answer the very question he asks (see Deere 1994: 274 - 275). As Deere has also pointed out, MacArthur really misses the point here; he should be looking at the relationship between doctrines and their abuses, because abuses arise mainly because of faulty applications of doctrines (1994: 274 - 275).

Much evidence could be found to support the continuance of the 'charismatic' movement from the beginning of the Christian church to the present time. Deere (1994:

73, 254 - 263) follows D. A. Carson who details many supernatural events, i.e. signs, wonders and miracles, taking place throughout history, *"there is enough evidence to show that some form of charismatic gifts continued sporadically across the centuries of Church history. It is therefore futile to insist, on doctrinaire grounds, that every historical report is spurious or is the fruit of demonic activity or psychological aberration"*, (cf. Jeremiah's foretaste of this 32: 20). Both Stephen and Philip appear to have been very active in the charismatic ministry during the Apostolic age (Acts 6: 8; 8: 6). There is, furthermore, in this grace dispensation much evidence of revelations, visions, prophecy, and physical phenomena (Acts 10: 10; 22: 17; 9: 22 - 26; Rev.1: 17). Contrary to MacArthur's claim that the Bible does not exhort believers to seek any miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit, are Paul's words in 1Cor.12: 31; 14: 1, 39.

Dispensationalism and Cessationism are effectively condemned by scholars (Morphew 1991; Robert Gundry 'The Church and the Tribulation' 1973; Adrio Kunig 'The Eclipse of Christ in Eschatology' 1989). It is encouraging to know that the differences mentioned above are being resolved through dialogue (see Arrington 1993: 247). It therefore seems preferable to refer, as Paul does, to the old and new covenants rather than to dispensations; or, if the concept of dispensation is used, to use it in a broader sense, as for example *"the dispensation of condemnation is surpassed by the dispensation of righteousness"* (2Cor.3: 9), where the dispensations could mean law and grace or Synagogue and Church (see Theodor Brandt 1975: 1: 730). In a similar way Peter sees Joel's prophecy fulfilled now *"in the last days"*, in which under the new covenant, we are still living (Acts 2: 17; see Morphew 1991: 126; cf. 1Cor.10: 11; 1Jn.2: 18).

MacArthur accuses people of needing something more than Christ thereby forgetting their magnificent inheritance in Christ; and, if they want to add to God's word, of saying *"the Lord told me"*, and then of acting accordingly, thinking their experience superior to an understanding of scripture (1992: 32; 1991: 39).

"We cannot rebuke Satan", says MacArthur, *"but if I did have authority to do that I would silence him permanently, and put an end to his diabolical interference forever!"* (1991: 225). Likewise Christians do not need to *"engage Satan in combat"*, but simply to *"resist the devil and he will flee"* (James 4: 7), *"for he who is in you is*

greater than he who is in the world" (1Jn.4: 4; MacArthur 1991: 215).

MacArthur must know that as Jesus rebukes Satan and engages him in combat (Mt.4: 1 - 10), so believers are encouraged to *"fight the good fight of faith . . . contending against . . . spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places"* (1Tim.6: 12; Eph.6: 12), even although the devil is defeated and his works destroyed (1Jn.3: 8). If this were not so why are the disciples given such authority at the close of Matthew and Mark's gospels - as they are earlier given? (Mt.10: 1; Mk.6: 7; Lk.9: 1). How else can we explain that *"many wonders and signs were done through the apostles"* (Acts 2: 43), and are still being done through believers? How else can we explain the building up of the church through the centuries (cf. 1Cor.12: 7).

The Spirit of God does not cause Christians to fall into a trance, to faint or lapse into frenzied behaviour, claims MacArthur; but he seems to forget Acts 10: 10; 22: 17; Rev.1: 17; Acts 2: 13 - 15 (see Deere 1994: 274 f).

3.   Conclusion

It could be, Morphew surmises, that Dispensationalism comes into existence when there is little church growth and when at the same time, perhaps at the Reformation, the gifts of the Spirit are not being manifested to give God the glory (1991: 122 - 123). A reaction in this situation would be to fall back upon a simple faith and Bible study, with an accompanying caution not to be too passive or subjective. But if the Church is not walking in the Spirit the charisma will be lost, and nominalism will prevail. Dispensationalism limits the creative work of the Holy Spirit. Undoubtedly as God's word spreads into the uttermost parts of the earth, the Spirit is bringing revival to hungry and thirsty believers, and manifesting Himself in extraordinary ways. The present is a time of freedom - if the Spirit wills we might be called to travel to heaven and back, or to speak a language which someone can interpret for the listeners, or even to roar like a lion! Signs and wonders are shared in one way or another at many church meetings to - day.

We hear, see, feel and even smell the Holy Spirit moving amongst us, bringing souls to salvation, to healing, to blessing, to deliverance and even to death. But the power of the Spirit is continually working through Jesus Christ for it is in Him and in His

name that all this can happen and it is all for His glory.

2.7.6.3 Christian Mysticism

We shall now define Christian mysticism, its definition, types, criteria and characteristics. Throughout its history the Church has made no official statement or doctrine concerning mysticism. It is encouraging, however, to read this admission by the Vatican II Council: - "... *the eternal Father created the whole world. His plan was to dignify men with a participation in His own divine life*" (Walter Abbott 1967: 15).

1.   Definition

The English word mysticism is derived from the Greek words mustikos (initiated one) and muein (close eyes or lips) which refer to initiates into the secretive mystery religions (L. Dupre 1987: 10: 245); and is defined as "*belief in the possibility of union with the Divine nature by means of ecstatic contemplation*" (SOED 1974: 2: 1380 - 1381). This definition seems too limiting. Unfortunately the English language does not distinguish, as the German language does, between true mysticism, 'Mystik', as defined above, and false mysticism 'Mysticismus'. Because of this fact no doubt, some scholars regret the use of the word 'mysticism' in theology. E. Tinsley suggests that the term 'mystical' originates through an association of the mystical experience with 'the mystery', e.g. liturgical actions or scriptural words actually become the realities they symbolise. When this happens one is said to have 'mystery - mindedness' (1983: 387). This argument appears to have merit. Dupre favours an alternative explanation which concerns the meaning hidden beneath the spiritual (e.g. sacraments), which in time, through love, develops into a union with the transcendent spiritual reality. These two theories are very similar (Herman Hanse 1974: 2: 825n). E.P. Sanders (1977: 440) favours the word 'participationist' to the word 'mystical', but we would agree with Käsemann that 'participation' is too weak a word and "*does not sufficiently describe the power of Christ's Lordship which seizes believers*".

Bernard Mc Ginn prefers to describe mysticism as "*the experienced 'presence' of God*", rather than as a 'union' on the grounds that 'union' usually implies a hierarchy in the mystical journey, e.g. ascent, mountain, ladder, while 'presence' could imply birth

of the Word in the soul, ecstasy, radical obedience to the divine will discerned in the present moment. Attractive as this idea might be, it does not seem to do justice to Jesus' 'abiding in' or to Paul's 'in Christ' image or to several inspirational analogies, e.g. the vine and the branch; for true union involves, as Christ makes so clear in His own life, a death, a burial and a resurrection (see Sanday and Headlam 1971: 162; J. Casey 1994: 597).

It is significant that the majority of definitions of Christian mysticism stress the concept of unity, although in a wide variety of forms, e.g. Deissmann describes Paul as *"a re - acting mystic - a communio mystic"* (1957: 152); Bornkamm maintains mysticism is the *"blurring of the boundary between God and man"* (1971: 155); Underhill *"union with God"* (1967: 76); Robert Zaehner (1969: 144) *"the realization of unity"* etc. These definitions together with others could support our own definition, i.e. union with God through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Let us examine this definition. Firstly it is trinitarian. While Paul does not formulate the doctrine of the trinity, he certainly lays the foundation stone for it by way of his theological statements (see Ben Witherington 1993: 103 - 104; 2Cor.13: 14). Jesus' claim *"I and the Father are one"* (Jn.10: 30) is also foundational here, as is Mt.28: 19. The incarnation of Christ radically distinguishes Christian mysticism from all other types of mysticism, for it reveals *"the interpenetration of the spiritual and the material"* (see Graef 1966: 46). It is through Christ that we *"have access in one Spirit to the Father"* (Eph.2: 18), and *"no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God"* (1Cor.2: 11; see Suenens 1975: 96). Paul thus reminds his readers that *"God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure (Phil.2: 13),* and this by mystically adopting believers as His children, giving them a position in Christ and sending His Holy Spirit to dwell in them" (see Corduan 1991: 138). Moltmann sees this from another angle, - the Holy Spirit in the fellowship of Christ restores God's image in the believer, institutes God's friendship as a gift, and ultimately as likeness to God (1994: 204 - 205; cf. also M. McIntosh 1998: 226).

Union is an operative word in our definition. Many scholars appear to be guilty of associating mysticism with the idea of absorption in God (see Ridderbos 1977: 59). But such a thought would be blasphemous to a Jew, as we have seen: similarly any idea

of identity between Creator and creature would be repulsive. The exact nature of this union is inexplicable, and yet the union is evident throughout the New Testament. Paul can even claim support from a Stoic, saying *"in him we live and move and have our being"* (Acts 17: 28). Jesus gives us some insight in his words *"truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me"* (Mt.25: 40). This reminds us of His words to Paul on the Damascus Road *"Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"* (Acts 9: 4). These illustrations we may regard as mystical; so when Paul says *"Christ who lives in me"* he explains *"I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me"* (Gal.2: 20). J. Reid admits that he cannot ascribe mysticism to Paul because after saying *"it is no longer I who live"* - where mysticism seems apparent - Paul goes on to say *"I now live"* (J. Reid 1960: 360; cf. Graef 1966: 34). Reid, however, fails to realise that a new unity now exists here between Christ and Paul, a unity of faith and love, of mutual surrender which Christ encourages - *"abide in me and I in you"* (Jn.15: 4; cf. 17: 21), and which involves no absorption.

Robert Zaehner adds to his definition quoted above - *"unless you have a clear idea of what that unity is, you are liable to unite with the most improbable entities"* (1969: 144); and thus Inge can rightly conclude that unless you are in God, you will find the devil (1907: 103). Christian mysticism requires not knowledge about God (which could be simply meditation), but knowledge of God (which climaxes in union with God), fullness of life, which Christ can give, and a walk according to the Spirit (Jn.10: 10; Rom.8: 4). This is the vital trinitarian basis of mysticism in which all three Persons are fully involved in mutuality and reciprocity (J. Casey 1994: 598 - 599), (the Holy Spirit is the power in mysticism cf. R.C. Moberly 1911: 312).

It is a corollary of our definition of Christian mysticism that, as has already been indicated above, it cannot be reached by our own efforts. Thus Deissmann is correct in seeing mysticism as *"the way to God direct through inner experience without the mediation of reasoning"* (1957: 149). In contrast Emil Brunner's belief that *"since evil is only 'superficiality', it is possible, by sinking down into the depths of one's being, to reach the Divine Reality, and thus to become one with God"* would appear to be questionable (1947: 126). Similarly, Patrick Henry's idea that mysticism could be sought in *"Paul's instinctive use of symbols and images that have resonance with religious*

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realities that are not limited to the biblical tradition", seems far removed from the truth (P. Henry 1979: 179).

2.   Types

A survey of literature over the past 100 years reveals over 20 types of mysticism, but a distinction of all these, as M. Barth writes of God - mysticism, Christ - mysticism, and Spirit - mysticism, *"contributes little to an understanding of Paul"* (1974: 385). Deissmann appears to be extreme in applying the word mysticism *"to every religious tendency that discovers the way to God through inner experience without the mediation of reasoning"*. He believes that before Paul became a Christian he was into anabatic, acting, unio, or performance mysticism, whereby human beings approach God. After Paul's conversion and call however he changes to catabatic, reacting, communio, or grace mysticism, whereby God approaches humanity (1957: 149 - 150). This speculative reasoning seems unfruitful, and therefore, following scripture, we shall refer in our study primarily to Christian mysticism, which by its very nature is trinitarian, as our definition above implies (see H. Fischer 1975: 1008; cf. James Price 1992: 320).

Louis Bouyer proposes a *"mysticism of the Spirit or of the resurrection"* on the grounds that there needs to be a mysticism for *"here and now"* (1982: 1: 70), but surely this is already present even if it is called Trinity - mysticism, for Bouyer admits that the Spirit manifests the inclusion of believers in Christ (1982: 1: 70), and probably also that the Spirit manifests in exactly the same way the inclusion of believers in mysticism.

It is nevertheless accepted by most scholars that there are four really basic types of Christian mysticism, i.e. God -, Christ -, Trinitarian -, and negative - mysticism. Paul's type is Christ - mysticism in practice, hence his 'in Christ' phrases, but Trinitarian in fulfilment (see Dodd 1932: 87 - 88). Negative - mysticism is the extreme situation in which God is completely unknowable, as described for example by Eckhart, but this type does not concern us here.

3.   Criteria and Characteristics

William James (1842 - 1910), professor of psychology and of philosophy at Harvard was probably the first to address mysticism by a number of 'marks' as he calls

them, i.e. Ineffability, Noetic quality, Transiency and Passivity (1959? - 372). In his lectures, which he delivered in 1901 - 1902, James admits that *"the words 'mysticism' and 'mystical' are often used as terms of mere reproach, to throw at any opinion which we regard as vague and vast and sentimental, and without a base in either facts or logic. For some writers a 'mystic' is any person who believes in thought - transference, or spirit - return"* (1959?: 370 - 371). Unfortunately James appears to be concerned only with the psychological aspects of mysticism and not with its object (see Mascall 1959: 216n). In the last century many scholars and mystics have added to James' 'marks' their own criteria, characteristics, themes, rules, constants etc[1].

It is questionable whether these 'additions' have any significant relation to the subject of mysticism. Mystical experience and statements made about it using language derived from other disciplines might have no relation to one another (see Rahner 1975: 1011), e.g. Laurence Hatab's definition of mysticism - *"the decentralization of ego - consciousness"* (see Corduan 1991: 22)[2]. Even Paul *"heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter"* (2Cor.12: 4). Genuine mystical experiences, inspired by the Holy Spirit, by grace, are super - natural, and therefore beyond the field of psychology, which is by definition limited to the natural, although it is acceptable that psychology may be "raised up by grace"[3] (see Rahner 1975: 1011).

The Christian mystic path is that of purgation, illumination and union which can be traced back to Plato's time (Inge 1948: 9), but is however scriptural for *"Repent and believe in the gospel"* are among the first words of Jesus that Mark records (1: 15). Thus with Kenneth Leech (1980: 37) we believe that scripture reveals the roots of Christian mystical theology, and that purgation, illumination and union derive from *"repentance, life in the Spirit and perfection"*. Several books on mysticism (e.g.

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[1] E.g. David Knowles 1961: 3; John Ferguson 1976: 126 - 127; C. Jones 1986: 19 - 21; M. Barth 1974: 386; D. Russell 1970: 14 - 15; N. Smart 1967: 5: 420; Underhill 1967: 81, 170; Carmody 1996: 150 - 151.
[2] This definition is almost as meaningless as *"mysticism is that science in which the psychology of man mingles with the psychology of God"* (S. Ghose 1998: 26: 588)
[3] It is surprising to find Ernst Best wondering whether the word 'mystical' is being justly used in a situation, and then concluding *"we must leave the psychologists and philosphers to decide"* (1955: 24).

Underhill's 'Mysticism'), are written according to the purgation, illumination and union pattern. In whatever way we define the various levels within this pattern, and there are many interpretations here, even regarding the pattern itself, it must be admitted that in some measure the pattern is completed and fulfilled in baptism, i.e. the believer repents, receives the gift of the Holy Spirit, and is also united to the body of Christ, the church, thereby being in Christ.

It appears therefore that mystical growth in baptised believers really begins with baptism, and continues as believers *"walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit"* (Rom.8: 4), in which realm the criteria and characteristics of Christian mysticism are to be found.

2.7.7   The Return of the Holy Spirit

The life - giving Spirit, whom God breathes into us when He creates us returns to Him when we physically die (Job34: 14 - 15; Ps.104: 29; Ec.12: 7). So Jesus on the cross yields up *"his spirit"*, as also does Stephen when he prays *"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit"* (Mt.27: 50; Acts 7: 59).

When the 'end times' really begin the Holy Spirit will continue to convict souls and to draw the unsaved into salvation, but the 'rapture' will first take place. Jesus will descend, then *"we who are alive"* will be *"caught up together"* with the dead in Christ *"in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air"* (1Thes.4: 16 - 17). Believers will then be judged (1Cor.3: 13 - 15; 4: 5; 2Cor.5: 10), and Christ will present the church, His Bride, to Himself (Eph.5: 25 - 33). Seven years later at the end of the Tribulation on earth Christ will return to earth (1Thes.3: 13) and the Battle of Armageddon will be fought (Rev.19: 11 - 21). According to Riggs the Holy Spirit during the Tribulation *"will deal particularly with the Jewish remnant, the 144, 000 that are to be sealed by Him"* (Rev.7: 1 - 8; 1977: 189), and the Holy Spirit will save a nation in a day (Is.66: 7, 8). During the 1 000 year Millennium, Christ, His Bride reigning with Him, and the Holy Spirit will take full possession of the earth so that all may glorify the Lord (see Riggs 1977: 190 - 191). After the Great White Throne judgment of the wicked (Rom.2: 14 - 16; Rev.20: 11 - 15) there will be the Lamb's Marriage Supper (Mt.22: 1 - 4; 25: 1 - 13); Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire and as the Holy Spirit's work climaxes *"a new*

heaven and a new earth" appear as the first ones pass away, *"the holy city, new Jerusalem"*, descends from heaven (Rev.21: 1 - 2).

2.7.8   Mysticism Model

We have reviewed the various operations of the Holy Spirit in the church in order to construct a model to assist in our major focus upon Paul's 'in Christ' phrase.

Plans for the Spirit's work before creation begins show the Spirit sealing believers, and thereby guaranteeing their ultimate inheritance. After creation comes conviction; and the promised sealing takes effect when believers by grace and faith are drawn into Christ and into Christ's body the church. When Christians are born again into this new creation Christ baptises them in the Holy Spirit giving them power to witness to Him and to do His work in their lives - *"you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God"* (1Cor.6: 11). As further empowerment to assist Christians who are now all walking in the Spirit, various gifts of the Spirit are manifested in their lives revealing the continual, comforting presence of the Spirit. These gifts which might be miraculous in nature as signs and wonders, are intended always to give glory to God through Jesus Christ. The final role the Spirit plays on earth is to prepare the church, as the body of all believers in Christ, to be the Bride of Christ and to be united with God forever in the holy city the new Jerusalem.

Union with God through Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, as we define mysticism, is clearly evident also as God's plan for humanity which is being progressively realised. Although far beyond our understanding, *"now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face"* (1Cor.13: 12). God's revelations of Christ by the Holy Spirit are certainly mysteries, and, we suggest, mystical.

2.8   Postmodernism Mysticism Model

Postmodernism appears to have a close affinity to mysticism and it is appropriate that the last model of mysticism that will be studied can be viewed in the light of current theological trends. We shall first define postmodernism, see some of its characteristics and then construct its model of mysticism.

2.8.1 Modernism

We can agree that since we live in the dimension of time one form of modernism or another is always present, and unless we move with the changes we can become ancient or primitive and be left behind. Thus Eduardo Mendieta following Octavia Paz writes *"modernity is a tradition against itself . . . it is the asymptotic attempt of time to catch up with itself in order to devour itself"* (1997: 255).

What is historically accepted as modernity arises towards the end of the nineteenth century principally in the Roman Catholic church where it aimed at: -

1.   A more critical view of the Bible as God's unfolding truth

2.   A rejection of scholastic intellectualism in favour of Christian practice, and

3.   A teleological approach towards church history (see ODCC 926).

It is significant that Friedrich von Hügel (1852 - 1925) a renowned theologian and writer on mysticism, played a leading role in the modernism movement. This movement was strongly condemned by the Vatican Council in 1870 and by Pope Pius X, who in 1907 called it the *"synthesis of all heresies"* (ODCC 926 - 927; Raphael Huber 1964: 498 - 499).

Modernity needs to explode from time to time *"just as Heilsgeschichte (salvation history) is punctuated by messianic ruptures that point in the direction of the eschaton"* for it is always in crisis, says Mendieta (1997: 255; cf. David Batstone 1997: 9), pushing us either *"towards updating the faith "* or else, if we are traditionalists, *"towards immobility"* (George Lindbeck, Lutheran theologian quo by David Edwards 1997: 607).

Thus with Batstone (1997: 5) we can understand the postmodern as *"more of the modern under the guise of its exhaustion, "* or, better, as its fulfilment. In contrast to the Roman Catholic church's sharp condemnation of modernism, it is encouraging to note the positive ways in which Vatican council welcomes the charismatic movement in 1963 - 1965, and also , as we shall see, postmodernism, if Professor Tony Campolo, an American leader in evangelical social action, can be regarded as representing the church.

2.8.2 Definition and Nature

Hans Kung could be correct in claiming that after the first world war Karl Barth

initiates the shift *"from the modern to the postmodern paradigm"* (1991: 190). As Barth's thinking matures and he eventually agrees with his former rival Emil Brunner over God's humanness as well as His godliness, and that this, through grace, provides a *"point of connection"* in human nature, the postmodern paradigm becomes more perfect (Kung 1991: 191, 271). Thus we see why Kung prefers the term ecumenical to postmodern, but it cannot be restricted to theology, in fact it probably originated in architecture. Nevertheless it applies usefully and globally across all religions, denominations, liturgies etc. (Kung 1991: 3, 4, 8).

Chambers (1996: 1084) claims 'postmodernism' is first used in the 1930's, but other sources credit Arnold Toynbee with coining the word in the 1950's, while he studied the rise and fall of civilizations, finding incidentally, that religions are the most important survivals (see David Edwards 1997: 592).

It seems too negative to call postmodernism *"the death of history"* (Batstone 1977: 11), even if one admits that all its characteristics lie in the past or in 'modernism'. The prefix 'post' is certainly temporal, but it is also critical, pointing to knowledge which is beyond modernism (see John McGowan 1994: 586; Batstone 1997: 9; John Docker 1994: xviii). Thus we can appreciate Jean - Francois Lyotard's classic definition of the postmodern as *"incredulity towards metanarratives"* (1979, 'The Postmodern Condition, A Report on Knowledge'), where metanarratives are seen as claims for universal truth or *"overarching explanations of reality based on central organising 'truths'"* (John McGowan 1994: 586; K. Newton 1997: 266; Jim Leffel and Dennis McCallum 1996: 201). Stanley Fish sums up the situation ironically but expressively, you *"shall know that truth is not what it seems and 'that' truth shall set you free"* (see Newton 1997: 279). Postmodernism's intent therefore is to level the spiritual and cultural playing fields by affirming *"indeterminacy, fragmentation, decanonization, self - less - ness / depth - less - ness, the unpresentable / unrepresentable, irony, hybridization, carnivalization, performance / participation, constructionism, immanence"* (Ihab Hassan, quoted by Mark Taylor 1990: 30).

Roger Lundin appears to be extreme in suggesting that postmodernism represents the impossibility of ever filling the void caused in modernism by the decline of religion in the West (1995: 82). So also are the postmodern slogans *"we do not need God"* (see

Schillerbeeckx 1987: 6; and Batstone 1997: 11; no sources given) and *"any religion is already bad religion"*.

In the light of extremes like the above we need to exercise caution in examining our subject. Professor Ernest Gellner sees postmodernism as a *'fad'* which appeals because of its novelty and obscurity, but which will soon disappear like any other fashion (1992: 71). This seems to be a superficial assessment, for the real questions are *'what can we learn from it and what is it teaching us?'* Similarly Lundin accuses postmodernism of creating a *'profoundly trivial'* world, particularly in relation to the fundamental truths of Christianity, i.e. sin and forgiveness, guilt and grace, death and resurrection (1995: 34, 37). Here again we should see these truths not as *'trivialised'*, but as deconstructed, and now appearing in a new light. It seems pointless to argue as William Craig does following John Caputo that, *"the truth is that there is no truth"*, therefore deconstructionism ultimately deconstructs itself (1995: 82). Such reasoning is counter - productive, and leads nowhere. Campolo gives an acceptable definition - postmodernism is *"an emerging conscience that allows for the mystical and miraculous beyond and 'other' than the rational and scientific."* He supports this definition by noting the *"postmodern consciousness experience . . . particularly in astronauts returning from space "*, having been where no one has ever been before (1997: 130 - 131, 134; cf. Otto's 'mysterium tremendum' and Paul's 1Cor.13: 12).

Postmodernism transcends modernity by moving beyond reason and science with a two - pronged approach of *"negative critique"* and *"emancipatory inspiration"* (Batstone 1997: 13). It is not a judge of those contributing toward present conditions (see Jose Sathler and Amos Nascimento 1997: 97), but rather a *"cultural dominant"* (Newton 1997: 269) allowing *"cultural relativisms"* and at the same time challenging them (J. Childers and G. Hentzi 1995: 235; Mc Callum 1996: 35; see Docker 1994: xvii for a list of these).

Fiedler's slogan *"cross the border, close the gap"* is very apt, but it cannot be extreme (McGowen 1994: 585). If it were extreme, postmodernity would suicidally deconstruct itself as has been said above and be a disillusionment within a disillusionment (Hopkins 1997: 208). Instead, its fundamental role is to liberate by deconstructing meganarratives of whatever nature thereby creating pluralities of forms, genres, criteria

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etc. (see Newton 1997: 266; Docker 1994: xvii).

2.8.3 Mysticism Model

The first level of postmodernism's model of mystism is that God is *"unavowably, remarkably present - as - radically - other to us in the world"*. In contrast, modernity holds that the world is a machine with God being 'wholly other,' transcendent or absent from the world (Tilley 1995: 168). In consequence of the Incarnation God may be present through prophecy, manifestation or sacrament, and bring healing by grace and joy (Tilley 1995: 168).

M. Taylor writes discerningly of human judgement being so 'erring' i.e *"limited, transitory, uncertain, never able to grasp or adequately represent what it seeks"*. He is not in despair however for all this he claims, perhaps influenced by de Chardin, is in the context of the 'divine milieu' (1996: 514), which, being absolute, renders all else co - relative (p529).

Against this background, or within 'local knowledges' or 'paradigms', the individual is at the centre, and people may choose by experience to find out what works for them, and to make that the basis of their belief (Leffel and McCallum 1996: 201, 207). In other words the individual is at the centre of postmodern religion, and has both freedom and opportunity to follow any religion and learn from every decision made (cf. Craig 1995: 76). If we read M. Taylor correctly, erring humanity through becoming aware of death by loss and fault (1996: 514, 515) 'needs deconstruction'. The word - the basis of religion; it generates, reads and rewrites, thereby uniting divine guidance and human initiative so that its dissemination is the *"crucifixion of the individual self"* (Taylor 1996: 514, 516, 529). This pattern resembles the classic mystic pattern of purgation, illumination and union which postmodernists like Derrida would replace with 'constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed' (see Johannes Wolfart 2000: 388). God's presence in Christ enables this process to change believers through their faith.

The second level reveals both thrusts of the postmodern movement. Firstly there is the liberation of the church from its shameful past in which its majority *"blessed colonialism, neo - colonialism, extreme stratification of wealth, centuries of genicide of Amerindians, blacks, and Jews, the subordination of women, the persecution of the*

sexual other, and the social exclusion of the pagan". Batstone rightly claims this, adding that it all happens because *"the church, once the warden of the social order, was now its chaplain"* (1997: 13).

Secondly, and here we find the postmodern movement playing a role akin to that of the charismatic movement, there comes the realisation that the church has lost the ultimate *"experiential encounter with the sacred,"* and needs to negate all other experiences which cause alienation from God in order once again to touch its mystical roots (Bruce Richey, following Thomas Altizer, 1995: 46). Several postmoderns endorse this need e.g. Tilley notes that in the premodern period we have a sense of continuity between *"self and world"*, but in the postmodern period it changes to between the *"personal and cosmic wholeness"* (1995: 68); and Carlo Carozzo sees *"postmodern mysticism"* as an invitation *"to put experience of the God of Jesus rather than prepositions at the centre of religious education"* (1994: 24). He supports this statement by quoting A.N. Terrin who correctly observes a *"radical difference between the mode of practice of traditional religion and the changed cultural context"* (1994: 23).

Further confirmation of this release of what David Tracy calls *"the radical apophatic mystical tradition"* is found in the many *"mystical - prophectic theology"* centres opening up around the world, providing a new understanding of God as love, and encouraging humans to actively play their parts as they receive God's new vision (Tracy 1994: 20, 22, 57). This is also seen in the increasing number of 24 hour prayer groups operating within various churches throughout the world.

The model we outline here cannot be syncretic, as has been suggested by Leffel and McCallum (1996: 229), for that would result in a metanarrative, contrary to the teachings both of the church and of postmodernism.

In conclusion it did not take long for postmodernism to take over from modernism and thereby inspire humanity to go beyond reason and science and into the mystical and miraculous. Significantly postmodernism and the charismatic movement emerge almost at the same time and have much in common, as is becoming increasingly evident. It's core concern is to attempt to topple all meganarratives and at the same time to liberate all marginals. It's domain, most postmodernists probably agree, is principally

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religion, where it acts like a judge bringing reconciliation and ensuring that no domination exists and that compensation is paid for past inequalities.

A postmodern model of mysticism is outlined on the foundation of freedom of choice and opportunity to follow the religious path of one's choice. The second level of the model is the mystical - prophetic theology which postmodernism offers and which appears to be spreading throughout the world. This model maintains the unity of believers and is hereby allied to ecumenism which in turn replaces fundamentalism, in the same way that mysticism replaces relativism.

In his autobiography Max Planck writes *"a new scientific truth tends to win acceptance not because its opponents become convinced and declare their conversion, but rather because the opponents gradually die out and the up - coming generation has already become familiar with the truth"* (see Kung 1991: 150). It seems that we are experiencing a situation similar to this as postmodernism replaces modernism, and could continue to play its part in religion and in culture indefinitely (one can hardly imagine a post - postmodernism!), or until the charismatic movement absorbs it. A flow may be discerned here - reality (modernism) - image (postmodernism) - spirituality (charismatic / in Christ). Gerard Rolland has regard for postmodernism *"only as a regression to pre - modernity"* (1994: 98). If this means to the early church then Rolland's argument is in line with current charismatic thinking i.e. recapturing the enthusiastic, spiritual, 'in Christ' nature of the early Christian church.

2.9   Mysticism Models - Conclusion

In this chapter the foundation stone for the thesis is laid through an examination of nine selected sources in order to discover their contributions towards an understanding of Christian mysticism. We shall now collate these contributions which are made in the form of models of mysticism. Upon this foundation will be laid in the next chapter the background of Paul, the person primarily responsible for promoting the use of the 'in Christ' phrase. The next 'stone' will be a study of the 'in Christ' phrase and of theories suggested to explain it and the final 'stone' will be the application of the mystical theory - as developed in this chapter - to Paul's 'in Christ' phrase.

These nine models reveal the development of our understanding of mysticism

through Judaism, the Apocalyptic, Neoplatonism, Synderesis, the Eastern Orthodox church, Calvin, Schweitzer, the Holy Spirit (Christianity) and Postmodernism. The range of development here covers anthropological, philosophical, ecclesiastical and theological disciplines.

From the moment God creates humanity He begins to reveal more and more about Himself. Not only is every person made in God's image but also has the in - breathed spirit or 'divine spark'. It is this 'point of contact' that primarily enables communication to take place between the divine and the human, and for humans to become more and more like God, for they are continually being drawn to Him by the Holy Spirit. These truths are basic to all the models. The desire to see God's face and to enjoy unity with Him is innate to humanity, and it is therefore understandable for example that the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil may be eaten or for a golden calf to be made (Ex.32: 14) or, the rock to be stuck twice (Num.20: 11). Furthermore a Messiah is promised, and as this event is awaited it is understandable if certain beings, doctrines or attributes of the coming Messiah are personified as autonomous intermediaries between humanity and divinity e.g. Angels, Bath Qol, Glory, Shekinah, Spirit, Torah, Wisdom, Word, as we see actually happens.

Judaism's mysticism model shows that mystics must: -

1. Ardently believe in one God who is both transcendent and immanent and who has a special relationship with Israel.

2. Have an innate desire to see God's face and to enjoy union with Him.

3. Live a holy life in His continual presence by keeping the Torah.

4. Anxiously await the coming of the Messiah, when a complete unio mystica will be experienced, that is when God reigns on the day of the Lord.

This model combines the Jewish mysticism and the apocalyptic models though the latter also includes becoming a Merkabah rider.

From the above we see Judaism under tension and anxious both to make God immanent but at the same time to offer Him the deepest respect by not pronouncing His name or seeing or hearing Him lest death would follow, and also avoiding any anthropomorphisms. A Jewish world kingdom is urgently awaited even after the Messiah - and the 'in Christ' phrase are born.

The Dionysius' neoplatonist mysticism model makes little direct contribution to Christian mysticism but provides a triadic structure comparable to that of doctrines, e.g. the trinity, hierarchies of angels, church ministry and Christian mysticism (purgation illumination and union). By giving his philosophy such a 'super' or extreme character that it is beyond positive description and can only be described negatively, he seems to be challenging Christianity to join his cause, as well as giving spiritual inspiration to his readers as they begin to become aware of Christian beliefs as doctrines are agreed upon by church councils.

Neoplatonists emphasise the 'primordial union of the soul with God' which enables the soul to be led to union and deification. This is similar to Christian belief if it is realised that the union is in Christ in this world but eschatologically in the next. This belief is important firstly in giving neoplatonists a goal to look forward to; secondly in giving Jews a goal to be seen, and thirdly by giving Christians a goal to be actually experienced.

The anthropological, synderesis, mysticism model explains how Christian mysticism can actually occur in human beings, but here we do not know the whole story and await medical and neurological findings. A study of 28 Mystics and their writings enables several relevant conclusions to be reached, e.g. God acts as a Trinity both within and outside believers.

Synderesis is that uncreated, sinless part of human nature that belongs to God and which believers are called to manifest in love, as they walk in the spirit (Gal.5: 16). This experiential evidence gives credence to certain of the mystical findings of this study and validates the synderesis theory.

The Eastern Orthodox church claims to have the same mission as that of the early Christian church and acknowledges a corporate mysticism, a complete dependence upon the Holy Spirit and a doctrine that every believer is deified. These constituents fashion the Orthodox mysticism model patterned after the teaching of Paul who personally founded many of the churches in Eastern Europe. Without any interruption the primitive church flows into the Orthodox 21st century church, continually acknowledging its mystical nature for which it finds support particularly in 1Cor.1: 30. God *"is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and*

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sanctification and redemption". Here Christ is seen as the 'substance' of spiritual life and of Christian mysticism. Therefore the more mystical Christianity is the more it is in union with God, which in effect is deification.

The Orthodox church not only teaches about Christian mysticism, it is itself a model of it in giving substance to theory through the inter - weaving of the doctrines of mysticism, the Holy Spirit and deification while pointing continually to the fulfilment of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase in an eminently Pauline way.

In contrast to the smooth historical flow of the Orthodox church's mysticism, the Western church's model experiences a hiatus at the Reformation. Calvin is one of the church's most influential reformers, and it is instructive to examine his mysticism model.

Calvin acknowledges his debt to previous mystics, especially Augustine and Bernard of Clairvaux and outlines a mysticism model which is fundamentally scriptural. Firstly believers must live in Christ, for outside of Christ nothing is worth knowing. Secondly it is the Holy Spirit who gives faith, with the Word, and who is the bond joining us to Christ and manifesting Himself through His fruit and gifts. Union with Christ is Calvin's third model element which he specially accentuates about 125 times using about 10 synonyms. This union is twofold; firstly justification, righteousness and reconciliation are totally present, while secondly sanctification is only partially present, awaiting future 'growth'.

There appears to be little difference between the Orthodox model and Calvin's, but although Calvin only twice refers to 'mystical union', mysticism seems to be implied in many of his references to union. Similarly Calvin does not appear to refer to the frequency of use of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase, but he continually stresses the importance of the believer's unity with Christ, without whom as he says there is no salvation.

In his Institutes Calvin says he purposes to teach 'piety' by describing God's benefits which should inspire reverence and love of God. He succeeds here and continues to influence readers widely, perhaps including the mystical way.

It takes courage for Schweitzer not only to write about mysticism but also about eschatology, and thereby to begin to set scholarship free from confirming itself to justification by faith and thus to consider the fullness of Paul's theology.

Schweitzer's foundation stone for his mysticism model is his identification of

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Paul's 'in Christ' phrase as the means by which human beings come into relation with God. This is a transcendent experience. Next, believers receive the Holy Spirit as the human spirit unites with the Holy Spirit. At this point Schweitzer's model becomes unorthodox in wrongly believing that Jesus expected the Messianic kingdom to come immediately He dies. Schweitzer now compounds his misinterpretation by suggesting that because the kingdom does not come there is an eschatological problem which 'demands' 'mysticism' to resolve it. This 'mysticism' is therefore unnatural in that it involves no union with Christ.

Thus Schweitzer rightly identifies the events, but faults on the explanation of them. The Messianic kingdom comes with Jesus; believers are in Christ, as baptised and justified children of God (which Schweitzer does believe) and in whom they await the parousia.

Schweitzer's contributions to mysticism are primarily his focus upon the importance of the 'in Christ' phrase and his positioning it in eschatology where it finds ultimate fulfilment.

The models of mysticism already considered contribute in various ways to our understanding of mysticism. Now the Holy Spirit mysticism model needs to be examined as the climax of this chapter.

God's plan for creation as revealed to Paul encapsulates the major events that will take place, i.e. the election, redemption and inheritance of humanity and the ultimate reconciliation of the universe in Christ. This history of humanity is experienced by every believer during baptism when God creates new beings in Christ. It would be difficult to deny the mystical nature of God's creation, as He breathes His Spirit into the ground of human nature in creating humanity, and again further, as baptism offers a new creation but this time in Christ, and again finally when creation has served its purpose and returns in Christ to God as a spiritual being.

The above models recognise the continual spiritual role of the Holy Spirit in creating, giving faith and power, and guiding and leading into all truth by communicating mystically through human spirits. The church the mystical body of Christ must be presented to Christ *"in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish"* (Eph.5: 27). The study of the mystics detailed

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above proves that the synderesis theory is factual and that humanity has this uncreated and sinless link with divinity. Thus the fruit and the gifts of the Spirit may be manifested in the lives of believers bringing glory to God and souls into His kingdom.

The benefits of the Lord, which David tells us not to forget (Ps.103: 2) are manifold and visibly evident in churches where the Holy Spirit is invited to manifest His gifts as, e.g. happens in Toronto. These manifestations, which have continued throughout history as the Orthodox church would agree (contra John MacArthur), appear to be more frequent to-day than ever before. Televangelists are reaching people at last in the *"uttermost parts of the earth"*.

Charismatics are not slow to acknowledge their need to be in Christ and to recognise that every Christian and every church must continually be aware of Christ's presence, *"lo I am with you always"*, and to glorify Him as the Spirit does (Jn.16: 14).

The postmodern mysticism model is the final one which moves humanity beyond judgment day. All inequalities are ironed out and modernism if fulfilled. Meta - narratives or strongholds (2Cor.10: 4), are all pulled down. It heralds an emancipation, thereby entitling every person to be free to decide on the truth. At last the fullness of mysticism and the miraculous can be appreciated and acted upon. Ecumenism replaces fundamentalism. The reality of the Spirit world is revealed, and access to it by faith is granted to believers (Rom.5: 2; Eph.2: 18; 3: 12). We see something of the charismatic phenomena, but this is only the tip of the iceberg of what is to come. Postmodernity is a global challenge to society's values, for world wide resources are available at the press of a button. The dominion given to humanity by God is vast, extending from the smallest living cell to the furtherest star in the sky. And all these things including believers are united in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth, according to God's plan (Eph.1: 10).

Humanity's emerging consciousness of what is beyond the rational and scientific enables believers to see the things of the Spirit and to enter the spiritual places. Postmodernity's triad of construction, deconstruction and reconstruction resembles God's pan for humanity as well as the baptism plan and the mystic triad of purgation, illumination and union. If the charismatic movement is accepted as God's judgment on the traditional church, then postmodernism may be regarded as God's judgment on the

charismatic movement. This emerging conscience appears to link humanity to the universe as a whole as never before which is proved by the rise of prophetic theology which is evident within the charismatic movement as it begins to understand better the full meaning of the 'in Christ' phrase and Christocentricism.

CHAPTER THREE

PAUL

Paul's thirteen letters and the book of Acts tell us much about Paul's missionary activities and the ways in which he builds up his co. - workers and also the churches to which he writes. But what of Paul's personal spiritual life? Let us examine this by looking at his background, conversion and call, followed by possible influences upon his theology; and also his goals - mystery, mysticism, ecstasy and zeal. These are all vitally important aspects of Paul's life, which we need to study to enable us to appreciate the rationale of his 'in Christ' phrase.

At the beginning of the Christian era Paul (who was known as 'Saul') was born in Tarsus, a city well known for its Stoic philosophers, its university, which rivalled those of Athens and Alexandria, and for the Roman games which were held there. Paul boasts of his heritage; of being a Jew of the tribe of Benjamin, of being a Pharisee, educated in part at least, by Gamaliel, and of being a Roman citizen. He knew before he was born that God had set him apart and called him through His grace (Gal. 1: 15). As a Hebrew, an Israelite, and of the seed of Abraham (2Cor. 11: 22), he religiously kept the Jewish laws and customs and had an excellent knowledge of Scripture (he quotes from the Septuagint at least ninety-seven times - Moises Silva 1993: 631). Paul is probably fluent in three languages Greek (Gal.6: 11), Hebrew (Phil.3: 5), and Aramaic (1Cor.16: 22; see Witherington 1998: 91). He could have been a Rabbi since he argues like one,[1] using the philosophers' and the Jewish forms of diatribe, designed both to teach and to convert listeners or readers (Joseph Sanders 1962: 677). He uses the Midrash method of exegesis, revealing the inner meanings of Scripture as related to everyday life. Arguing from the lesser to the greater he makes much use of analogies (Calvin Roetzel 1983: 15), particularly city life ones[2] (cf. Jesus' country life ones).

As a member of a synagogue or of the Sanhedrin Paul had been given authority

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[1]Eg. writing that the law was delivered by angels. (This is not mentioned in Scripture. See Acts 7: 53, Gal. 3: 19 - William Barclay 1972: 14 - 15).
[2]Eg. relating to commerce (Col.2: 14, Phlm. 18); the games (1Cor. 9: 24 - 27; Phil. 3: 14); law (Rom. 7: 1 - 3; Gal. 3: 15); politics (Eph. 2: 19; Phil. 3: 20); See Fitzmyer 1968: 803.

to persecute Christians; to *"shut up many of the saints in prison,"* and *"when they were put to death,"* to cast *"his vote against them"* (Acts 26: 10). It is unlikely that Paul before his conversion actually saw Jesus, (2Cor. 5: 16 does not imply a meeting). The fact that his nephew had access to Jerusalem leaders could imply that Paul's family had some social status. Adolf Deissmann however sees Paul more as a tradesman earning his living as a tent - maker (1Cor. 4: 12, 9; 1Th. 2: 9), writing somewhat clumsily, but not in literary Greek (1957: 49 - 50). Before his conversion and call Paul undoubtedly has everything going for him. Antoinette Wire describes Paul well - *"in wisdom, power, rank, ethnic security, caste and sex . . . [Paul] has status"* (see N. Elliott 1994: 62).

3.1   Conversion and Call

Paul must have been deeply moved by seeing Stephen stoned to death and hearing him cry *"with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them'"* (Acts 7: 58 - 60). Thus Paul's conversion and call are referred to no less than eight times in the New Testament,[1] and no doubt Paul wanted to share this experience with others whenever he could, surely more times than we know of, for *"something had happened which brought Christ into Paul's heart and joined Paul's life to the life of Christ in such a way that he could only say that he was forever in Christ"* (Barclay 1972: 100). This latter truth will become more real to us later as we study Paul's 'in Christ' phrase in detail.

The five accounts of Paul's conversion and call are described, as might be expected, in contexts concerning the relationship between Judaism and Christianity, ie. In Acts, Galatians and Philippians (see Janet Everts 1993: 159). Thus in Galatians, Paul writes of *"my former life in which I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age, . . . [but God] was pleased to reveal his Son in me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles . . ."* (1: 13 - 16). We note here that while Paul emphasises the internal aspects of the event, Luke the historian on the other hand emphasises in Acts the

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[1]Acts 9: 1 - 20; 22: 1 - 21; 26: 2 - 23; 1Cor. 9: 1; 15: 8; Gal. 1: 11 - 17; Phil. 3: 3 - 17; . 1Tim. 1: 12 - 16; see Janet Everts 1993: 157 - 158. There are only minor differences between these accounts. Rom. 7: 7 - 25 does not appear to warrant inclusion as biographical.

external aspects (William Baird 1972: 740). Here Paul also describes his personal growth and progress from 'in' Judaism to 'in' Christ and freedom, ie. from out of Christ to in Christ. As Larry Kreitzer rightly points out, Paul is here setting his own personal resurrection appearance of Jesus objectively on the same level as the other earlier ones, hence his use of the aorist passive verb 'ophthe' (1Cor.15: 5 - 8; cf. 1Tim.3: 16; Krietzer 1993: 266; against Alan Segal; cf. James Dunn 1975: 99). This was a real and not an imaginary experience for Paul and his companions; for he says *"and when we had all fallen to the ground* ..." (Acts 26: 14).

We conclude by suggesting that Paul's conversion and call experience be seen not as psychological, for he claims to be *'blameless'* (Phil. 3: 6; Col. 1: 14), but as involving a transfer, as it were, from one community (Pharisaic Jewish) to another (Gentile Christian); being a definite call to a ministry as apostle to the Gentiles. George Ladd describes Paul as *"converted from one understanding of righteousness to another - from his own righteousness of works to God's righteousness by faith"*[1] (Rom. 9: 30- 32; Ladd 1997: 406; cf. Segal 1990: 11). This new community may be identified with Jesus, as in fact the early Christians see themselves in Jesus (Acts 4: 24 - 30). Christ's words to Paul *"why do you persecute me?"* (9: 4) have a catalytic effect upon Paul, making him, to use Deissmann's expression, a 'reacting' mystic,[2] not concerned about revelation for himself by his fasting and praying as an 'acting' mystic would do, but being inwardly renewed by God's own revelation, thereby becoming willing to serve God. By becoming a reacting mystic Paul joins the ranks *"as the saints of Israel ... before him, and all the greatest Christians ... after him"* (Henry Goudge 1928: 411; cf. Gal. 2: 19 - 20; 4: 19; Phil. 1: 21).

Paul's experience is both a conversion from his old way of life and beliefs, and a call as an apostle, as one having seen Jesus, to a completely new life in Christ and in the power of Christ's resurrection. A mystery is revealed to Paul, who is here commissioned

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[1]John Ziesler correctly sees Paul's Damascus experience as a 'conversion' only in the sense that *"having been an opponent of Jesus, he now becomes his servant;"* because Christianity should be seen as the fulfilment of Judaism rather than as a new religion (1990: 26).

[2]Mysticism is examined earlier. In this study we define it as 'union with God through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit'.

to share the Gospel with the Gentiles. Salvation is for everyone. To know Christ is to be a Christian, provided this knowing means being *"found in him,"* becoming one with Him. Paul enjoys a glorious theophany; and becomes a powerful personality, part Jew, part Greek, part Roman, but wholly Christian. Having sacrificed his life in Christ, his mission begins, and he will continually encourage others to imitate him, *"to press on toward the goal,"* to be *'in Christ'*. The 'in Christ' phrase has now come alive. *"Paul's conversion not only influenced his theology, it defined Christianity"* (Everts 1993: 163).

In addition to the references to Paul's call and conversion there are several references to other visions experienced by Paul, (2Cor.12: 1 - 4; Acts 16: 9 - 10; 18: 9 - 10; 22: 17 - 21; 23: 11; 27: 23 - 24; cf. Segal 1990: 37; Aune 1993: 30 - 31; Kim 1982: 252n; Jerry Camery - Hoggat 1993: 964). Paul's vision described in 2Cor.12: 1 - 4 is very significant because, as scholars agree, it is a Merkabah mysticism ascent to heaven (see Segal passim; James Tabor 1986: 118 - 125; Morray - Jones 1993: 269 - 277; Camery - Hoggat 1993: 964).[1] This must be Paul's second peak experience, actually entering Paradise and receiving *"abundance of revelations"*, as a result of which he is also given a Satanic thorn in the flesh to keep him from *"being too elated"* (v.3, 7). Paul could see Christ at the right hand of God, as Stephen does (Acts 7: 55), and thereby become aware of what is planned for the world in the future (see Tabor 1986: 124; Morray - Jones 1993: 269).

Here Paul is countering critics who might accuse him of not having legitimate apostolic authority for his missionary work (see Acts 1: 21 - 22). His experience also enables him to warn his congregations not to follow anyone who might want to *"stand on visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind"* (Col.2: 18), instead of following Christ (as others including Montanists would do later).

3.2   Possible Influences on Paul

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[1]Merkabah mysticism is examined above. Paul's ascent, which Tabor discusses in detail, is separate from his call and conversion which is at a different time in his life, and about which Paul is not required to be secretive (2Cor.12: 2, 4; see Camery - Hoggat 1993: 964). McGinn rightly calls Paul's ascent 'unique', for it is the only ascent of its time which is autobiographical (1992: 70).

In this section we shall examine Stoicism, Mystery Religions, Gnosticism, and the Qumran Community in order to trace any influence they might have on Paul and in particular upon his conception of his 'in Christ' phrase.

When God calls Paul, the world is changing rapidly. Christianity is established and Christians are being persecuted. Deification is rife especially among the Roman emperors. Currents of Platonism and Neoplatonism, Jewish and Christian apocalypticism, angelology, belief in a future state, rewards and punishment, immortality and judgment are permeating society. Roetzel quotes Baron who estimates that every 10th Roman is a Jew and that 20% of the population of the Empire east of Italy is Jewish.

3.2.1   Stoicism

Stoic philosophy peaks in popularity as the Christian era begins and Paul must have had contact with it, for in Acts 17: 28 he quotes from two Stoic writers; and fourteen letters between Paul and the famous Stoic Seneca (C4 BC - AD 65) are extant, although probably not genuine (ODCC 1259, 1312; The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to Seneca, with Seneca's to Paul 1974: 1: 95 - 99). We find several parallels between Stoicism and Christianity: -

1.   *"In him we live and move and have our being"* (Acts 17: 28) implies a monism, a *"seeking to explain all that is in terms of a single reality"* (ODCC 931), which imitates that of the most intimate union conceivable with the divine (Charles Dodd 1980: 188). Albert Schweitzer calls this union *'static mysticism,'* in contrast to Paul's dynamic mysticism: later, Stoicism develops an ethical mysticism (1953: 12, 308). Thus Epictetus writes *"wretch, you are carrying about a god with you, and you know it not. You carry him within yourself, you perceive not that you are polluting him by impure thoughts and dirty deeds"* (Epictetus 1952: 12: 146). Paul's appropriate and expressive image of the human body and its various members is probably Stoic in origin (see R. Brown 1997: 531).

2.   Stoics come from God's breath, and eventually return to it (Herman Hausheer 1964: 736). Thus they can think of themselves as children of gods (J.S. Wright

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1975: 3: 635; cf. doctors being called 'Sons of Asclepius'). Similarly their spirits are part of the Divine Spirit, and their souls, being made of fine material substance like warm air, are off-shoots of the Logos, the divine principle of creation, and thereby permeate their bodies (W.D.Davies 1980: 186; cf. 1Cor. 2: 11 - 12; Rom. 8: 11, 16, 26, 27; Vergilius Ferm 1964: 728).

3. Ziesler believes Paul draws upon Stoicism for his 'conscious' concept, which he uses nineteen times and which is hardly ever found in Jewish writings, as well as for his reference to being 'content' (eg. Rom. 9: 1; Phil. 4: 11; 1990: 14; cf. Howard Kee 1991: 46; Intro.). Here for example Paul speaks the truth 'in Christ,' his conscience bearing him witness in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 9: 1); and he has learned in whatever state he is in to be content, because *"I can do all things in him [Christ] who strengthens me"* (Phil. 4: 11 - 13). Paul is continually dependent upon Christ; but the Stoics are dependent upon themselves.

4. Stoics also had house codes, lists of virtues and vices which Paul could draw upon in establishing standards of conduct (eg. Gal. 5: 19 - 23; Rom. 13: 1 - 7; see Ziesler 1990: 20).

While John in his Gospel boldly and effectively identifies the Stoic Logos with Jesus, Paul identifies the Stoic World as the Soul and life - giving Spirit of God penetrating the world and filling human souls with Jesus, hence he uses the phrases *'being in the Spirit'* and *'walking in the Spirit'* (eg. 1Cor. 2: 11 - 12; Rom. 8: 11, 16, 26, 27; see Johannes Weiss cited by W.D. Davies 1980, 186, 181). Naturally Paul never identifies the human spirit with the Holy Spirit for that would imply absorption, which is contrary to Christian mysticism.

Hans-Georg Link is probably right in arguing that for many in the ancient world 'Stoicism provided a bridge to Christianity' (1975: 1: 68 - 69). Thus it is possible that Paul uses the Stoic 'conscience' concept to help pioneer a path between the virtual inaccessibility of the God of the Jews, and the extreme mysticism and virtual deification of the Stoics, thereby establishing a moral law and a union between humanity and God in the Logos or Christ. The parallels between Stoicism and Christianity seem to point in this direction, and Paul's 'in Christ' phrases seem to support this possibility.

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3.2.2 Mystery Religions

As Stoicism could provide a bridge to Christianity, so the mystery religions, Shirley Case suggests, *"prepared the soil for the Christian planting."* She points to some parallels: -

1. All are welcome as members, regardless of sex (except in Mithraism), race and nationality.

2. A 'lively emotional experience' is offered to all initiants, including teaching concerning the significance of their fellowship's purifying and sacramental rites.

3. The ultimate goal is salvation obtained by divine favour of a suffering but triumphant deity to whom the believer is bonded by initiation, and who continually offers help in this world and the next (Case 1964: 513).

There seems little doubt that Paul knows something about the mystery religions, since coins in use at that time have an image of the burning of the god Sandan on them. Thus, Paul would understand the current and widespread idea of the dying and rising god. J. Wand suggests that even some sections of Judaism seem to observe this idea of union between man and a saviour - god (1968: 28).

In the era before Christianity hundreds of city - states exist in the Greek world practising 'mystery religions' which *"form a combination of mystical transcendent Eastern thinking and the more concrete immanent religiosity of the West"* H.N. Ridderbos (1977: 22). Evelyn Underhill traces these religions back to the sixth century BC (1967: 24n), where we find the first appearance of *"the idea of Divine Union as man's true end."* Generally speaking scholars appear to agree that these mystery religions influence Paul's thinking, especially sacramentally, i.e. in relation to baptism and the Lord's Supper. David Aune however gives evidence that there is no such influence upon Paul because some of the terms Paul uses, e.g. wisdom (1Cor. 1: 17- 31) 'to be initiated' (Phil. 4: 12), 'mystery', might derive from the mystery religions, but have become common religious usage. In fact Paul might even use his opponents' language to rebuke them (Aune 1993: 794). The truth here is uncertain.

Strangely, Aune does not mention the mystical aspect of the mystery religions, for this is one of Schweitzer's main arguments as we have seen. This eclectic climate is conducive to deification, or to being *"affiliated to a deity in one sense or another"* (C.

Dodd 1954: 250). C. Dodd cites a current maxim *"man on earth is a mortal God; God in heaven is an immortal man"* (cf. John 10: 25). Mythological gods are losing favour, and being replaced by humans who benefit humankind (E.R. Bevan 1911: 525; *"skepticism brought anthropomorphism)."* Alexander the Great in 331 BC becomes the first human in Greece to be deified, an event which is critical for the growth of his empire. Inevitably the word 'God' is being degraded (G.L. Prestige 1952: 72). Even the Gnostic emanations are called 'god' and loosely used, e.g. Barnabas and Paul in Lystra and Paul on Malta are called 'gods' (Walter Inge 1947: 44 - 45; Acts 14: 12; 28: 6). The general belief seems to be that immortality separates gods from humans, and because the human soul is *"a divine being imprisoned in the mortal body for some pre - natal offence,"* immortality is coveted (E.R. Bevan 1911: 526). Paul echoes this, *"to those who by patience in well - doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, he [God] will give eternal life"* (Rom. 2: 7); but he believes it comes by faith only *"through the gospel"* (2Tim. 1: 10), and fully at the resurrection when *"this mortal nature must put on immortality"* (1Cor. 15: 52 -, 53).

Initiation into a mystery cult is through a secret ritual involving 'things enacted,' i.e. probably of the gods' sufferings; 'things spoken,' i.e. probably a recitation of the god's story, and things shown, i.e. some ritual object (see Aune 1993: 793). No doubt there are also ceremonies designed to induce ecstasy, involving initiants in the power of the deity, e.g. by drugs, music, dancing, rhythmic cries or self - mutilation (see John Passmore 1970: 63; Albrecht Oepke 1974: 2: 451, a comprehensive study of ecstasy). Ecstasy is thus a foretaste of immortality and divine union; the fullness of which comes only when the soul is freed from the body (see Bede Frost 1941: 12 - 13), or through deification (Ridderbos 1977: 23).

The mystery religion cycle - suffering, death, resurrection, victory - is similar to the primitive fertility, seasonal or annual cycle, but it is symbolic. This is Schweitzer's point *"Hellenistic mysticism is dominated by the idea of symbolic influence,"* i.e. by imitating the actions of the divinity the initiate becomes in a sense what the divinity is (Schweitzer 1953: 15). Robert Pheiffer argues that *"the Homeric religion is anything but primitive . . . deities are glorified human beings, immortal . . . clear - cut personalities;"* concluding that *"both in its primitive popular aspects and in its Platonic*

sublimation, the Greek religion has had a lasting influence on Christianity" (R.H. Pfeiffer 1964: 311). Although to mythical figures from all countries and religions could be ascribed the qualities he mentions, this Greek religious influence on Christianity should nevertheless be born in mind.

Case (AEOR 513) visualizes Christian missionaries not as attempting any imitation of the mystery religions, but rather as seeking to satisfy completely the various religious needs awakened by them; and doing this in a language not dissimilar from theirs (e.g. Freidrich Büchsel believes the Mysteries may have influenced Peter's use of the word 'regeneration' 1974: 1: 675). In this way Christianity could take advantage of its freedom from Judaism, and from the declining status of gods. God and Christ could be substituted for these gods, and as reality replaces the symbolic, both the recency of the Christ event and the fulfilment of various prophecies would reinforce the message (see G.E. Ladd 1981: 360). Case's theory is attractive, and enables one to see ways in what Paul could use his 'in Christ' phrase and how Christian mysticism could take over from symbolic mysticism.

In short the mystery religions give us another glimpse of strongholds about to be destroyed by the divine power which is in Christ alone (2Cor. 10: 4). Paul will continually emphasise Christ's victory over these strongholds.

3.2.3   Gnosticism

The name Gnosticism derives from the Greek word 'gnosis' (knowledge), and is given to a religious movement which probably begins before Christianity, and may even have its roots in the personified Wisdom (see Rudolf Bultmann 1980: 162; Proverbs 1 - 9). After legalism, Gnosticism is probably the earliest and the most dangerous heresy to threaten the Church, and it is still present today. We shall study this movement particularly to find any influence it might have upon Paul's 'in Christ' phrase.

Gnosticism is a search for salvation essentially through 'gnosis,' i.e. some revelation knowledge of God to set the good human spirit free from the evil physical body; to make it divine and therefore immortal. It is a syncretistic belief trying to unite all religious thought, including the Christian faith. Thus its dualism of Spirit over matter or revelation over reason includes both the Platonic dualism of the ideal over the

material, and the Persian of light over darkness, and goodness over evil (see Derek Morphew 1996: 12 - 13). Gnostics believe that Christ brings 'gnosis,' but that he does not have a human body nor does he die; he merely appears temporarily (ODCC 573, i.e. a form of Docetism. Paul knew of this, see Col. 2: 8 - 9). Christ's place is taken by emanation, equated with angels and planetary rulers mediating between the supreme deity and the earth (Morphew 1996: 14, 19). A Jewish apocalyptic influence is seen here, which is coupled with magic.

In essence Gnosticism is a self - centred pursuit of knowledge for its own sake. Life is treated very indifferently, and no real belief in God is involved. As Karl Rahner observes, if 'per absurdum' the choice were between 'gnosis' and salvation, the Gnostic would choose the former (K. Rahner 1974: 6 - 7). Self - salvation leads inevitably to elitism.

It seems agreed among scholars that although there is no clear historical reference to Gnosticism in his letters, Paul does give his readers several warnings about incipient forms of Gnosticism. It is apparent too that Peter, Jude and John also give similar warnings (see Morphew 1996: 3; Joseph Grassi 1968: 335; Thomas Leahy 1968: 378; Bruce Vawter 1968: 410 cf. Bultmann 1974: 1: 709). Frederick Bruner points out how Simon Magus' 'notion' which Peter condemns so harshly, develops into the 'Corinthian theology' of Paul's opponents, and how both *"find perhaps their most recent correspondence in the theology of Pentecostalism"* (F. D. Bruner 1971: 183). We must now see how Paul tackles this problem. This is possible with 'Gnosticism' (as we identify it), but virtually impossible with other heresies, e.g. Mystery religions.

In countering the Gnostic heresy: -

1.   Paul uses their terminology, proving that what they claim as theirs is only to be found in Christ, e.g. words and phrases like 'fulness,' 'mystery,' knowledge, wisdom, flesh and spirit; (see Morphew 1996: 23). He keeps Christ in whom *"all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell"* (Col. 1: 18), in His prime position as the only Mediator between God and humanity (1Tim. 1: 15; Eph. 1: 22 - 23). Thus Paul chooses to use his various 'in Christ' phrases to show that self - salvation and self - sufficiency are inconsonant with Christianity. Although we are new creations 'in Christ,' we are still *"being changed into his likeness"*

(2Cor. 5: 17; 2Cor. 3: 18). Therefore, there is no longer any dualism between flesh and spirit; and the 'already,' which the Gnostics emphasize, cannot take the place of the 'not yet' (see James Dunn 1975: 316; Eph. 4: 15 - 16).

2. Paul clarifies who our enemies are (Eph. 6: 12). Jesus is crucified because these 'Gnostic rulers' do not recognise Him.[1]

3. Knowledge is necessary as Paul admits, *"even if I am unskilled in speaking, I am not in knowledge"* (2Cor. 11: 6); but knowledge must be tempered by Christly and neighbourly love (Bultmann suggests that 1Cor. 13 is written in opposition to Gnosticism 1974: 1: 710; cf. 1Cor. 1: 19; 8: 1 - 2; Eph. 3: 19). It is most important that knowledge must come through God's knowledge of us (1Cor. 8: 3; Gal. 4: 9). So Paul reminds everyone that 'in Christ' are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2: 3).

3.2.4   The Qumran Community

Is there evidence of influence upon Paul by the Qumran Community especially concerning Paul's 'in Christ' phrase? We shall now seek to answer this question.

In about 140 BC an ultra - orthodox community of Essenes arises in Qumran having originated, like the Pharisees, from the Hasideans (M. Hengel 1974: 1: 254; Raymond E. Brown 1968: 552). It is significant that the Essenes are not mentioned either in the Bible or in the Talmud. And yet, bearing in mind Paul's Pharisaic background, and the number of parallel passages between Paul's writings and the Qumran literature, e.g. *"in relation to dualism, angels, the 'mystery' of God, and the gift of uprightness"* it seems safe to assume that Paul has contact with Essenes or converted Essenes (Fitzmyer 1968: 218). George Johnston makes the unlikely suggestion that Paul was a member of the Community (G. Johnston 1962: 720).

The Righteous Teacher, a priest of the Zadokite line, is leader of the sect. He is not a messiah; but it is claimed that God gives him understanding to interpret all the

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[1]So Bultmann (1980: 197) who also regards 'the deep things of Satan (Rev. 2: 24) as Gnostic (1974: 1: 709); Bruner observes that John denies Gnostics the name Christian (1Jn. 2: 4) and, where Jesus is not confessed, sees *"the spirit of Antichrist,"* (1971: 276); (1Jn. 4: 3).

mysteries behind the prophet's words (R. Brown 1968: 552, 550, 555). Paul himself makes a similar claim several times (Eph. 6: 19; Col. 1: 25 - 27; 4: 3). And as the Teacher offers Israel its great chance of salvation; so Paul quotes Isa. 49: 8 then adds *"behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation"* (R. Brown 1968: 555; 2Cor. 6: 2). The Community waits for redemption; hoping to hasten it, through their cleansing ceremonies and rituals; while Paul proclaims that *"Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures . . . was raised . . . (and) appeared also to me"* (Stephen Noll 1993: 780 - 781).

Lets examine some of the parallels between Christianity and the Qumran sect: -

1. Both are 'conversion communities.' Candidates are examined, take certain vows and are baptised, marking a definite move from sin to new life. There is here we may say both a ritual and a spiritual cleansing to ensure absolute purity. Apart from its use in cleansing, a well of water is interpreted at Qumran as the law. Christianity sees it as Jesus Christ (Jn. 14: 14; see A. Segal 1990: 178; R. Brown 1968: 553; Edward Blair 1972: 1071). Sect members call themselves a spiritual temple. Similarly Paul writes *"your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit"* (William Domeris 1996: 7; 1Cor.6: 19. John refers to Jesus' body as the Temple 2: 21).

2. Organisationally there are important parallels: -

    Session of the Many vs. Body of disciples (Acts 6: 2, 5; 15: 12);

    Supreme Council vs. Special body of the twelve apostles;

    Qumran Supervisor vs. Bishop (both having similar functions - pastoral, administrative and doctrinal), (Tit.1: 7 - 9; 1Tim. 3: 2 - 7; see R. Brown 1968: 554).

3. Belief that they are living in the last days. Hengel suggests that this eschatological hope helps to explain the apocalyptic foundation of Paul's thought (Domeris 1996: 7; Hengel 1974: 1: 254).

4. Both communities share their possessions one with another (Blair 1972: 1071).

5. Virtues of humility, loving kindness, truth, right thinking, faithfulness, unity (unity in Qumran is very strong). Dodd notes that Johannine unity has much in common with that of Qumran (1980: 777) and patience should be shown, but the

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Community are also expected to show *"a hatred for the ruling sons of darkness"* (Hans - Helmut Esser 1975: 2: 261 cf. Gal. 5: 22 - 23).

6. In the Community there are dualisms of light and darkness, of God and Belial; which strongly compare with Paul's 2Cor. 6: 14 - 7: 1; so much so that some commentators regard the latter as non - Pauline (Noll 1993: 778; John J. O'Rourke 1968: 282; Blair 1972: 1071; Joseph A. Grassi 1968: 348; Eph. 5: 8; 1Thess. 5: 5). There is also preparation for war between the children of 'light' and of 'darkness' in which the Archangel Michael will play a part (Rev. 12: 7).

7. There are several parallels too between phrases and ideas, e.g. 'righteousness of God,' 'works of the Law,' 'church of God,' 'sons of light' and 'son of God' (Noll 1993: 778).

8. The sacred meals of bread and wine at which the coming of the messiah is mentioned by the sect, and which anticipate the messianic banquet, bear a similarity to the Lord's Supper (see R. Brown 1968: 554; Blair 1972: 1071).

In conclusion, seen together these parallels seem to <u>indicate a definite influence of the Qumran Community's rationale upon Paul,</u> rather than both parties drawing upon a common source (see Noll 1993: 778). Thus we can agree with Domeris that *"Christianity shares more with sectarian Judaism, like that found at Qumran, than with the orthodox Judaism of the Sadducees"* (Domeris 1996: 7). Paul is shown a picture of *"an almost ready - made theology of how to be a Jew without the Temple"* (Yigail Yadin 1985: 254).

Similarly Paul is presented also with a vital apocalyptic mysticism which, Noll observes, reinforces Schweitzer's claim that the essence of Paul's Gospel was the experience of being in Christ, though not as Schweitzer thought of it (Noll 1993: 779). This mysticism includes the Merkabah mysticism of which there are fine examples in the Qumran repertoire (see R. Eisenman and M. Wise 1992: 222 - 230, e.g. the Chariots of Glory 4Q: 286 - 287). Angelic Liturgy is celebrated, and the cosmic war is continually being waged between the children of light (the Qumran sect) and the children of darkness, and also within the soul of each person.

3.3 Paul's Goals

What are the goals Paul suggests, or even commands, for his readers? Let us examine and classify the principal ones, acknowledging that many of Paul's words of advice and encouragement in his letters can also in some way be seen as goals. What is significant about these main goals is that they all embody Paul's 'in Christ' phrase. The goals fall into five sections.

3.3.1 Know

"Knowing Christ Jesus my Lord . . . that I may gain Christ and be found in him . . . that I may know him and the power of his resurrection . . . I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil.3: 8 - 14).

Knowing Christ gives Paul firstly directions for his life, and secondly the necessary victorious power to live as Christ lives, through being continually called by God (cf. *"I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified"*, 1Cor.2: 2). This is one of Paul's decidedly mystical passages.

3.3.2 Mature

"Him we proclaim . . . that we may present every man mature in Christ" (Col.1: 28). Paul, in a motherly way, admits that he is *"again in travail until Christ be formed"* in those to whom he is writing (Gal.4: 19). We cannot conceive, (Paul seems to apply the maternal image again here), *"what God has prepared for those who love him"* (1Cor.2: 9; cf. Is.64: 4). And the goal is to be mature in Christ so that, as Paul rephrases it, *"we all attain to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"* (Eph.4: 13).

3.3.3 Obey

"In Christ Jesus then I have reason to be proud of my work for God . . . what Christ has wrought through me" (Rom.15: 17 - 18). In all humility Jesus is given all the credit for Paul's work. The key note here is Paul's continued obedience to God's call upon his life. *"Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus . .*

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." (Eph.3: 20 - 21). The Galatians have been hindered from *"obeying the truth"* (Gal.5: 7), so Paul motivates them *"I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view than mine"* (Gal.5: 10).

3.3.4 Fulfil

"See that you fulfil the ministry which you have received in the Lord" (Col.4: 17). This goal applies not only to Archippus, whom Paul elsewhere describes as his 'fellow soldier' (Philem 2), but also no doubt to himself and all believers (cf. *"those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus"* 1Tim.3: 13). This goal requires the fulfilment of each person's life - mission as willed by God.

3.3.5 Union

God's goal for the universe is *"set forth in Christ as a plan for the fulness of time to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth"* (Eph.1: 9 - 10). In view of this Paul encourages his readers to be part of this new creation, that is to be in Christ (see 2Cor.5: 17), being washed, sanctified and justified *"in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God"* (1Cor.6: 11; cf. *"be filled with all the fullness of God"* Eph.3: 19).

Here Paul shares with his readers the goals in his lifestyle, which is one of complete and utter commitment to Christ, who, since the Damascus Road experience, has become such a part, if not the whole, of Paul's life that he has no other option than to seal or certify with an 'in Christ' phrase almost all that he writes.

3.3.6 Conclusion

Our study of possible influences upon Paul has been very fruitful, for Stoicism, Mystery Religions, Gnosticism and the Qumran Community all appear to show significant parallels with Christianity. Obviously our understanding of the background to Paul's thinking and work among the churches is so limited that any conclusions in this area can only be tentative. We have already considered the influence upon Paul of Judaism and Jewish Mysticism, areas which are coming increasingly into the forefront of scholarship.

Leander Keck believes Paul owes far more to the mystery cults than appears on the surface, for example there is no Jewish precedent for the idea of participating in the deity's death (Rom. 6: 5; 1989: 11). Also Inge quotes Clement who maintains that the notion of deification by the gift of immortality comes into Christian mysticism through the 'mysteries' (1948: 88).

Paul emphasises the fact that he receives the gospel *"through a revelation of Jesus Christ"* (Gal. 1: 12) which must include the essentials of Paul's theology (Ladd 1981: 369); and at the same time in the light of what we have found above we must in part at least agree with Dunn who readily acknowledges *"Paul's debt to both Jew and Greek for the great bulk of his language and concepts"* (See Seyoon Kim 1982, 252n, 334), e.g. 'Logos,' 'conscience,' 'content,' 'being in the Spirit,' 'walking in the Spirit,' 'a dying and rising god,' 'wisdom,' 'mystery,' 'divine union as man's true end,' 'deification by immortality and the mystery religion cycle - suffering, death, resurrection, victory.'

Examining Paul's ultimate life goals we can see how Paul comes to crystallise the various influences upon his thinking into the simple but very expressive and influential 'in Christ' phrase, which is the focus of our study.

3.4.   Paul's Mystery

Mystery (Greek musterion) is a distinctive word in the New Testament although it is used there only 27 times, including 21 times by Paul (Peter O'Brien 1993: 622). It may be defined as a secret which was formerly withheld but which is now partially but not fully revealed by the Holy Spirit to believers. Let us examine mystery in the light of our studies on mysticism, for as Nicolai Berdyaev writes *"Mysticism presupposes mystery"* (1948: 241; cf. E. Tinsley 1969: 225). Throughout world history God reveals his plans to His people before actually carrying them out; thus Amos can say *"surely the Lord God does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets"* (3: 7; cf. Num.24: 4, 16). Humanity needs to have a fuller knowledge and appreciation of God's mysteries in order better to understand the meaning of history. Clifford Hill illustrates this truth by showing how Paul in Eph.1: 3 - 10 praises God not only for redeeming humanity in Christ but also for making *"known to us . . . the mystery of his will"* (Hill 1995: 62).

The reason why we live in the midst of mystery is that God is to us

incomprehensible. This fact is the only real mystery, therefore we cannot really speak about it but only as a result of it as He communicates Himself (uncreated grace) to us enabling us to do so (see Rahner 1975: 1002). James Bacik rightly suggests that before we share Christian beliefs it helps to *"develop a sense of mystery"*; that is *"the apologist must become a mystagogue"* (Bacik 1980: 128n). Paul conveniently borrows the term 'mystery' from the Mystery Religions which are very active during his time, and which are seeking union with the divine, a union which Paul knows can come only through Christ (see George Hendry 1963: 156 - 157). No relation to the Mystery Religions is suggested here, but simply an analogy is expressed. Bornkamm rightly commends caution even in the use of analogies (1974: 4: 824).

Paul 'mystery' is basically Christocentric, but is applied in at least 18 different directions (see Fitzmyer 1968: 807; M. Barth 1974: 125; Dake 1993: 175), including Israel's hardness (Rom.11: 25), God's wisdom 1Cor.2: 7; and Christ in human beings (Col.1: 26 - 27). It is in this latter pericope, which Paul describes as *"the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory"* that we find the church with Christ as head (see Günter Finkenrath 1975: 3: 504; Col.1: 27). Paul continues (v.28) *"him we proclaim, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man mature in Christ"*. In Col.1: 25 - 27 the 'mystery' is described first as *"the word of God"* (v.25), then as *"Christ in you, the hope of glory"* (v.27; cf. 2: 2 where the mystery is *"Christ"*). *"Christ in you"* could be interpreted individually, i.e. Christ in each believer's life, or, more likely, collectively, i.e. Christ among the Gentiles, which Moule describes as an *"unheard - of position!"*, but which is an *"aspect of the gospel of the incarnation"* (Moule 1962: 992). Nevertheless Paul's 'in Christ' phrase is prominent in this mystery analogy.

Jewish and apocalyptic sources influence Paul in his application of the mystery concept, which therefore also has an eschatological nature (see Fitzmyer 1968: 807; Stegner 1993: 507; Bornkamm 1974: 4: 822). Thus the crucial role of Paul's 'mystery' is the Christocentric incorporation of the Gentiles and the elect Jews into a new body, the Church, in which every person is a new creation in Christ (2Cor.5: 17), and which is intended to embrace the whole world (see M. Barth 1974: 123; Beda Rigaux and Pierre Grelot 1973: 375).

Mystery may therefore be seen, in part at least, as secretive, and mystical as God continues to unite all things in Himself (Eph.1: 9 - 10) through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. This process conforms to our definition of mysticism which in turn lines up with our understanding of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase. In short, mystery being Christocentric, is an important foundation both to Paul's 'in Christ' phrase, and to mysticism.

3.5   Paul's Mysticism

It appears that several scholars accept Paul as a mystic,[1] some, (e.g. Deissmann 1957: 147n and C.H. Dodd 1967: 69) even suggesting he is a mystic before he becomes a Christian. Other scholars also agree, provided they first define the word mystic, (e.g. R. Tannehill 1966: 4n; F. Bruce 1975: 75; C.H. Dodd 1967: 69). Let us try to answer the question 'is Paul a mystic?'

Most scholars who answer in the affirmative support their argument by referring to texts in Paul's letters.[2] Other scholars go into greater detail in articles or books about Paul himself and his mysticism. Deissmann is also in the forefront here, believing that Paul has a *"mystical - prophetical nature"* (1957: 79). Perhaps von Hügel gives a strong affirmation of Paul as a mystic. He finds in Paul *"not only a deeply mystical element, but mysticism of the noblest, indeed the most daringly speculative, world - embracing type"* (1961: 1: 35). Similarly Underhill regards both Paul and John as *"obvious instances of mystics of the first rank"* (1967: 455); while Graef describes Paul as *"a mystic of the highest calibre"* (1966: 32); cf. Inge (1947); Moltmann (1980: 63); Wikenhauser (1960); Yungblut (1991);

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[1] Tannehill's definition is similar to our own, i.e. *"the doctrine that the individual can come into immediate contact with God through subjective experiences which differ essentially from the experiences of ordinary life"* (1966: 3n). Bruce follows Tannehill. Dodd gives no definition.

[2] E.g. Bousset (1970: 227) - 1Cor.13 conclusion, and 2Cor.12: 1 - 4; Alexander Bruce (1894: 219) - Col.3: 1; F.F. Bruce (1975: 67) - 'in Christ Jesus', 'in Christ' or 'in the Lord' phrases; Bultmann (1970: 370) - 2Cor.12: 1 - 4; Corduan (1991: 135, 136, 138) - Gal.3: 3; Phil.2: 13; Acts 16: 31; Rom.8: 5; M. Cox (1983: 44) - Gal.2: 20; W. Davies (1980: 318) - Col.3: 4; C. Dodd (1966: 63) - Rom.6: 4, 8 - 9; 8: 29 - 30; 'in Christ'; 2Cor.12: 4; W. Dyson (1913: 121) - Rom.8: 39; Gal.2: 20; Graef (1966: 34) - Gal.2: 20; M. Grant (1976: 112) - Rom.9: 32; Mc Ginn (1992: 4) - 2Cor.12: 2 - 4; Morray - Jones (1993: 182) - 2Cor.12; Stegner (1993: 508) - 2Cor.12: 1 - 4; Tannehill (1966: 3) - 2Cor.12: 1 - 4.

Schweitzer (see above); Segal (1990); Cerfaux (1967: 355) - Paul *"was the greatest mystic of all the children of men"*.

Patrick Henry suggests Paul is not in the third heaven but that he is using symbols and images which line up with extra - biblical realities (1979: 179). There can be little substance behind this theory, for, as Yungblut points out (1991: 131), mystics like Paul who experience ultimate reality have therefore no need to recognise dogmas as metaphors which are literally true.

Evidence that Paul may be regarded as a mystic and that several 'in Christ' phrases may be regarded as being mystical may be found throughout this study but our main intention is to ascertain whether or not these phrases are used principally in a mystical sense[1]. It seems clear that Paul, as we would expect, does not simply give advice to his congregations, but is encouraging them to experience what he experiences. We have already looked at his Merkabah mysticism in detail, an event which several scholars take as proof that Paul may be called a mystic. Can we see an event similar in nature to this as typical in the lives of certain 'mystics', e.g. Moses (Ex.24: 17) Micaiah (1Kg.22: 19), Isaiah (6: 1); Ezekiel (1: 26); Jesus (Mt.17: 2 transfiguration); Paul (2Cor.12: 2); John (Rev.4: 2; 14: 1)? Perhaps the mercy seat on top of the ark is the prototype for these later appearances (see Ex.25: 22) as is evidenced in 1Sam.4: 4; 2Sam.6: 2; 2Kg.19: 15 (see OAB 99n).

3.6   Paul's Ecstasy

Can we call Paul an ecstatic? We shall now attempt to answer this question, seeking also to find any relationship between ecstasy and Paul's 'in Christ' phrase.

3.6.1   Definition

It is difficult to distinguish ecstasy from other similar supernatural experiences, e.g. union and rapture. In fact the mystic Teresa of Avila regards union, rapture, elevation, flight of the Spirit and transport as *"all different names for the same thing . . . ecstasy"* (1976: 1: 129). Wolfhart Pannenberg (1994: 2: 451) gives a definition we shall accept *"believers*

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[1]Stewart claims that the majority of the 'in Christ' phrases have the mystical meaning (1935: 162).

are 'ecstatic', i.e. outside themselves, as they are in Christ (Rom.6: 6, 11). Thus - and only thus - Christ is also in them (8: 10)".

3.6.2   History of Ecstasy

James Muilenberg follows G. Widengren in distinguishing various ecstatic activities of early communal groups of prophets in the Old Testament. He lists (1962: 480) several unusual outstanding acts including : -

> "Far - hearing (1Kg.18: 41; 2Kg.6: 12, 32f)
>
> Far - seeing (2Kg.5: 26; 8: 10ff)
>
> Rain - making (1Sam.7: 7; 12: 16ff; 1Kg.17: 1; 18: 42ff)
>
> Production of food (1Kg.17: 14; 2Kg.4: 1ff, 42ff)
>
> Healing of sickness (1Kg.13: 6; 2Kg.5: 11, 14)
>
> Raising from the dead (1Kg.17: 21; 2Kg.4: 337".

God's word releaased through the prophets can be seen here in great power. And since prayer, or God's command, accompanies the word, there is no danger of there being any magical influence. The prophets are all aware that God's Spirit is inspiring them in their work (Muilenberg 1962: 480). Contrast for example the pure ecstasy of Saul (1Sam.10: 10) and that of his messengers (19: 20 - 24), with the artificially induced ecstasy of Baal's prophets (1Kg.18: 26 - 29). We have already referred to the decline in prophecy in the four hundred years before the coming of Christ; and what is also happening then is a widespread use of artificially induced ecstasy, prominent particularly in the mystery religions. We discern elements of this also in our study of Jewish mysticism.

With the advent of Christianity there can be no artificially induced ecstasy, but instead there arises a strong, dynamic ecstasy which can offer for example, strength to missionaries, comfort to those being persecuted, and direction in their work (see Oepke 1974: 2: 450, 457). Stephen's witness (Acts 7); Paul's conversion, call and preaching (Acts 9); Gentiles receiving the Spirit (Acts 11) illustrate this. In his survey of the ecstatic element in the early church Oepke notes (1974: 2: 458) that the 'Didache', a first century church document (see ODCC 401), makes no adverse comment about ecstasy or ecstatics. However Oepke suddenly, without giving any explanation, admits to the ecstatic becoming *"more and more heretical"* and pictures Paul fighting against what he

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describes as *"the excesses of orgiastic ecstasy"* (1974: 2: 458), probably in the Corinthian church. But if this is true how does this happen? Montanism, which is in part ecstatic, does not *"appear until late second century and is almost immediately condemned by the church"* (see ODCC 934), though it has a wide influence. It would appear that the truth behind this 'heresy' is unknown, but one possible reason for the 'orgiastic ecstasy' might be the neglect of the pure Holy Spirit inspired ecstasy, hence the prophets and others would be operating in Satan instead of in Christ.

3.6.3   Experiencing Ecstasy

Ecstasy (standing outside oneself) is associated with enthusiasm (having God within oneself). In ecstasy our conscious thought ceases, and our will is united with God's will (Inge: 1948: 14; ODCC 443). Our soul might even be violently acted upon by divine power, as we have already seen happen to the Old Testament prophets, resulting in the Spirit giving utterances or revealing visions (see ODCC 442; cf. Acts 2: 4, Pentecost). Bloch - Hoell may be incorrect in suggesting that *"ecstasy represents the highest stage of mysticism"*, for Teresa of Avila sets it between the 'Prayer of Union' and the "Mystic Marriage" (see Bloch - Hoell 1964: 173; ODCC 442; cf. Robert Frank - ecstasy is the "unitive" stage, 1964: 243). Nevertheless ecstasy plays a vital part in spiritual growth.

Although Jesus' relations once described Him as being "beside himself" His life does not appear to show any evidence of ecstatic behaviour (Mk.3: 21). Wilhelm Mundle and Albrecht Oepke feel that Jesus was no ecstatic; Oepke suggesting that Jesus' *"highly developed life of prayer and miraculous gifts are better described as pneumatic"* (W. Mundle 1975: 1: 528; A. Oepke 1974: 2: 456). Certainly Jesus was continually filled with the Holy Spirit and therefore 'pneumatic', but if 'pneumatic', then by definition He must equally be ecstatic in part. Oepke quotes Ninck *"Jesus had also moments of ecstasy when He saw what no eye has seen and heard what no ear has heard, when His inner life made a great leap forward"* (1974: 2: 457n). There must have been many such moments in Jesus' life, e.g. at His baptism (Mk.1: 9 - 12), transfiguration (Mt.17: 1 - 8), and prior to Lazarus' resurrection (Jn.11: 41 - 42). It seems in order here to share Denys the Areopagite's insight that *"creation, providence,*

incarnation are all of the divine ecstasy, of God himself inspired, taken out of himself, made man so as never to be unmade more, united with us forever by his own initiative of love, which antedates the world's"(see Inge 1964).

After Pentecost ecstasy accompanies the powerful movement of the Holy Spirit in the Christian Church, but it needs control, or heresy might result, hence Paul's letters to the Corinthians. As we have seen, ecstatic union is the chief end of the mystery religions, and so with God taking the initiative through His Holy Spirit, believers can be overcome supernaturally and thus united 'in Christ' mystically. John would later express the command *"test the spirits to see whether they are of God"* (1Jn.4: 1).

Since 'ecstasy' means to stand outside oneself, this can occur under the inspiration either of the Holy Spirit, or of an evil spirit or of love. Thus Paul can write that he is so loved by Christ that *"it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me"*, (Gal.2: 20), i.e. Paul is in Christ (Rom.6: 6, 11) and so Christ is in him (Rom.6: 8). *"The Spirit takes us above our finitude, so that in faith we share in him who is outside us, Jesus Christ"* (Wolfhart Pannenberg 1994: 2: 451). Saudreau quotes Gerson's claim that ecstasy operates in the highest part of the soul which becomes so intent on its action that the inferior powers . . . and often even the faculties of nutrition and motion - are incapable of action (1927: 202). This appears to be a true reflection of what actually happens as present day experience confirms. We see here a very close link between ecstasy, the 'in Christ' phrase and also mysticism.

What appears to be happening to the persons experiencing ecstasy is thus a restriction in their consciousness effected by the Holy Spirit which results in a temporary union with God through Christ. As Ringgren points out there is a similarity between ecstasy and trance (1992: 2: 280; cf. the experience of Saul, 1Sam.10: 6; 2Cor.3: 18; 4: 17). So whatever happens to believers during these experiences may be claimed as real and actual no matter to what it relates (see Bloch - Hoell 1964: 106). Thus for example Paul can rightly claim to be an apostle having seen Christ, although only in a vision (Acts 26: 19; 1Cor.9: 1 - 2; 15: 8 - 9). Against Witherington (1998: 158) who regards Paul as probably *"a member of the wider circle of apostles"*.

In conclusion it would appear that in the light of Paul's conversion and call and his other subsequent visions, particularly his Merkabah mysticism experience, he may

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rightly be called an ecstatic. Several scholars are in agreement here, e.g. Albrecht Oepke (1974: 2: 457); and W. Davies (1980: 187).

3.7 Paul's Zeal

If there is one quality which shines brightly throughout Paul's life it is his zeal. He describes himself as *"educated according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God"* (Acts 22: 3). Earlier Paul claims to be *"as to the law a Pharisee, as to zeal a persecutor of the church, as to righteousness under the law blameless"* (Phil.3: 5 - 6). Paul possesses this trait not to an ordinary but to an extreme degree - *"so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers"* (Gal.1: 14). And, as we might expect, he appreciates and acknowledges others who also show this attribute. For example he *"rejoiced still more"* on hearing from Titus of the longing the mourning and the zeal of the Corinthian congregation for him [Paul] (2Cor.7: 7; cf.9: 2; and Epaphras, Col.4: 13).

This quality is eminent in Jesus, especially as He cleanses the temple, after which His disciples remember David's words (which John prophetically changes from the past tense to the future tense), *"zeal for thy house will consume me"* (Ps.69: 9; Jn.2: 17).

Allied to zeal is eagerness ('spoude'). Paul, for example, is eager to *"maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"* (Eph.4: 3). Here we see Paul's charismatic leadership in action, Witherington (1998: 82 - 83) rightly comments that Paul is charismatic, a man of the Spirit who is in fact very much like his Corinthian saints, as he shows in congratulating them that they *"come behind in no gift"* (1Cor.1: 4 - 7). It is this spiritual eagerness that keeps the church body whole, and directs it ethically (see H. Kennedy 1959: 149; Wofgang Bauder 1975: 3: 1169).

Thus Paul may be called charismatic, for he is continually through grace (charisma) being directed by the Holy Spirit (see Dunn 1977: 110) and continues to acknowledge Christ by reinforcing his letters with the 'in Christ' phrase..

3.8 Conclusion

This study on Paul and his writings is intermediary in the thesis integrating the mysticism models with Paul's 'in Christ' phrase as used by him and as interpreted by

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scholars.

Paul's call and conversion must be the most dramatic in history and it is little wonder that he mentions it about eight times. He is a person superior to his colleagues in many ways, as he admits, but how can he change so quickly and completely from being so zealous for the law, and so ready and willing to persecute and kill Christians, to become someone overflowing with love for everyone, Jews or Greeks, slaves or free? Paul gives the answer *"all were made to drink of one Spirit"* (1Cor.12: 13). Perhaps it was at Stephen's martyrdom that Paul drinks of the Spirit. He is later 'slain in the Spirit' as Jesus appears to him, and Paul realises he has been persecuting Jews all the time. If Paul previously is in Judaism and in the law he is now in Christ and in freedom, where he will remain all his life, and because of which he will be able to encourage others to imitate him.

During his life Paul receives many revelation knowledge visions including the Merkabah mysticism rider vision. These principally constitute Paul's theological education. They are necessary to meet Paul's needs, as he relates in Phil.3: 8 - 11: ❶ v.8 *"knowing Christ Jesus my Lord"* (one of Paul's most mystical passages): ❷ v.v.8 - 9 *"that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own, based on law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness of God"*; ❸ v.10 *"that I may know him and the power of his resurrection;* ❹ v.10 *"and may share his sufferings;* ❺ v.11 *"that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead"*.

Were there any possible particular influences upon Paul and upon his conception of the 'in Christ' phrase? This question is difficult to answer because at the time of Jesus' birth the world is changing rapidly with many movements, philosophies and religions permeating society. In examining Stoicism, Mystery religions, Gnosticism and the Qumran Community for example they all in various ways seem to offer bridges to Christianity at a vital time when mythological gods are falling out of favour as also is the symbolic influence of Hellenic mysticism. Scholars, e.g. Domeris, maintain that Christianity shares more with Qumran than with orthodox Judaism, and that Qumran provides a ready made theology - how to be a Jew without the temple.

More specifically parallels between the teachings of Stoicism, Mystery religions, Gnosticism and the Qumran community may be seen in for example various concepts.

Stoicism could have been influential in its themes of the human body and its members, the conscious, being content and its lists of vices and virtues from its house - codes. Similarly Mystery religions could be influential with their 'welcoming all' policy, emotional and sacramental purity, initiation, ecstasy and the recognition that salvation is a divine favour, as is immortality which hitherto had separated gods from humans.

Gnosticism is a dangerous heresy with its roots in personified wisdom and its emphasis upon 'gnosis'. Paul appears to accept their language by using it to counter their claims, i.e. fullness, mystery, knowledge, wisdom, flesh, and spirit. In fact it seems true that Paul emphasises that being 'in Christ' shows the worthlessness of self-satisfaction or sufficiency. The Qumran community could provide Paul with a wealth of concepts he could use, e.g. their organisation and strong unity, sharing all possessions, continually engaging in a light vs. darkness war, and living in the last days. In considering the above parallels, some terms might not be confined to particular philosophies or religions, etc. but might be in common use, e.g. wisdom, initiation, mystery cf. *"Man on earth is a mortal God, God in heaven is an immortal man"*. There appears to be no Jewish precedent for the idea of participating in the deity's death (Rom.6: 5), and deification through immortality seems to come from the Mystery religions. In essence Paul seizes the opportunity apparently to crystallise many of these 'influences' in his 'in Christ' phrase.

In a similar way Paul applies the 'in Christ' phrase to his own life, *"I can do all things in him who strengthens me"* (Phil.4: 13), thus his goals to know, mature, obey, fulfil show his progress towards ultimate union 'in Christ' personally and for the universe as a whole.

The Christocentric mystery of God's will (see Eph.1: 9) is a revealed secret Paul explores in several directions for it is fundamental to living, and consequently leads to mysticism and the 'in Christ' phrase. Thus many scholars support the idea that Paul is a mystic and also witness to his mystical - prophetical as well as his ecstatic nature. Accepting ecstasy in the Christian context as standing outside of oneself by being 'in Christ', with Christ also in oneself, Paul's statement that *"it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me"* (Gal.2: 20) qualifies Paul as being ecstatic. The suggestion that ecstasy operates in the highest part of the soul, if accepted, would support the synderesis

theory suggested earlier. A similarity is seen here between an ecstasy, a trance and being slain in the spirit (see the Holy Spirit mysticism model above), when one loses power over one's actions. Allied to Paul's ecstasy is his zeal or eagerness as exemplified in his maintaining *"the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"* (Eph.4: 3).

It is impossible to position Paul in any specific model because they all have their boundaries, but he is certainly in every one of them to a limited degree.

CHAPTER 4

'IN CHRIST' PHRASES AND ASSOCIATED PHRASES

In chapter three above we trace Paul's life up to his call and conversion. Thereafter little is known of his three years in Damascus and fourteen years in the regions of Syria and Cilicia prior to his return visit to Jerusalem, this time with Barnabas and Titus[1]. Anthony Hanson believes that during this period Paul receives teaching which includes - the story of Jesus; Jesus fulfilling the Scripture; Jesus as Messiah, Lord and (probably) Son of Man, and that the end - time has begun, and the Parousia will take place shortly. He concludes that *"basic to it all is his [Paul's] belief that all believers in God have always in some sense been 'in Christ' . . . sharing in Christ through the Eucharist, being incorporated in Christ through baptism . . ."* (Hanson 1974: 218 - 224). This could well be true. We shall in this chapter look at the nature and possible origins of the 'in Christ' phrase, studying particularly the in Adam and in Abraham phrases, and also classify the phrases. They will be looked at again in Chapter six. These phrases constitute the raw material for our study.

Fundamental to Paul's 'in Christ' phrase is the fact that God creates human beings in His image, after His likeness, crowned with glory and honour (Gen.1: 26; Ps.8: 5; cf. 1Cor.11: 7). The Wisdom of Solomon (2: 23) written in about 50BC adds that human beings were created to be immortal. They may be seen therefore as the peak of God's creation, having a spiritual nature, reason and free will and as commanded to be holy (Lev.11: 48), and never to grieve the Holy Spirit (Eph.4: 30). It is this special place that human beings have in God's creation that Paul seems anxious to preserve which could contribute to Paul's choice of the 'in Christ' phrase as we shall see.

Through sin and 'envy of the devil' (Wisdom of Solomon 2: 24) human nature, which is created 'very good' (Gen.1: 31), becomes 'a good thing spoiled' and loses its glory (John Baillie 1939: 22 - 23). It seems true to say that on eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve, and hence the whole human race, created in their likeness, after their image, die spiritually, and are thereby separated

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[1]Gal.1: 18 - 2: 1; Segal (1990: 36 - 37)

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from God, as God had threatened (Gen.3: 5; cf. Is. 59: 2; Rom.3: 23). The sinner's spirit is guilty, dead or asleep but is not nonexistent as we have seen in our study above of mysticism models (cf. Rea 1974: 29).

4.1 The Phrases

Table Four

Frequency of 'in Christ' and variant phrases in Paul's letters

Letter	Total No.	In Christ Jesus	In the Lord	In Christ	In Him	In Whom	In Lord Jesus	In Christ Jesus the Lord	In Lord Jesus Christ	In Him-self	In Jesus	In the Beloved
1Th.	7	2	2	1			1	1				
2Th.	4		1	1				2				
1Cor.	24	5	9	7	1		1	1				
2Cor.	14			7	5	2						
Gal.	8	5	1	2								
Rom.	21	6	7	5			1	2				
Philm.		5	1	2	2							
Col.	18	1	4	3	7	7						
Eph.	36	8	7	5	3	7	1	1		2	1	1
Phil.	21	8	8	3	1		1					
1Tim.		2	2									
Titus.	0											
2Tim.		7	7									
Total	167	45	41	35	18	10	6	4	4	2	1	1
%	100	27	24	21	11	6	4	2	2	1	1	1

Scholars differ widely in assessing the actual number of those phrases, depending upon the biblical text used (see Martin Hengel 1983: 182n, and B. Witherington 1993:

96 for more on this) and also on their exegesis of the texts, e.g. F. Buchsel find only 12 places where 'being in Christ' is denoted (see Alfred Wikenhauser 1960: 100 - 101); while H. R. Mackintosh finds nearly 240 phrases (see James Garrett 1997: 2: 330). The majority of estimates appear in the 160's taking into account all the 13 Pauline letters. We suggest 167 phrases[1].

Table Four details the frequency of the phrases and their variants in each of Paul's thirteen letters, which are listed in probable chronological order (Gordon Fee 1995). At this stage we simply note that : -

1.   The phrases do not appear in the letter to Titus;

2.   Ephesians, probably a circular letter (OAB 1415), contains far more phrases than any other letter,

3.   The three phrases most widely used are in Christ Jesus (27%), in the Lord (24%), and in Christ (21%). It is significant that the 'in Christ' phrase, and the others to some extent make a sudden appearance in the early letters, then peak in the captivity letters and decline in the pastorals (J.K.S. Reid 1960: 353 - 354). We shall refer later to the inverse of these phrases, i.e. *"Christ in us"* as well as the phrases *"in God"*; *"in the Spirit"* and *"the Spirit in us"*.

John in his Gospel and letters uses varieties of the phrase a surprising number of times (Jn.6: 56; 14: 20, 30; 15: 2 - 7; 16: 33; 17: 21; 1Jn.2: 5, 6, 8, 24, 27, 28; 3: 6: 24; 5: 11, 20). The phrase 'in Jesus' appears in Rev.1: 9 and in Acts 4: 2, cf. vv. 9, 10, 12, and is implied in Acts 13: 39. Peter uses the phrase 'in Christ' (1Pet.3: 16; 5: 10, 14); and 'in the Lord' is used in Rev.14: 13 (see Fernand Prat 1959: 391; Reid 1960: 353; Sanday & Headlam 1971: 161). These, however, are not Pauline phrases and so do not concern this study.

4.1.1 In Adam

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[1]Paul's 'in Christ' phrase is pre - figured in the Synoptic gospels in several places, e.g. *"gathered together into my name, there I am in the midst of them"* (Mt.18: 20; cf. 25: 40 - 45; Mk.8: 38; see Hunter 1977: 35)

Paul mentions Adam by name only seven times[1], but he makes powerful use of his in Adam / in Christ analogy, not only in explaining Christ's redemption as we shall now see, but also in other themes, e.g. the old / new nature / man (Rom.6: 6; Col.3: 9 - 10; 2Cor.4: 16) where 'anthropos' has an Adamic nature (see Larry Kreitzer 1993: 9). Kreitzer here aptly describes this analogy as *"close to the heart of Paul's thought"*.

Paul knows of Adam's corporate nature, for he tells the Athenians that God *"made from one every nation of men . . ."* (Acts 17: 26). Being a Pharisee, he knows too, of Israel's corporate nature and ethnic solidarity. Thus, he traces the sequence of events: -

- The first Adam became a living being (1Cor.15: 45)
- *"As sin came into the world through one man . . ."* (Rom.5: 12)
- Because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man (Rom.5: 17)
- One man's trespass leads to condemnation for all men (Rom.5: 18)
- For the wages of sin is death (Rom.6: 23), i.e. God's judgment on sin.

Above all Paul knows that the perfect sacrifice is made, and through this atonement there is victory over sin, condemnation and death, for Jesus Christ is crucified, and is risen from the dead, for He personally appears to Paul. Adam and Christ now stand, not as individuals but as *"the two great figures at the entrance of two worlds, two aeons, two 'creations' the old and the new, and in their actions and fate lies the decisions for all who belong to them, because they are comprehended in them and thus are reckoned either to death or to life. This is now expressed by 'in Adam' and 'in Christ'. And it is therefore in this sense that Adam can be called the type of him who was to come"*. (Ridderbos 1977: 61; Rom.5: 14 cf. E. Best 1955: 36; Oepke 1974: 2: 542; Moule 1968: 29; C. Barrett 1962: 69 *"neither Adam nor Christ acted as an individual"*).

Relating Adam to Christ, Paul summarised the historical redemptive picture in four parallels:

- As by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead (1Cor.15: 21)

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[1]Rom.5: 14 (twice); 1Cor.15: 22, 45 (twice); 1Tim.2: 13, 14; cf. 1Cor.15: 21; Phil.2: 5 - 11.

- As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive (1Cor.15: 22)
- The first Adam became a living being, the last Adam became a life - giving spirit (1Cor.15: 45)
- The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven (1Cor.15: 47)

Paul's argument is convincing. He is probably original in describing Jesus as the Last Adam, a fact that shows his eschatological thinking. What is important for us here is the way in which Paul refers to and contrasts sinful humanity as being physically in Adam, with believing humanity as being spiritually in Christ. How humanity 'inherits' Adam's sin is not described, nor is it of importance to us, though we would agree with scholars, e.g. Lietzmann and Best, who attribute it to incorporateness (Best 1955: 36). We can understand too how Adam can be the believers' ancestor, and that they can be in him, as Richardson well expresses it, as being 'in his loins' as he is the old nature in them (Rom.6: 6; Eph.4: 22; see 1963: 15). Believers are not responsible for being in Adam, but they are responsible for deciding to be in Christ (Barclay 1972: 54). Both these states, as they exist today, may be described as local or spatial, but the latter, as Oepke recognises, certainly has an instrumental element (Oepke 1974: 2: 542).

As we study the 'in Adam' phrase in relation to the 'in Christ' phrase we may draw several conclusions.

4.1.1.1 The first man is a Redeemer.

Joachim Jeremias traces an early Eastern redeemer myth which was widespread and known to Paul, which holds that the first man is part redeemer and part type of the redeemer (son of man). This myth coupled with Judaism's belief that the first man was ideal and that his glory which was lost at the Fall would be restored by the Messiah, who is pre-existent, help Paul to explain the two accounts of man's creation ❶ the ideal man is created in God's image (Gen.1: 27). Paul gives this priority, showing the divine image in Christ (Col.1: 15), ❷ Adam is created (Gen.2: 7). Thus Christ is the head of God's new creation (Jeremias 1974: 1: 143).

It is a foundational truth, as we have already seen, that Christian mysticism really begins in the Genesis creation story. Herein also lies, as we have just noticed, the

beginning of the Adam / Christ typology, and also that of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase, for in a sense Adam is the first - born in Christ. Hence Paul can explain eschatologically that our physical bodies will ultimately become spiritual bodies (1Cor.15: 46; Jeremias 1974: 1: 143).

4.1.1.2 The Corporate Personality of Adam and Christ.

As Adam represents humanity as a whole[1], so Paul sees all Christians as crucified with Christ *"and participating in the (mystical) body of Christ"* (Gal.2: 20; 1Col.10: 16; C. Dodd 1932: 102).

4.1.1.3 Mystical Unity in Adam and in Christ

C. Dodd describes the unity (or corporate personality) of humanity in Adam and of redeemed humanity in Christ as mystical (1Cor.15: 22). He explains (rightly we submit) that these unions are fundamentally real, and that union in Christ occurs when believers are baptised as members of the church, and thereby grow into Christ and are now 'in Christ', a phrase which is called Paul's 'Christ - mysticism' (1932: 87; Rom.6: 11). Best confirms this by regarding the 'in Christ' phrase as expressing firstly that people are 'solid' with Christ, and secondly that *"Christ is the place of salvation, i.e. it is localised"* (1955: 39). Further confirmation is found in Barrett who describes the new Adam's work as *"to produce a new unit of existence, which is as truly one in Christ as the human race as a whole is one in Adam. You are all one in Christ Jesus"* (Gal.3: 28; C. Barrett 1962: 110).

4.1.2 In Abraham

We look now at the role Abraham plays in the development of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase. Abraham's importance in contrast to Adam's in the New Testament is reflected in the fact that he is mentioned 73 times, while Adam is mentioned only 9 times. Similarly Paul mentions Abraham 19 times, and Adam 7 times.

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[1]Michel Join - Lambert and Xavier Leon - Dufour lists six senses in which the term Adam appears in the Old Testament, the majority of which are collective (1973: 6). Paul naturally would be familiar with all these.

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The first occurrence in the Septuagint of the preposition 'in' relating to a person is *"in you [Abram / Abraham] shall all the nations be blessed"* (Gen.12: 3; cf. 18: 18; 21: 12). Both Peter and Paul quote this passage later, indicating its importance (Acts 3: 5; Gal.3: 8; see T. Wright 1997: 121). Considering the covenant God makes with Abraham, and the nature of God's promises to him, we agree with Wedderburn and Mussner, against Betz, that since Adam and Christ are corporate personalities, and since Paul uses similar language about Abraham to that which he uses about Adam and Christ, all three should be seen as 'representative' figures, i.e. the blessing given through, by means of Abraham, is realised through by means of Christ (Gal.3: 8; see A. Wedderburn 1985: 89, 95n 30; M. Parsons 1988: 32).

Abram / Abraham is the first man in the Bible to whom we are told that God appeared (Gen.12: 7). It is significant that he later *"called on the name of the Lord"* (v.8). If this means, as Clarke suggests, that he invoked God in the name of the Lord, then he could be approaching God through the Mediator, Jesus (cf. Jn. 8: 56 'Abraham rejoiced that he was to see my day'; Clarke 1824: 1: 95). No confirmation for this suggestion can be found.

'In you (Abraham)' could be a precedent influencing Paul in his uses of the 'in Christ' phrase. Thus as God's covenant is universalist since it includes foreigners (Gen.17: 1 - 9), so God's people at Israel's birth are all in Abraham and eschatologically, are also all in Christ. In other words, if Abraham begins Israelite history, Jesus must end it by fulfilling it eschatologically (see N. Calvert 1993: 4). This applies because God's promises are made *"to Abraham and to his offspring"* (Gal.3: 16). The word 'spermati' here is a collective, singular noun which Paul uses to describe Christ and believers who are many, but are one body in Christ (Rom.12: 5; C. Dodd 1932: 80; Ridderbos 1977: 62). Paul describes the relationship perfectly *"and if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise"* (Gal.3: 29; see Beker 1980: 51; T. Wright 1997: 121). To achieve this relationship in Christ rebellion and disobedience are necessary, i.e. Adam's rebellion and disobedience in reverse (see C. Barrett 1962: 36). No doubt Paul also believes that the righteous who die before Christ's resurrection are united in Christ in Abraham's bosom (Lk.16: 22; see OAB 1962: 1281n).

Paul's argument is very simple. He writes: -

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Gal.3: 6 Abraham *"believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness"*.

v.7 So you see that it is men of faith who are the sons of Abraham

v.8 Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying *"in you shall all the nations be blessed"*.

v.9 So then, those who are men of faith are blessed with Abraham who had faith.

Abraham stands on God's promises (cf. Also Gen.15: 5 - 6), and thereby becomes a foundation member of the community which will bring new life into a sinful world. He is 'representative' (see above) because he is justified by faith alone. Circumcision is no longer a criterion, for the spiritual replaces the physical (see Jeremias 1974: 1: 9). Paul completes the picture by explaining that *"the blessing of Abraham"* comes *"upon the Gentiles"* *"in Christ Jesus"* in order that *"we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith"* (Gal.3: 14; see Dunn 1993: 130 - 131; Wedderburn 1985: 88). Since the Spirit and faith are both active here in drawing believers into union with God through Christ, and as the focus moves from the physical to the spiritual we may presume, according to our definition, that mysticism is present.

Several scholars suggest that Paul's use of the 'in Christ' phrase is influenced by the Hebrew *'be'*.[1] Against this is Oepke who follows Deissmann in believing that *"the rich usage [of the in Christ phrase] cannot be explained as a Hebraism based on the LXX equation of 'ev and be'"* (Oepke 1974: 2: 541). The theory is that when Paul uses the preposition *'ev'* it is often uncertain whether it is being used locally or, under the influence of the Hebrew *'be'*, instrumentally (Wedderburn 1985: 86; M. Harris calls the influenced *'ev'* causal (1975: 3: 1191). These two scholars give 22 cases where the influence is effective, only one of which involves an 'in Christ' phrase, i.e. Phil.1: 13 *"I am in bonds in Christ"* which Harris suggests we translate *"on account of"* or *"because of"* Christ (1975: 3: 1192). It would appear therefore that while the *"causal en"*, as a sub - division of the *"instrumental en"*, may have played some part in Paul's use of the 'in Christ' phrase, it contributes little towards our understanding of believers relating to Christ in community (see Harris 1975: 3: 1192; Best 1955: 33).

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[1]See Wedderburn 1985: 86 - 90; M. Harris 1975: 3: 1191 - 1192; Schweitzer 1953: 123. The majority of scholars who study the in Christ phrase make no mention of the *'be'* influence.

4.1.3 Origin of the 'In Christ' Phrase

4.1.3.1 The 'In God' Phrase

Does Paul's 'in God' phrase play a part in the origin of his 'in Christ' phrase? We seek to answer this question.

The 'in God' phrase is used 7 times in Paul's letters. The uses in Rom.2: 17 and 5: 11 can be ignored because the verb 'boast' demands the preposition 'in'. Wikenhauser feels that the uses in 1Th.1: 1 and 2: 2, and presumably also 2Tim.1: 1, should also be ignored because 'in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ' meaning 'beloved of God' is unparalleled and is not mystical; but he seems to be incorrect here as we shall show. We are also left with Col.3: 3 and Eph.3: 9, but let us first look at the background to 1 and 2 Thessalonians, which are probably Paul's earliest extant letters written in about 50 AD after his short successful mission there.

Knowing that the Thessalonians are recent converts from paganism we would expect Paul to write eschatologically and monotheistically, and also to stress the importance of faith in Christ, which he does (see Seifrid 1993: 434). Both letters are addressed to *"the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"*. There is no danger of being blasphemous here (see John Yungblut 1991: 108), although Herman Kleinknecht notes Greek religion believes that in some measure God is present in most things (1974: 3: 122). Barclay uses Paul's Stoic quotation for support (Acts 17: 28) to see God as *"the very atmosphere in which the Church lived and moved and had its being . . . so the true Church is in God and God is in the true Church and . . . . God is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Barclay 1981: 185). Thus we agree with Best that Paul here seems to *"feel after a theology"* as he establishes a letter - writing pattern, and that he will later drop the 'in God' and keep simply to the 'in Christ' phrase (note the suggested equality between the Father and the Son), possibly for the sake of simplicity (Best 1955: 22). We see here a possible origin of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase.

The other two 'in God' passages Col.3: 3 and Eph.3: 9 should be seen as locative, i.e. in God, and as 'hidden', i.e. relating to the first and the last times (see Oepke 1974: 2: 539). We suggest there is both a mystical and an eschatological

interpretation here. C. Dodd however describes being hidden in God as a psychological use, i.e. the secret is in God's mind (1980: 196). This is surely incorrect for such an action cannot fall within the realm of psychology. There must be here a union of the believer with God through Christ, which according to our definition is mystical (cf. S. Hughson 1950: 99). W. Howard describes this experience as *"mediated and realised by means of the mystical fellowship with Christ"* (1955: 149). In the *"last times"* a mystical application may be given to Psalm 110: 1 as crucified believers who are with Christ and therefore are one with God are now sitting at His right hand (Gal.2: 20; see E. Scott 1930: 63).

As a footnote Paul twice writes of God being in believers, both being Old Testament quotations (1Cor.14: 25; 2Cor.6: 16; cf. respectively Is.45: 15 and Lev.26: 12). What is interesting here is the way Paul adapts the LXX texts to strengthen his points, i.e. Paul adds to Lev.26: 12 *"I will live in them"* (see Wikenhauser 1960: 67: 69). 1Cor.14: 25 affirms that God is no longer hidden but really among us - in Christ.

In conclusion Paul's references to believers being 'in God' appear to mark the beginning of his correspondence to his churches, thus setting the pattern, for his later use of the 'in Christ' phrase and its variants. He uses it mystically before creation (Eph.1: 4) and it reaches into the parousia (Col.3: 4). Beginning with 'in God' Paul safeguards important doctrinal issues which he deals with, e.g. monotheism, faith, eschatology, apostle authority etc. The 'in Christ' phrase now comes into action (see 1Th.2: 14; 3: 8; 4: 1, 16; 5: 12, 18; 2Th.1: 12; 3: 4, 12) but its origin lies elsewhere, as we shall see.

4.1.3.2 Theories of the Origin of the 'in Christ' Phrase

Beginning with Deissmann, and perhaps even before him scholars speculate over the origin of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase and there is still no consensus. Deissmann concludes that *"Paul invented it out of a usage already present in secular speech"* (1957: 17). No evidence can be found to support this possibility or the possibilities that the idea came from Jesus Himself (cf. Mt.18: 20; J. Stewart 1935: 156; Sanday and Headlam 1971: 161); or that it follows from Paul's new sphere of salvation (Ladd 1997: 525), or new level of being (C. Spicq 1964: 40). . Reid claims that *"there is elsewhere in the New Testament an element of dominical origin upon which St. Paul seized"* (1960: 357). J. Reid is not specific here

nor can we be sure Paul is familiar with other New Testament literature. We refer above to the other appearances of the 'in Christ' phrase in the New Testament, but it appears that all the other documents containing the phrases are post - Pauline. The 'in Christ' phrase is so peculiar that analogies of it could hardly be expected to appear in Greek literature or in the Mystery religions but nevertheless as we have already seen, traces of it do appear in the Old Testament, particularly in the Psalms.

John Gibbs follows Gerritzen in favouring the theory that Paul's 'in Christ' phrase depends upon its use in the Septuagint, e.g. Abraham and Isaac are corporate head figures like Christ; *"in you [Abraham] all the families of the earth shall bless themselves"* (Gen.12: 3); *"in Isaac shall your descendants be named"* (Gen.21: 12) (see Gibbs 1971: 132 - 133). Paul could certainly be inspired from this direction, especially since the adjective 'Christos, anointed' is used about 40 times in the Greek translation of the Old Testament (J. Campbell 1963: 44).

The most likely source of Paul's phrase is the context of baptism in early Jewish Christianity. Paul writes that we who were *"baptized into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead . . . we too might walk in newness of life"* (Rom.6: 3 - 4). Seifrid claims that here Paul is relying on a traditional statement revealing that before his time salvation into the *"realm of Christ"* had been expressed in baptism. *"Jesus is the decisive 'sphere' of God's saving action"* (Acts 4: 2, 12; Seifrid 1993: 435). Beker is of a similar mind noting the presence of the 'in Christ' phrase in several *"pre - Pauline baptismal contexts"* (Rom.3: 24; 1Cor.1: 30; 6: 11; Gal.3: 26 (?); cf. also 1Cor.1: 2; Beker 1980: 272). A comparison of 1Cor.6: 11 with 1Cor.1: 30, Beker adds, proves the baptismal connotation of the 'in Christ' phrase. Thus the phrase is both local in that believers are incorporated into Him, and instrumental that He is God's agent who creates the new age (Beker 1980: 272). A. Hunter also supports the theory that Paul's 'in Christ' phrase originates in the baptism into Christ context by stressing the Hebrew corporate personality belief (Gal.3: 27; A. Hunter 1977: 96). All who are baptized into Christ are *"sons of God through faith "* and have *"put on Christ"* (Gal.3: 26 - 27). Paul's imagery here is reminiscent of God being *"clothed with honour and majesty"* (Ps.104: 1), and of Job clothed with righteousness (Job 29: 14). Yet Paul goes much further, beyond nationality ethnicity and gender, to identification *"you are all*

one in Christ Jesus" (Gal.3: 28)

In conclusion it seems that there is no real evidence to support the ideas that Paul's 'in Christ' phrase originates from secular speech, or that it can follow from words of Jesus Himself, or any *"element of dominical origin"* in the New Testament. Paul could however be inspired by similar phrases in the Septuagint relating to Abraham and Isaac, as well as the frequent use of the adjective 'Christos, anointed'. The most likely origin theory appears to be the Christian baptism context. Paul gives the full trinitarian explanation of the origin of Christian life - God *"is the source of your life in Christ Jesus . . . you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God",* (1Cor.1: 30; 6: 11). Here Paul links his 'in Christ' phrase with baptism. Similarly the baptismal *'putting on Christ'* could fulfil the Old Testament imagery of being 'clothed, robed, etc' (see Job 29: 14; cf. Ps.104: 1; 93: 1; Is.59: 17). We have in our study already explored some of the avenues of life and salvation opened up to believers through baptism. The role of mysticism in relation to the 'in Christ' phrase is becoming increasingly apparent.

4.2   Christ

Why does Paul in his 'in Christ' phrase use the title name Christ? We shall here attempt to answer this question.

'Christos' meaning 'anointed' is the Greek word for the Hebrew Messiah. It is mostly used in the gospels as a title (e.g. Mt.16: 20; Mk.8: 29; Lk.3: 15; Jn.1: 20). Later Paul uses 'Christos' mostly as a proper name. This change in the word's meaning could be linked to the church's mission to the Greeks in Antioch where *"the disciples were for the first time called Christians . . . in the days of Claudius"* (Acts11: 26, 28). Paul must welcome this, if he is not actually responsible for it (Motyer 1986: 53). In about AD 40 - 44 the word's meaning has already changed mainly because the Hellenistic church would be unfamiliar with the Messianic associations of 'Christos'. In fact Jesus is now known as Lord (Kyrios), *"he has been converted from the Jewish eschatological Messiah into a Hellenistic cult deity"* (Ladd 1997: 449, 377). Part of the original meaning of 'Christos' remains however, because Paul still seems to be of two minds, so he continues to write of both Christ Jesus and Jesus Christ (cf. the name Simon Peter;

ODCC: 279). A double name might also add to Jesus' royal dignity (cf. 'Caesar Augustus', Witherington 1993: 97).

Because the word 'Christian' is parallel to, e.g. Herodian (cf. Mk.12: 13) and Caesarian, it is thought that Christianity is a quasi - political movement, and therefore because of its pagan origin Christian writers would avoid using the word, except when writing against paganism (see ODCC: 278). There could be further confusion among the Greek Christians over 'Chrestos',[1] a Greek adjective meaning 'kind', 'good', which is pronounced like 'Christos' but spelled differently. Amid this extensive change the church finds the perfect name (Christian) for its members, to replace 'brethren', 'believers' and 'disciples' (Acts 1: 16; 2: 44; 11: 26) and to contrast with Jews and pagans. In the second century the name Christian becomes a *"title of honour"* (see Vine's: 130). Thus Ignatius of Antioch (35 - 107) as his martyrdom approaches, writes *'let me not merely be called Christian but be found one'* (Rom.3, 2; ODCC: 278). To - day 'Christian' may not be applied to Jesus Christ at all, but simply to virtues associated with Christians, e.g. kindness, patience, etc. (see ODCC: 278 - 279; Chambers 1996: 246).

This historical background to 'Christos', and in part to 'Christianous' is intended to show thought - changes taking place in an era of intense political turmoil and persecution. It is remarkable that in the midst of this new creation Paul stands firm on all that is revealed *to* him (1Cor.15: 31). In what is probably his first letter, 1Thessalonians, Paul uses no less than five different phrases as he explores ways to express amongst other truths the union between God and humanity: - *"In God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"* (1: 1); *"in Christ Jesus"* (2: 14; 5: 18); *"in the Lord"* (3: 8; 5: 12); *"in the Lord Jesus"* (4: 1), *and "in Christ"* (4: 16) (see Table Four). Shortly after this letter, in the middle of the first century, Paul is already preaching not Jesus, but *"Christ crucified"* and *"Christ died for our sins"* (1Cor.1: 23; 15: 3). (See Dunn 1981: 43; Witherington 1993: 97). 'Christos' refers here not only to Jesus, but points to Jesus' death as the way to salvation. Paul even seems to play on words in writing *"God who*

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[1]The Codex Vaticanus New Testament manuscript gives 'Chrēstian (os)' for followers of Christ in Acts 11: 26; 26: 28; 1Pet.4: 16 (J. Campbell 1963: 46).

establishes us with you in Christ (eis Christon) and has anointed us (Chrisas)" (2Cor.1: 21; Witherington 1993: 96).

As we study the 'in Christ' phrase in depth more and more factors are discovered which all point to the 'in Christ' phrase as being an inspired choice Paul makes. The question asked at the beginning of this section is answered in part, as Witherington concludes *"the 'en Christo' formula in many ways best encapsulates Paul's view of the condition and position of Christians - they are in 'Christ'* (1993: 95).

4.3   Prepositions

In this section we examine the four prepositions in context which relate to Paul's 'in Christ' phrase, i.e. through (dia); into (eis); with (syn); and in (en), in that order. We shall also trace the prepositional flow that is apparent in Paul's letters. Our prime concern will be the 'in' preposition which will be considered in the 'in the Lord' phrase and in depth in the 'in Christ' phrase.

Moule (1977: 49) and Hengel (1983: 182n) warn respectively that we cannot expect classical accuracy in the use of prepositions in the Koine period, and that the order of the Greek text makes it difficult to reach final decisions. Some conclusions however seem to present themselves. Prepositions are vitally important because, as Theissen finds, they demonstrate the *"logic of the whole"*, e.g. unification symbolism, which relates to our study, uses the characteristic preposition 'in' (cf. liberation symbolism uses the preposition 'under the power of hypo'; see Beker 1980: 259 - 260). Beker rightly criticises Theissen for categorising Paul's language too neatly, e.g. is there a division *"between juridical and mystical language, or an emphasis on one as opposed to the other"?* Nevertheless the important role prepositions play must be fully recognised.

One approach to the use of prepositions is to consider a particular issue from various angles through different prepositions. Thus Robinson approaches the relation between Christ's death and the individual's dying by expressing it in Christ, with Christ, through Christ, of Christ and into Christ. All these expressions must be taken into account as a 'nexus' to use his word, if the original relation is to be fully understood (see Robinson 1966: 46 - 47). Manson adopts a similar approach with 'through Christ' being God's channel; 'with Christ' being discipleship; 'of Christ' being brotherhood; and 'in Christ'

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being the totality realised in the church, God's kingdom (see Manson 1967: 73, 76).

Konig's method is to relate the issue to the three phases of Jesus' history, i.e. what Jesus does 'for us' (incarnation to resurrection); 'in us' (ascension to second advent); and 'with us' (at his return) (see Konig 1989: 64).

Fitzmyer relates the different factors of Christ's influence to the life of the Christian, i.e. 'through' expresses Christ's mediation; 'into' concerns either belief or baptism in Christ; 'with' concerns identification with Christ's acts or association with Him in glory (Rom.3: 24); 'in' most commonly expresses the close union of Christ and the Christian (2Cor.5: 17) (1968: 822 - 823).

Of these three the last one seems the most applicable, mainly because it places the prepositions on a progressive time scale. The model or flow of prepositions[1] we suggest is, through Christ, into Christ, Christ in the believer, in the Lord, in Christ, with Christ. The phrases will be studied in this order, except that in Christ being the particular subject of our study will be dealt with last. This model or flow of prepositional phrases should be seen as depicting the believer's life from its beginning to its consummation.

Table Three reveals with Paul's letter to the Corinthians the sudden appearance of both the 'in Christ' and 'in the Lord' phrases, their frequency peaking in the captivity letters and declining in the pastorals. Paul's 'circular letter' to the Ephesians contains far more 'in Christ' phrases than any other letter of his.

4.3.1   Through Christ

It might appear that there is little difference between 'through Christ' and 'in Christ' (cf. 2Cor.5: 18 with v.19); but 'en' can have a nuance of togetherness, and a unity with the mediator which 'dia' does not have (see Wedderburn 1985: 90). Christ is the mediator *"for from him and through him and to him are all things"* [2] (Rom.11: 36). All believers are and have come through Christ, and it is with this assurance that Paul can appeal to his church *"now I beseech you, brothers, through our Lord Jesus Christ and*

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[1] Stewart contrasts Luther's belief that all religion lies in the pronouns, with Deissmann's that religion is in the prepositions, especially the preposition 'in' (1935: 154 - 155). There is an important truth here, as we shall see.

[2] E.g. Salvation (1Th.5: 9); Victory over sin (1Cor.15: 57); Peace with God (Rom.5: 1).

through the love of the Spirit . . . " (Rom.15: 30). This mediation may be on earth or through Christ as Lord (e.g. 1Th.5: 9; Rom.1: 5), or eschatological (1Th.4: 14; see Fitzmyer 1968: 823). Bietenhard is probably right in suggesting that the 'through Christ' phrase is pre - Pauline (1975: 2: 517).

The important role dia plays is in the acknowledgment that behind all that humanity does is what Christ has already done, and through which humanity's actions can actually take place (see Oepke 1974: 2: 68). 'Through Christ' is thus the starting point for Paul's impressive plan for Christian progress, leading to 'into Christ', 'in Christ', 'Christ in the believer', 'in the Lord', 'with Christ' and 'in God' (cf. Fitzmyer 1968: 823).

4.3.2   Into Christ

'Eis' and 'en' are sometimes used synonymously especially by Luke, possibly because etymologically 'eis' is a later variation of 'en', but their distinction must be respected (M. Harris 1975: 3: 1185 - 1186).

Paul uses 'into Christ' principally in relation to baptism and to belief (e.g. Rom.6: 3; 10: 10; Gal.2: 16; 3: 27; see Fitzmyer 1968: 823). In Gal.2: 16 and 3: 17 Paul sees the Galatians believing 'into' Christ and thus putting on Christ, while the Romans he sees believing 'into' righteousness (10: 10) and baptised into Christ Jesus and into His death (6: 3). Believers are now no longer in Adam, or in the flesh, or under the law, but, through baptism in water they are incorporated into Christ's body the church, and simultaneously take part in all the benefits Christ won over sin by His death (M. Harris 1975: 3: 1209; Fitzmyer 1968: 823).[1]

A mystical element may be recognised here as the believer puts on Christ and thus enters into union with Christ (see Prat 1959: 2: 462 - 466; cf. our definition of mysticism). Similarly both Harris and Guthrie seem to find no other way but the mystical to explain what is happening here when they write of a possible *"transfer of ownership, resulting in a new allegiance"* (Harris 1975: 3: 1213), and *"into Christ means more*

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[1]Alfred Edersheim comments on Jesus' words in Luke 7: 50 *"go into peace" - "into peace as said to the living; 'in peace' as referring to the dead".* (1866: 1: 569). 'Into Baptism' is certainly into new life. 'Into Christ' is into everlasting life.

than admittance into the Christian body, and must include some sense of identification with the personality of Christ himself" (Guthrie 1981: 656). It seems significant that in Gal.3: 27 Paul sweeps away all divisions, and then boldly proclaims *"you are all one in Christ Jesus".*

We emphasise the masterly way in which Paul uses his 'into Christ' phrase, with its belief and baptism, as a link between 'through Christ' and 'in Christ'. The eschatological flow is continually apparent.

4.3.3   Christ in the Believer

We shall here examine the reciprocal of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase, that is, Christ in the believer, a concept which is expressed in a variety of ways in scripture, e.g. 'In you', 'in your mind', 'in your heart'. This relationship of Christ within humanity is vitally important to Paul, so much so that it is actually mentioned or implied in some way over 25 times and in each of his letters. It appears more times even than Paul's specific 'in Christ' phrase. The key to Christ being in the believer is, as we have seen above in baptism, that the Spirit must first be there, *"you are in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God really dwells in you. Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him"* (Rom.8: 9).

Typical of the 'Christ in the believer' phrases are: -

Rom.8: 10   *"But if Christ is in you . . ."*

Gal.2: 20   *"it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me"*

Gal.4: 19   *"until Christ be formed in you"*

Eph.3: 17   *"that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith"*

In our study above on Jewish mysticism we detail the assurances God continually gives that He will always be with His people: this constitutes part of the covenanted relationship which begins with *"Emmanuel (which means, God with us)"* (Mt.1: 23), continues in Mt.18: 20 *"here am I in the midst of them"*, and enters a new dimension in Mt.28: 20 *"I am with you always"*. How can Jesus be "with us" always? Must we not ask this same question when we read Paul's words *"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me"?* (Gal.2: 20). And is not the best answer simply - Christ lives in the believer by His Spirit (see Fee 1995: 375).

As we study these 25 or so texts relating to Christ in the believer it is immediately apparent that several of them intend,

1.   God and not Christ to be their subject, e.g. Gal.3: 5; 1Cor.12: 6; Phil.2: 13,

2.   Meaning 'among' those addressed rather than 'in' them. Bousset goes so far as to suggest that this applies to all the texts with the exception of Gal.2: 20, and, since they are all in the plural tense, e.g. Eph.3: 20; Col.3: 16[1],

3.   The Spirit in the new creation in Christ (2Cor.5: 17) dwelling in and forming Christ in believers in the same way that Adam lives in natural persons, e.g. Gal.4: 19; Col.1: 27 (see MacArthur 1991: 47) in order that believers may now live in and grow to be like the last Adam (see Oepke 1974: 2: 542). And even more, all this happens so that the last Adam Himself lives in the believer. This growth towards maturity Behm rightly discerns as *"both gift and task; it corresponds to the distinctive nature of Paul's Christ mysticism"* (1974: 4: 754). Here Schoeps also discerns a mystical process which culminates *"at the pure mysticism of Christian existence"* (1961: 209; cf. Barclay 1972: 99; Robinson 1977: 64). When Paul writes of *"the riches of the glory of this mystery which is Christ in you, the hope of glory"* (Col.1: 27) perhaps he is thinking of Jesus assuring His disciples that they will know that he is in His Father and they are in Him, and that He is in them (Jn.14: 20), i.e. the mystery is at last revealed. Stewart, who also favours the mystical approach, visualises "Christ in me" as meaning *"Christ bearing me along from within"*. He adds with insight that in contrast to this, any religion basing *"everything on example is pitifully rudimentary"* (1935: 169). We agree with the well - known evangelist - writer Juan Ortiz that the *"fact of Christ in us is the greatest and clearest promise of the Holy Scriptures"* (1983: 46).

How does Paul come to the realisation that Christ is "within us"? Christ's words to Paul (Acts 9: 5) *"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting"* can enlighten Paul not only about Jesus being with believers as He promises,but also being in them by His Spirit.

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[1]Werner Kummel (1966: 33) claims the kingdom of God is amongst us (cf. Num.5: 3): other scholars see the kingdom as within believers (e.g. N. Turner (1965: 62); Caragounis 1992: 423,who claims support from *"the entire Greek literary corpus including the papyri and Modern Greek")*. This latter interpretation appears more acceptable, especially when we remember Paul's *"the kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit"* (Rom.14: 17).

The reciprocal relationship between the Spirit - life of believers and the Spirit of Christ thus leads to the dwelling of the Spirit of Christ "in us" (see H.R. Macintosh 1931: 56 - 57). Orthodox theologian Berdyaev comes to a similar answer - *"the spiritual life is both dualistic and monistic; it is a confrontation, a dialogue, an interaction . . . divinely human. In the depths of spirit there is a genesis not only of God in man, but also of man in God"* (1948: 139). In other words an ongoing interchange exists between the Holy Spirit in the church and the Spirit of Christ in the believer. Becker appears to support this as the most likely answer (1993: 418).

We conclude by stressing that Christ lives "in us" as the believer lives by faith in Christ (Gal.2: 20). Ridderbos (1977: 232), terms this passage the *"locus classicus for the mystical conception of the new life"*. In other words - as believers live in Christ, Christ will be living His life in them. Thus it is not surprising to find several instances of "Christ in us" and 'in Christ' phrases both present in the same context, e.g. Rom.8: 10 and 8: 1, 2; 2Cor.13: 5 and 13: 4; Gal.2: 20 and 2: 17; Col.1: 27 and 28. Perhaps Paul is using the reciprocals here to emphasise his teaching. Thus Best summarises *"Christ the whole Christ, dwells in each believer; but it is the corporate whole of believers who dwell in Christ"* (1955: 9 - 10).

Our understanding of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase enters a new dimension through our understanding of Christ in the believer. The mystical explanation of this reciprocal relationship appears to be gaining more acceptance.

4.3.4   In the Lord

Scholars appear to agree that the phrase 'in the Lord' as applied to Jesus is probably in use prior to Paul's ministry (see Richard Longnecker 1970: 120; Bietenhard 1975: 2: 517). About one third of Paul's 'in Christ' phrases include the word 'Lord' (see Table Three), and about two thirds of these may be regarded as hortative or imperative (see M. Barth 1974: 70). Paul could be influenced here by the Hebrew 'Adonai - my Lord' which *"refers to God in relation to the earth as Blesser"*, in contrast to 'Elohim', the supreme God the Creator, and 'Jehovah', God in covenant relationship with creation (see Dake 1993: 50, 70). We shall now study the 'in the Lord' phrase to discover any meaning it might have which would contribute towards our understanding of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase, although

it is included in the corporate body of 'in Christ' phrases as defined at the beginning of our study.

Paul applies the word 'Lord' to Jesus in all his letters but at first gives no explanation of its use. Later he explains *"there is one God . . . and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist"* (1Cor.8: 5 - 6). Paul admits that *"we preach . . .Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake"* (2Cor.4: 5); and he shares the key to salvation *"if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved"* (Rom.10: 9); and since you *"received Christ Jesus as Lord, so live in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith . . ."* (Col.2: 6).[1] The Greeks to whom Paul is writing are polytheistic, and do not distinguish between gods and human beings (see Gregory Riley 1997: 33). Paul therefore has to proclaim that God is the God above all gods and that Jesus is the Lord above all lords (see Ziesler 1990: 36); and to encourage unbelievers to confess this truth and thereby to receive Jesus as Lord of their lives, and to *"live in him"*. Here, with this invitation to a union with God through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, we find mysticism in action.

The title 'Lord' is fundamentally cosmic, but for humanity it is central, and according to Dunn, Paul applies it to Jesus about 230 times (1977: 50; cf. Werner Foerster 1974: 3: 1090). Dunn rightly points out that during the first generations of Christianity increasing overtones of deity are applied to its distinguishing confession, Jesus 'is Lord', which consequently assumes more importance. The Lord continually guides His people into leading the life given to them (1Cor.7: 17), by grace (Eph.4: 7), visions and revelations (2Cor.12: 1), understanding (2Tim.2: 7), with authority (2Cor.10: 8), and with prayer *"Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus"* as they expect the return of the Lord for the 'rapture' (Rev.22: 20; 1Th.4: 16; see Bietenhard 1975: 2: 517).

In the light of this study of Paul's 'in the Lord' phrase we can see that its true place is really after the believer is' in Christ'. In other words, as salvation precedes commitment, so one must be in Christ before one can be in the Lord. Moule realises this in his 'slogan'

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[1] cf. Also 2Th.2: 22; Phil.2: 11; 1Cor.1: 2; 12: 3 passages which together constitute a Christian creed (cf. Hengel 1981: 7; Ladd 1981: 455).

"become in the Lord what you already are in Christ" (1968: 26), i.e. being 'in Christ' and thereby eschatologically being in heaven, one lives one's life on earth 'in the Lord'. In his theology, Paul makes good use of this indicative / imperative theme.

It is certainly divinely ordained that the title 'Lord' could so easily be adopted by the early Christian community (see Psalm 110: 1; Acts 2: 34 - 35), and thereby provide a vital stepping stone between the divine and the human, and so without offending the Roman world, certain divine actions could be ascribed to Christ, e.g. 'the day of the Lord' becomes 'the day of Christ' (2Th.2: 2; Phil.2: 16; see Konig 1989: 149; Wand 1968: 146).

In conclusion Paul's 'in the Lord' phrase reveals his great concern that all should believe in, confess and continually live in the Lord (Rom10: 9; Col.2: 6). God calls believers to freedom, and at the same time commands them through love to *"be servants of one another"* (Gal.5: 13). And since they have been bought with a price, wholehearted loyalty to the Lord is continually required because they are *"all one in Christ Jesus"* (Gal.3: 28; Col.3: 22; see Foerster 1974: 3: 1095). The indicative of being 'in Christ' makes possible the imperative of living 'in the Lord'.

4.3.5 With Christ

As we continue our examination of Paul's prepositional phrases we shall here study, his 'with Christ' phrase in particular relation to his 'in Christ' phrase.

Grundmann is probably right in attributing the origin of the 'with Christ' phrase not to scripture, but to the *"religious spirit of antiquity"* (1974: 7: 773n). Greeks in their mystery religions would trust that all they were doing would be 'with' the favourable support of their gods, and thereby they could live their lives in peace. How easy therefore must it have been for Paul to coin his simple comparable 'with Christ' phrase.

Of the two Greek words meaning 'with', 'meta' denotes an association or circumstances, e.g. *"at the coming of our Lord Jesus 'with' all his saints"* (1Th.3: 13). The second word 'syn', which we shall study, is more significant because it has a theological importance, e.g. *"when Christ who is our life appears, then you also appear 'with' him in glory"* (Col.3: 4; see M. Harris 1975: 3: 1206 - 1207).

The phrase 'syn Kristo' with variants occurs twelve times in Paul's letters, seven of

which relate to Christ's death and cover the Christian's life,[1] while five deal with the Christian being eternally with Christ.[2] Its meaning is *"personal fellowship in the sense of coming to and being with"*, i.e. the totality of those sharing in a common task. The phrase thus covers the whole of Christian existence (Grundmann 1974: 7: 770, 781 - 782), but it is used only in baptismal or eschatological contexts, e.g. *"you have died and your life is hid with Christ in God"* (Col.3: 3); *"and so we shall always be with the Lord"* (1Th.4: 17; see Schweitzer 1953: 2; Dunn 1973: 143).

In addition to the two prepositions 'meta' and 'syn' Paul also uses over nineteen unusual words compounded with 'syn' and verbs and adjectives. John Robinson suggests that Paul here feels that language cannot possibly convey *"the unique witness that Christians have in Christ"* (1973: 63). No doubt this is true but Paul is here identifying Christians with, both the historical redemptive acts of Christ and also Christ's eschatological glory [3]. Prat, with insight suggests these 'with Christ' words describe *"our mystical union with Christ"* as originating at the Passion, when Christ dies, and thereafter as being continuous but realised in every believer *"when faith and baptism graft us upon the dying Christ and make us participate in his death"* (Prat 1959: 19). Scholars (e.g. Oepke and Wikenhauser) trace this mystical trend from the Atonement, particularly in Gal.2: 20, 2Cor.5: 17 and Romans 5, 6 and the end of 8 until the Parousia takes place when *"mystical fellowship gives place to personal association"* (Oepke 1974: 2: 336; Wikenhauser 1960: 206; 1Th.5: 10; 2Cor.4: 14). Paul's goal, to *"be with the Lord"* (1Th.4: 17; Phil.1: 23), will then be fulfilled. It must be stressed again that no absorption into God or Christ is envisioned here.

Deissmann is probably the first to recognise that the phrase 'with Christ' denotes a higher stage than 'in Christ', because a glorified body similar to Christ's own supernatural body replaces the fleshly one (1957: 217 - 218; cf. 1Cor.15: 35 - 44; Phil.3: 21). Furthermore, 'with Christ', although continuous with 'in Christ', has no reciprocal, as 'in Christ' has - another sign of its superiority.

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[1]Rom.8: 32; 2Cor.4: 14; Phil.1: 23; Col.3: 4; 1Th.4: 14, 17; 5: 10.
[2]Rom.6: 8; 2Cor.13: 4; Col.2: 13, 20; 3: 3.
[3]See Fitzmyer (1968: 823); Schattenman (1975: 1: 643); Ridderbos (1977: 58, 59); Grundmann (1974: 7: 786 - 787).

In conclusion we find in Paul's use of the 'with Christ' phrase an emphasis upon its source in baptism, i.e. dying and being buried with Christ at baptism, believing also to live with Him (Rom.6: 8; Col.2: 12, 13). This is further confirmation of what we have found earlier, that both Paul's 'in Christ' phrase and Christian mysticism can also be seen to originate in Christian baptism (see Prat 1959: 19). After this the Christian life is lived 'in Christ' or 'in the Lord' until we are raptured at the parousia 1Th.4: 17 *"and so we shall always be with the Lord"* (see Fitzmyer 1968: 823; Grundmann 1974: 7: 767). Being with the Lord is the fundamental purpose of life. Paul makes this point time and again (Phil.1: 21; Gal.2: 20; Rom.6: 11). This union with the Lord, this *"communion of the saints"*, this being together 'with Christ' (Eph.2: 5), is certainly a consummation of the believers' destiny. Lampe senses that Paul moves beyond the community as a body stage to a more personal relationship with Christ (1977: 169). Paul hints at this when he writes that God *"raised us up with him [Christ], and made us sit with him in the heavenly places"*, and, when we would expect Paul to add *"with Christ Jesus"*, he adds *"in Christ Jesus"* instead. The past tenses Paul uses here as he writes eschatologically must be noted. In fact, Paul uses the past tense almost whenever he uses the 'with Christ' phrase (see Guthrie 1981: 650). It seems therefore, that it is right to visualise 'with Christ' as including fellowship but also and more importantly, as a participation in Christ's life of glory and victory (see Grundmann 1974: 7: 783; Fitzmyer 1968: 250; Col.3: 3 *"your life is hid with Christ in God"*). Wikenhauser sees Christ's resurrected co - heirs (Rom.8: 17, 23; Gal.3: 29) with glorified bodies, transformed into Christ's image and seeing Christ face to face (Phil.3: 21; 1Cor.15: 49; 2Cor.3: 18): *"mystical fellowship gives place to personal association"* (Wikenhauser 1960: 206). Humanity now enters a post - mysticism realm of transcendence 'in God'- Beatific Vision.

4.3.6   In Christ

The preposition 'en' occurs over 2, 700 times in the New Testament and Moulton thus calls it the 'maid - of - all - work' (see Nigel Turner 1959: 113 - 114). It is probably the most frequently used of all the New Testament prepositions, and more versatile than the English 'in' because it needs most of the English prepositions, except, e.g. 'from' and 'beside', to translate it (Moule 1977: 75). Over the centuries 'εν' became very diversified;

then the dative case disappeared, with the result that 'ev' disappeared from the Greek language after the tenth century, following the principle that an over - used linguistic form is progressively weakened. Nevertheless in the 'in Christ' and 'in the Spirit' phrases 'ev' served the Christian church well in the early centuries (see J. Moulton 1967: 103, 261; M. Harris 1975: 3: 1190).

Turner, after exhaustive studies of 'en' notes that its predominant meaning in the New Testament is 'within' (spatial, temporal or metaphorical), and therefore the first question we should ask whenever we meet the preposition is whether 'within' is in the author's mind (Turner 1959: 113). Similarly Moule (1977: 71) sees 'ev' having, probably by origin, a punctilious sense - 'in or within'. There is a fundamental truth here that needs to be widely recognised, for, the early Christians give importance to the mystical belief of being 'in Christ' as in a new spiritual creation, and of Christ being 'in' them. Turner illustrates this by suggesting that the prepositions in Eph.4: 1 and Phil.1: 13 be translated respectively as a prisoner 'in' the Lord, and that Paul is bound 'in' Christ (1959: 117). Turner is advocating a mystical 'en' which is neither metaphorical nor spiritual, but secret and invisible. This, he writes, is termed 'Christification'[1], a sharing of the physis or nature of Christ, i.e. Christ no longer 'gives' life for He 'is' life (Col.3: 4). He 'does' not sanctify or redeem for he is sanctification and redemption. In other words, *"identification renders activity and attribution redundant . . . Christ and the believer, like Christ and the Father are one - a substantive whole"* (N. Turner 1965: 119 cf. Col.3: 3 *"hidden with Christ in God"*). Similarly John does not say *"God is loving"*, but *"God is love"*. This approach supports the mystical theory of the 'in Christ' phrase.

Barclay does not account for this mystical 'en', but admits that when 'in Christ' is translated 'through Christ' or 'by means of Christ', what we have is true, *"but is considerably less than half the truth"* [2]. Similarly Bultmann writes *"to be 'in Christ' is also to be 'of Christ' - i.e. to belong to Christ as one's Lord"* (cf. Gal.3: 29 with 3: 27f; 5: 24; 2Cor.10: 7; Rom.8: 9; 14: 8; Bultmann 1952: 1: 312). Here Bultmann uses what

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[1]This word well describes *"the predication of an abstract noun to a personal name"* (Turner 1965: 119).

[2]Barclay (1974: 97) explains this statement by seeing the 'in Christ' phrase as more than simply being used metaphorically, e.g. as more intimate and lasting than being in love.

Deissmann labelled the 'mystical genitive', which exists and is used principally by Paul (in addition to the normal objective and subjective genitives) to indicate mystical fellowship with Christ (see Deissmann 1957: 162 - 163; Turner 1965: 110). Wedderburn while searching for an explanation of the 'in Christ' phrase, fails to realise the importance and the reality of 'Christification', and instead regards the phrase simply as *"figurative, an extension of language, but still a quite intelligible one"* (Wedderburn 1985: 88). Fitzmyer follows Deissmann and Turner - *"one belongs to Christ (2Cor.10: 7) or is in Christ - a mystical genitive that often expresses the same idea"* (cf. Philem.1; Eph.4: 1; 3: 1 or Rom.16: 16 and 1Th.1: 1; Fitzmyer 1968: 823).

Bouttier observes Paul's use of different prepositions with different tenses, e.g. using 'dia' to qualify something happening at a particular time - (Rom.5: 10) *"we were reconciled to God 'through' the death of his Son . . . we shall be saved 'in' his life"*, i.e. 'dia' distinguishes and points to Jesus Christ, while 'ev' *"always joins him to us and includes us in him"* (see Wedderburn 1985: 90, 96n 46). This confirms Theissen's conclusion quoted earlier. There is consensus here, particularly among grammarians. A. Robertson (1934: 587, 588) compares Paul's frequent mystical use of 'ev kurio' (1Cor.9: 1); 'ev kristo' (Rom.6: 11, 23 etc) with Jn.15: 4, and cites Moulton and Sanday and Headlam as agreeing that the *"mystic indwelling is Christ's own idea adopted by Paul"* (cf. Rom.9: 1; 14: 14; Phil.3: 9; Eph.4: 21). When Paul writes that *"in him [Christ] all things were created . . ."* (Col.1: 16), he means this literally not instrumentally. Turner (1965: 124) explains *"Christ embraces them all, having become their prototokos, so that they are his icon in the same sense that he is God's"*. This interpretation, which we believe to be correct, immediately rules out other more indeterminate theories, e.g. Wedderburn's 'figurative' theory (1985: 88) and Neugebauer's belief that the 'in Christ' phrases are *"definitions of circumstances"* or adverbial or adjectival phrases (see Wedderburn 1985: 88 - 89; Beasley - Murray 1979: 150n).

4.3.7   The 'In Christ' Phrase and Theology

It may be safely affirmed that the majority of scholars approach Paul's 'in Christ' phrase from the following points of view - Ecclesiology (Bultmann), Justification by Faith, Reconciliation (Seifrid), Eschatology (Beker); Lord's Supper, and Mysticism

(Wikenhauser). We shall therefore examine each of these areas in detail. M. Barth (1974: 69) identifies no less than eight approaches to our subject;[1] and more could be found, for in the works of over twenty - five scholars there are about thirty - five categories into which the 'in Christ' phrases could be divided; the goal of most of these theories is union with God or with Christ. Thus we shall make a special study of union with Christ, but before beginning these studies a critical examination will be made of what may be called the 'sense theory'.

It is not our purpose to explore the history of Paul's phrase, for it is more than evident that *"man's predispositions distinctly influence his approach"* (Ladd 1981: 5). It is also apparent that several scholars, as they 'mature' do a right - about - turn over their understanding and appreciation of religious issues. Paul is a classic example here, followed over the centuries by many unbelievers who become believers, and by many believers who initially oppose the charismatic movement but later embrace it, e.g. Dr. Yonggi Cho pastor of perhaps the largest Christian Church in the world, tells how God saved him when he was a Buddhist and was dying of tuberculosis. Later, he writes *"I looked into a face that was like a powerful sun with rays of light going outward. Still I did not know who He was until I saw the crown of thorns. They were piercing His temples and the blood was streaming down. I knew then that He was Jesus Christ. His love, seemed to pour over me"* (Cho 1973: 40 - 41). Like Paul Cho was certainly in Christ. Karl Barth initially sees mysticism as 'esoteric atheism' (1961: 1: 318 - 319), believing that humanity was free from enthusiasm and mystical experience or dependence. He admits later however that *"we need not be fanatically anti - mystical"* (1961: 4: 104), realising more now about the real truth behind immanentism and mysticism, how all - embracing redemption can be, and how to be more hopeful for humanity.

4.4   Sense Theory

At least from the time of Deissmann scholars divide Paul's 'in Christ' phrases according to the senses in which they perceive he is using them, e.g. local, instrumental, etc. No theological definitions appear to exist for this classification, but the system is of

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[1]Ecclesiastical (Grossouw cf. Bultmann), Existential (Bultmann), Historical and Eschatological (Lohmeyer, Neugebauer, Bouttier), Juridical (Parisius), Local (Deissmann), Mystical (Schweitzer), Mythical (Schlier), Sacramental (Bouttier).

assistance in understanding Paul's theology and in exegeting the relevant passages in which the phrases appear. Some scholars prefer a large number of divisions (e.g. Wedderburn (8); Harris (7); others a small number (e.g. Moule (2)), which makes comparisons between the classifications almost impossible, and thereby severely limits the overall value of the Sense Theory. Nevertheless Table Five is drawn up as a summary of the theory with three entries only being entered in each division.

4.4.1. Local or Spacial Sense

Local, meaning a person or event in relationship, or simply membership in the body of Christ, is the sense most commonly used, giving 'ev' its full value (see Best 1955: 7). Thus Sanday and Headlam, looking particularly at the 'in Christ Jesus' phrase as being local, quote Deissmann's fundamental observation that *"the Christian has his being 'in' Christ, as living creatures 'in' the air, as fish 'in' the water, as plants 'in' the earth"* (1971: 160). This profound truth is misinterpreted by several scholars, but refers, as we have already suggested, to the spiritual realm (cf. 1Cor.6: 11; see Fee 1993: 675). Fee claims that 'in Christ' is *"almost certainly locative"* (1995: 593n), for it is where both salvation and believers are (see Best 1955: 7). This truth may be expanded and whole congregations may be seen 'in Christ' as *"limbs are in the body"* (Witherington here quotes Moule 1993: 99; cf. 1Th.1: 1 *"Church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"*). E. Scott is also in agreement conceiving Christ as *"in some sense the dwelling - place of the Christian"* (1930: 153; cf. also Rom.8: 1; 1Cor.1: 30; Phil.4: 1; Philem.16).

Table Five
'In Christ' Phrases According to Senses

1.	Christian	Rom.16: 2	Receive (Phoebe) in the Lord
		2Cor.12: 2	I know a man in Christ
		Phil.1: 1	To all the saints in Christ Jesus
2.	Local	Rom.8: 39	(Nothing) will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord
		Phil.2: 5	Have this mind among yourselves which

			you have in Christ Jesus
		1Th.4: 1	We beseech and exhort you in the Lord Jesus
3.	Instrumental	Rom.8: 2	The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free
		Phil.4: 13	I can do all things in him who strengthens me
		Col.1: 16	In him all things were created
4.	Ecclesiological	Eph.2: 15	Create in himself one new man in place of the two
		Phil.3: 8 - 9	That I may gain Christ and be found in him
		1Th.1: 1	To the church . . . in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ
5.	Justification by Faith	Rom.3: 24	Justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus
		1Cor.6: 11	You were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ
		Eph.1: 7	In him we have redemption through his blood
6.	Reconciliation	2Cor.5: 19	God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself
		Eph.2: 13	You who were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ
		Eph.3: 6	Gentiles are fellow heirs . . . partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus
7.	Eschatological	Eph.1: 10	A plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in him
		Eph.2: 21	In whom the whole structure is joined together
		1Th.4: 16	The dead in Christ will rise first
8.	Union	Rom.12: 5	So we, though many, are one body in Christ

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		1Cor.15: 22	So also in Christ shall all be made alive
		Gal.3: 28	For you are all one in Christ Jesus
9.	Mystical	Gal.3: 26	In Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith
		2Cor.5: 17	If any one is in Christ, he is a new creation
		Rom.6: 10	Consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus

4.4.2. Instrumental Sense

Instrumental is probably the sense used most frequently after the local sense, and is applicable to phrases in which God is the subject and something is done 'in Christ' to believers by the power of the Spirit (cf. our definition of mysticism; cf. Rom.8: 2; 12: 5; Gal.3: 28). Several scholars recognise the instrumental use of Paul's phrase (e.g. Bultmann 1952: 2: 177; Fitzmyer 1968: 823; Oepke 1974: 2: 539; Beker 1980: 272).

It is possible that Paul uses the 'in Christ' phrase initially to describe the corporate union of believers in Christ, and that the scope of the phrase is later widened to include not only local but also instrumental and other senses, thereby reducing the impact of the phrase, as is evident in Ephesians with its many instrumental phrases (see Guthrie 1985: 489). Thus as Table Four shows it is difficult to correctly classify the phrases for there is much overlap between the divisions. Furthermore little agreement can be found among scholars in this regard, e.g. Buchsel suggests that there can be no locative sense because the phrase is used adverbially, while Best, Wedderburn, Sanday and Headlam and Scott all seem to favour only the local sense as indeed does Deissmann (see Seifrid 1993: 434;160; Wedderburn 1985: 95; E. Scott 1930: 139). Scholars remain divided.

4.4.3 Conclusion

In summary and in criticism of the 'Sense theory' it must be seen as largely speculative but at the same time capable of throwing light upon important issues, i.e. as a base for exegesis. The phrase 'in Christ' by its very nature is local or spatial: Christ however is a Person and not a space. The phrase therefore is Christ relating with humanity through the power of the Holy Spirit (see Frans Neirynck 1969: 70; Goppelt

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1982: 2: 105), and this relationship cannot possibly be contained within local, instrumental or any other similar mundane boundaries. Various shifts in the Sense theory interpretation of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase may be traced from Deissmann's mystical - local, to Schweitzer's mystical - eschatological, to Bultmann's ecclesiological - local, to Neugebauer's instrumental - temporal, to the present mystical - ecclesiological - eschatological, but no consensus among scholars is apparent.

4.5 Conclusion

In spite of earlier scholastic contributions to our understanding of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase it appears that only in recent years is the fullness of its meaning beginning to be grasped. This appreciation could be related to the current Holy Spirit revivals. Paul's success with this phrase lies in the unusual combination of the preposition 'in' with a person's name 'Jesus Christ', or title 'Lord'.

He makes this phrase central to his theology, from pre - history to post - parousia times. To do this he applies his concept to at least two other persons - Adam and Abraham - so that a four - step sequence can be traced for humanity - in God, in Adam, in Abraham, in Christ and the Spirit, in God.

This cycle of revelation begins and ends with believers, by election and by choice, sharing in the most intimate of relationships, being 'in God'. Here human nature is both perfectly planned and fulfilled and made truly itself - Christian lives are *"hid with Christ in God"* (Col.3: 3). The Stoics rightly believed that *"in him we live and move and have our being"* (Acts 17: 28).

Humanity is the climax of God's creation, being made in His image as a corporate mystical unity of which Adam is the head. This event is also the beginning of the Adam / Christ typology, and thus of Christian mysticism and of the generation of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase.

It is Abraham who is the first person in the Septuagint to whom the preposition 'in' is related. As all the nations of the world are in Adam, so in Abram / Abraham shall they all be blessed (Gen.12: 3), i.e. not only the Jews, because Abraham was a Gentile in idolatry (Josh.24: 2 - 3) when the covenant was made with him. God's promises are made *"to Abraham and to his offspring, . . . and if you are Christ's then you are*

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Abraham's offspring". Paul uses here a collective, singular noun to describe all who *"are one body in Christ"* (Rom.12: 5).

There is still no consensus among scholars concerning the origin of the 'in Christ' phrase, the most likely theory being the Christian baptism context. As Adam heads the first creation so the second Adam, Christ, heads the new creation, and it is in baptism that believers are told to *"consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus"* (Rom.6: 11; 1Cor.1: 30; 6: 11). Believers who have *"borne the image of the man of dust, . . . shall also bear the image of the man of heaven"*(1Cor.15: 49).

By using several variants of his 'in Christ' phrase Paul is able to explore new truths concerning the newly established union with God through Christ's reconciliation, e.g. 'in Christ', 'in the Lord'. While the early church is formulating its theology Paul develops a Trinitarian relationship between the divine and the human, involving the Persons of the Godhead directly and, with the exception of God the Father, reciprocally (the in the Spirit and the Spirit in us phrases are studied above in another chapter).

'Christos' appears to be used originally as a title but later as a proper name. Perhaps this change to a name is linked with the disciples first being called Christians in Antioch (Acts 11: 26), which Paul must welcome, if he is not actually responsible for it (see Motyer 1986: 53). A contribution is made here to the separation of Christianity from Judaism, and more importantly, to the corporate identity of Christians in Christ. Preaching Jesus as the messiah who was crucified would be blasphemy, in any event any proof that Jesus is the messiah is unnecessary for Paul (see Hengel 1983: 71 - 72). As the title Lord is given to Jesus a parallel can be drawn between Emperor Caesar Augustus and Lord Jesus Christ (Grundmann 1974: 9: 542).

Paul's experience is the reverse of that of the disciples; that is he meets Jesus the risen Christ first while the early disciples first meet the earthly Jesus. This fact could influence Paul in his choice of 'Christ' for his 'in Christ' phrase.

By using these phrases Paul reveals a progressive flow from the beginning of the Christian life to its consummation, i.e. through Christ - into Christ - with Christ - in Christ - Christ in the believer - in the Lord - in the Spirit - Spirit in the believer - with Christ - in God. The focal point of this sequence is Paul's 'in Christ' phrase. It proves the believer is a new spiritual creation, sharing in some way (Christification) the nature of

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Christ. The preposition 'in' is the most, familiar of all the prepositions. 'Christ' is the title of the 'anointed' one. An indescribable union takes place here of which words like 'symbiosis', 'togetherness', 'fellowship' etc. all fall short.

The weight of the evidence, historical, grammatical and theological appears to favour the mystical interpretation of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase. No absorption in Christ or loss of personal identity is involved but simply a spiritual oneness, such as Paul describes himself *as "a prisoner in the Lord"* (Eph.4: 1). We shall develop the mystical interpretation together with other explanatory theological theories in our next two chapters.

CHAPTER 5

IN CHRIST THEORIES AND UNION WITH CHRIST

After examining several mysticism models, looking into Paul's background and some possible influences upon him, and seeing how Paul's 'in Christ' phrase and other associated phrases come into being, we shall now direct attention to the major areas in which theologies concerned with Paul's 'in Christ' phrase are proposed and also to the goal to which these theories lead - union with Christ. It will then be possible to see the fuller import of the mystical theory of Paul's phrase which is central in this study. In the appendix to her excellent book 'Mysticism', first published in 1911 Underhill describes how Christian mysticism progresses in Europe throughout history, and it would be informative to trace in a similar way the development of our understanding of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase, particularly since Deissmann's work in 1892.

A close study of twenty schemes reveals over thirty categories into which the 'in Christ'[1] phrases could be divided. Consequently there would appear to be little hope of finding general agreement. It is significant, however, that the first in - depth study here, which is Deissmann's, promotes the mystical approach which we are investigating. While Deissmann admittedly over - emphasises his theory it is fair to state that he realises that the phrase has various contexts, and therefore has various shades of meaning (see Reid 1960: 359).

5.1 Ecclesiology

We shall now consider the ecclesiological theory as a possible answer to the question of the meaning behind Paul's 'in Christ' phrase, and look particularly at the two concepts - the corporate unity and the body of Christ. We define the church as created by God, built up by Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit (1Cor.3: 16; Eph.2: 22;

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[1]The following in chronological order of their publications are some of the major scholars who have contributed to our knowledge of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase: Bousset, Schweitzer (1930), Stewart (1935), Best (1955), Prat (1959), Wikenhauser (1960), Buchsel (1960), Kramer (1966), Bouttier (1966), Moule (1968), Fitzmyer (1968), Bornkamm (1971), Barclay (1972), Oepke (1974), Ridderbos (1975), M. Harris (1975), Beker (1980), Smedes (1983), Wedderburn (1985), Segal (1990), Seifrid (1993).

by God, built up by Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit (1Cor.3: 16; Eph.2: 22; see Paul Ternant 1973: 78; cf. Manson 1967: 72). Paul sees the church as: -

Christ's body (Col.1: 24; cf. 1Cor.12: 27),

Christ's bride (2Cor.11: 2; cf. Eph.5: 32),

Christ's temple (1Cor.3: 16; 2Cor.6: 16; Eph.2: 20 - 22)

(ODCC: 287). Only the first of these will be examined here since 'body' is the most extensive image and the most relevant for our purposes, being Paul's most dynamic image, hence the many references to 'building up' the church.[1] This might be called mystical growth as believers 'in Christ' mature to the *"measure of their stature of the fullness of Christ"* (Eph. 4: 13). Paul is careful to avoid any reference to building up the temple image (see Fitzmyer 1968: 826) for fear of idolatry.

5.1.1 Corporate Unity

God's plan which is revealed in Christ is *"a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him"* (Eph.1: 9, 10). It is difficult for us to - day to appreciate the corporate unity enjoyed by the Hebrew families and tribes. Names like Israel, Esau, Jacob and Joseph are applied both to individuals and to their descendants. *"The father of the tribe contains within himself all who will spring from him* (cf. Heb.7: 9, 10), *and his actions affect them both for good and for evil"* (H. Goudge 1928: 417). To - day the fact that children may inherit disease from their infected parents gives us some understanding of this truth, (cf. *"The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"*, Jer.31: 19).

In Paul the church is the 'Israel of God' (Gal.6: 16), made up of those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and destined in love *"to be his sons through Jesus Christ"* (Eph.1: 4, 5). This 'ekklesia' is the new Christian community elected by God, of those who through faith 'in Christ' are called out from the old Adamic community.

We have seen above that Adam and Christ stand out as corporate representatives

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[1]Rom.15: 20; 1Cor.3: 9 - 17; 14: 2 - 4, 12, 17, 26; 2Cor.10: 8; 12: 19; 13: 10; Gal.2: 9; 6: 10; Eph.2: 19 - 22; 3: 17; 4: 12 - 16; 1Thes.5: 11

of two new world creations, and all who presently follow Adam in sin are invited to break from the past and become new creations in Christ. Being 'in Christ', is, as we have seen above, being baptised, being in the body of Christ, the church (Rom.12: 4 - 5; 1Cor.12: 12), free from condemnation (Rom.8: 1), and justified by faith in Christ (Gal.2: 16). The invitation also includes becoming more and more like Christ, since humanity is created in His image, and its prime purpose apart from worshipping God is in the power of the Spirit to build up the body of Christ (Mt.28: 19 - 20).

No doubt Paul's great contribution to the spread of Christianity throughout the world, and indeed to Christian theology, is his stress on the unity of the Christian community in the Church (Fitzmyer 1968: 826). Best suggests that the three phrases - 'in Christ', 'Body of Christ' and 'dying and rising with Christ' *"are different facets of the same fact of the union of the believer with Christ"* (Best 1955: 18). Here Best to a degree follows Schweitzer, who notes that Paul goes even further by saying that believers are *"all one in Christ Jesus"*, i.e. one person - masculine, forming with Christ a *"joint personality"* (Schweitzer 1953: 118). Ridderbos quotes Hofer on this 'personal character' aspect *"it is not the individual that is the fundamental . . . rather it is the ancestral father, as type and mediator of life, as the one who comprises his followers and disciples in himself"* (Ridderbos 1977: 62n). Let us now look at the Body of Christ concept.

5.1.2 The Body of Christ

This analogy, which Paul probably takes from the Stoics (Dunn 1975: 262; Ziesler 1990: 59), is very appropriate, and enables Paul to reveal the Church's organic unity with Christ in which the various gifts are continually activated by the Spirit, as everyone shares in Christ's body (see Rom.12: 4 - 5; 1Cor.12: 12 - 14; Gal.3: 28; Col.3: 11; Stauffer 1974: 2: 439 - 440).

Several scholars would probably agree with Bultmann that Paul's 'in Christ' phrase is primarily an ecclesiological formula, meaning the *"state of having been articulated into the body of Christ"* (1952: 1: 311). There is however a danger in this thought, as Kasemann points out, of obscuring the primacy of Christology over ecclesiology; for *"in Christ is really not primarily an ecclesiological formula at all"*. We agree with

the gospel are called out of the old world, and who belong to the new creation in so far as they continue to be confronted with the Lord . . . for both in the primeval period and in the end - time the point at issue is more than individual salvation or disaster; what is at stake is the destiny of the world" (Kasemann 1978: 101). Although Kasemann later (p.106) admits this is a minor matter, it does seem important to maintain the primacy of Christology, as we shall do throughout this study, for all scholars would agree that 'Christ' includes more than the church, which is simply the 'body of Christ' (see Becker 1993: 449).[1]

If Bultmann may be criticised over this issue, he is certainly right earlier when he claims that the *"body of Christ"* (1Cor.12: 27), or *"one body in Christ"* (Rom.12: 5), is constituted not by the members who are all equal because they belong to Christ, but by Christ, who is there, *"not through and in the members but before they are there and above them"* (Bultmann 1952: 1: 34).

Other scholars follow various theological routes to the church, C. Dodd writes that believers are baptised into the church, into the body of Christ, and so into Christ (1932: 87 - 88; Rom.6: 4; see W. Davies 1984: 207). Ladd (1981: 490) sees 'in Christ' as almost equivalent to being in the church (cf. 1Th.1: 1; 2Th.1: 1; 1Cor.1: 30; Gal.1: 22; cf. T. Manson 1967: 72). The 'body' is thus the corporate Christ, which includes Jesus and His church (see E. Ellis 1989: 45).

5.1.3 Conclusion

Scholars used to think of the church as beginning with Christians gathering together and forming local communities or churches which together constitute the universal Christian church. The truth is that God creates the church before He creates humanity. And as Christology precedes ecclesiology, so believers both individually and corporately must first be in Christ before they can be in the church. It is safe to say that every believer in Christ is a part of the corporate unity of Christianity, and of the body of

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[1]An alternative theory of origin is that Paul matches the concept of the new humanity incorporated 'in Christ' with that of *"the 'body' of the Second Adam, where there was neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, bond nor free"* (W. Davies 1980: 57). This theory also has merit.

Christ, as well as being a member of the Christian church. We suggest that the Christian's life in Christ is initially by its very nature mystical in Spirit, and secondly that this nature is continually being expressed through the Holy Spirit in the 'building up' of Christ's church. Further support for this may be found in several places in the course of our study.

5.2   Justification by Faith

Is justification by faith the real answer to Paul's 'in Christ' phrase? We shall now answer this question.

Unfortunately, scholars are divided over the nature of justification. Some, e.g. Schweitzer and Stewart regard it as a minor issue. Ladd (1997: 479) observes that the verb to justify 'dikaioo' is used fourteen times by Paul only in Galatians and Romans, i.e. where Paul is putting right Judaisers who are still promoting Jewish law, except for a reference in 1Cor.6: 11 and in Tit.3: 7, (he could include Phil.3 here). Justification is forgiveness of sin and restoration to righteousness by faith and through grace (see Rom.3: 24, 28; 5: 1; Gal.2: 16; 3: 24; 1Cor.6: 11; Tit.3: 7; Erickson 1992: 307; Aquinas ST: 2: 2326 - 2327). Christ's death enables justification to take place (Rom.3: 25; 5: 9). *"And so to one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness"* (Rom.4: 3). Faith is not exactly imputed, (see Ladd 1997: 491) but rather righteousness on the basis of faith, for believers are united to Christ and thereby have all things in common. They are with Him in His death and resurrection. This leads us to the mystical interpretation.

Schweitzer is probably the first to notice the limiting effects of the justification by faith concept, i.e. it excludes *"the other blessings of redemption, the possession of the Spirit, and the resurrection"* (1953: 221). Thus Paul's goal is to *"be found in him [Christ] not having a righteousness of my own, based on law, but that which is through faith in Christ"* (Phil.3: 9; cf. Rom.3: 22). Earlier Paul shares the same goal, *"so that in him [Christ] we might become the righteousness of God"* (2Cor.5: 21; cf. Rom.5: 19).

5.2.1 Mystical Interpretation

E. Sanders (1977: 441) and Parsons (1988: 26, who follows Conzelmann), argue

against the mystical interpretation because of the occasional use of the 'in Christ' phrase *"in juridical, objective contexts"*, as in 2Cor.5: 17 - 21. This reasoning is questionable, because these uses are 'existential' rather than forensic, since they are sacramental, and almost always associated with justification, (e.g. Gal.3: 26 - 28; Rom. 13: 14; 1Cor.12: 12ff; see Bornkamm 1971: 151 - 152). Justification may be seen as including various groups of metaphors for salvation in Christ - reconciliation, forgiveness, redemption and adoption, which Deissmann rightly claims are all taken from *"the practice of law"*, and which have *"most seriously suffered violence at the hands of Paulinism investigators"* (1957: 167, 168, 177). Ziesler also claims that *"too much is made of the supposed judicial background of the verb justify"*, and he therefore sees justification in Paul more as *"the act of restoring people to their proper relationship with God"* (1990: 88). Similarly Stewart rightly warns that justification, and also sanctification, can mislead if separated from union with Christ (1935: 152). The objections of Sanders and Parsons therefore appear to have little substance.

Union with Christ which will be examined later is humanity's prime goal, and it is also the goal of mysticism and justification. It is achieved by grace through faith and love (1Cor.13; Gal.2: 20; Col.3: 3). In short we can say that Christ is our only sure justification, since He is *"the way, the truth and the life"* (Jn.14: 6). As Deissmann writes *"because faith is union with Christ, it is only realized in Christ, i.e. faith is not action, but reaction, not human achievement before God, but the experience of justification, divine influence upon us in Christ"* (1957: 168).

Justification therefore is foundational for Paul, but it is no longer by nature or by birth, but by faith in Christ (1Cor.1: 30). Thus Paul is desperate to *"gain Christ and be found in him"* and to have the righteousness from God that depends on faith (Phil.3: 8 - 9), which is 'in Christ' (2Cor.5: 21; see Ridderbos 1977: 175). Hays correctly combines justification 'in Christ' with participation 'in Christ', believing that Paul understands salvation to mean *"our participation in Christ's justification"* (1983: 250). F. Bruce is in agreement here *"righteousness by faith and participation in Christ ultimately amount to the same thing"* (Gal.3: 24 - 27; see 1982: 184). Schrenk also notes the close relation between *"justifying faith and union with Christ in the sense of identification with His destiny ('mysticism')* (Gal.2: 16 - 21; see 1974: 2: 208 - 209). Justification thus renders

us holy or sanctified (1Cor.1: 30; Eph.5: 26; see Rea 1974: 29). Our lives are continually being permeated by Christ's death and resurrection (see Phil.3: 10 - 12; 2Cor.4: 10) *"so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies"* (cf.Schweitzer 1991: 81; Phil.2: 1 - 11). Fee (1993: 668) criticises the mystical experience of being in Christ (as an alternative to justification by faith) as Paul's theological centre, for being *"somewhat limiting"*. He gives no reasons, but seems to be ignoring the part played here by the Holy Spirit, which we shall now examine.

5.2.2 Holy Spirit

From the beginning of his correspondence, and continually throughout it, Paul stresses the power of the Holy Spirit (1Th.1: 6; Rom.15: 13, 19; 1Cor.2: 4; 2Cor.4: 7; 12: 9 etc.). Paul's emphasis seems designed to encourage his readers to realise the power they have through the Spirit after being justified in Christ. Thus their lives should continually be lived in terms of the Spirit and the power of the Spirit (see Fee 1993: 100). Schrenk details the close link between justification and the Spirit and the expressions used for their reception (see 1974: 2: 208 - 209; Rom.3: 28). The life - long task of believers would appear to be to recognise who they are in Christ, and in this realisation, to keep on dying in their old nature and living in their new victorious life in the Spirit. Their lives do not relate to *"some forensic transaction in heaven which transcends time"*, but to a mystic union in God's righteousness made possible by the bridging Holy Spirit (see Hafemann who cites Stuhlmacher's view just quoted (1993: 677).

5.2.3 Conclusion

Paul appears to initiate the justification / righteousness by faith theme, but what is significant for our study is that the 'in Christ' phrase can well be regarded as the consequence, and indeed the goal of this theme. This is evident in Paul's letters, particularly in Galatians and Romans. God is calling people to be reconciled to Him and the only way, says Paul, is through Christ *"who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God"* (2Cor.5: 21). Justification is therefore, God receiving people into his favour as if they were righteous, thereby forgiving their sins and

empowering them with the Holy Spirit.

The justification by faith doctrine may be viewed as a foundation stone in Paul's theology. Justification by nature or by birth is no longer acceptable to God for His children; faith 'in Christ' is the only route, both for salvation, and for unity with God and with one another. The realisation that righteousness or justification by faith is ultimately an identical belief to that of union in Christ is common knowledge now for a long time.

Bouttier credits T. Preiss for reconciling in his 'juridical mysticism' justification by faith and living in Christ, doctrines *"which had wrongly been contrasted"* (1966: 34n; no reference given). Among the factors causing this division we find the rise of rationalism and the corresponding reaction against the supernatural, including mysticism (see Gerhard Hasel 1993: 18 - 53); but these factors lie beyond the limits of our study. Nevertheless the unnecessary and long - standing separation of scholars on this doctrine is regretted.

Viewing these two concepts as a unity which distinguishes believers from unbelievers, and accepts sinners as righteous or justified, it must be seen eschatologically as pointing its goal to union with Christ, which is the destiny also of true Christian mysticism.

5.3   Reconciliation

Reconciliation, which we shall now examine, is claimed by some scholars (e.g. Ralph Martin 1993: 94) as the centre of Paul's theology. We shall look at this claim in particular relation to Paul's 'in Christ' phrase.

Martin sees reconciliation, which he does not really define, as providing a *"suitable umbrella under which the main features of Paul's kerygma and its practical outworking may be set"* (1993: 94). He concludes his essay by submitting that reconciliation is a tapestry into which are woven the cosmic, personal, societal and ethnic strands of our human story (1993: 94). He interprets Paul as changing the meaning of reconciliation *"from historical factuality to ethical obligation"* in the middle of which lies Paul's *"ministry of reconciliation"* (2Cor.5: 18; 1993: 94).

First, Martin here appears guilty of reductionism. Paul writes that *"all things, whether on earth or in heaven"*, are reconciled to Christ and through Christ, because all

the fullness of God dwells in Christ (Col.1: 19 - 20). The *"historical factuality"* of Christ's reconciliation is as fundamental to - day as it has ever been, and Martin offers no valid proof for any change in its meaning. By concentrating only upon ethical obligation Martin appears to deal with reconciliation as existing only in vertical and horizontal directions; and not to think of the kingdom of the world and the kingdom of God, of body with soul and with Spirit, or of nature's hostile forces. A more effective approach could be von Hügel's, i.e. of objective and subjective. The former reconciliation is immediate on Christ's death (i.e. is juridical and more Judaic). The latter is voluntary and continuous (i.e. is ethical and more Hellenistic) (von Hügel 1961: 2: 71). This approach has the merit of acknowledging the reconciling role Christ plays on behalf of humanity.

Second, Martin contrasts what he terms the *"not yet of reconciliation"* with the *"here and now"* of Paul's counter arguments, i.e. forgiveness of sins, new creation, justification, redemption, sonship, the gift of the Spirit and the promise of resurrection (1993: 94). Scholars are divided over whether reconciliation is - a precondition of salvation (Rom.5: 10; 2Cor.5: 17 - 20; H. Vorlander and C. Brown 1975: 3: 171); or one of the effects (with justification), of salvation (Rom.5: 1 - 11; see Fitzmyer 1968: 814; Bornkamm 1971: 141; Kim 1982: 313); or a consequence of justification as Martin suggests, (see Bultmann 1952: 1: 286). The weight of theological evidence seems to favour the second of these three possibilities. There can be no doubt that God is the reconciler; that humanity is the object of God's reconciliation; that a new creation in Christ is the consequence of the reconciliation (2Cor.5: 17); and that *"God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself"* (2Cor.5: 18 - 20; cf. also Eph.2: 16 and Col.1: 22). True and complete reconciliation is therefore a universal act rather than a process. It is an act in which *"all things"* are involved and which takes place in the new creation in Christ (see F. Taylor 1963: 185). 2Cor.5: 18, 19 refers to the ministry and message of reconciliation, standing for the apostolic ministry and the gospel, the word of reconciliation (see Roy 1973: 480: Vorlander & Brown 1975: 3: 168 - 169).

Further support for this criticism is given by Leon Roy who believes reconciliation *"coincides with justification and sanctification"* (Col.1: 21f), therefore we are now able *"to exalt in God"* (Rom.5: 11), *"and we have access in one Spirit to the Father"*

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(Eph.2: 18; Roy 1973: 480). Buchsel also agrees, adding that *"the God who reconciles us to Himself is always at the same time the God who judges us. For this reason reconciliation includes justification both in 2Cor.5: 21 and in v.19"* (1974: 1: 257 - 259). Similarly, Bornkamm links reconciliation with justification in being *"the work of God alone in the self - surrender of Christ"*. Following on from this truth Bornkamm aptly calls the command *"be reconciled to God"* (2Cor.5: 20) an *"imperative passive!"* (1971: 141).

In conclusion Martin in his promotion of reconciliation as the centre of Paul's theology appears to be unduly influenced by Paul's reference to the ministry and message of reconciliation. God reconciles through Christ alone as He does everything for humanity through Christ alone. Thus reconciliation is simply one of the many blessings offered by God to those who wish to be 'in Christ'. If the centre of Paul's theology lies anywhere it lies in Christ alone and we must therefore regard the reconciliation theory as theologically unacceptable as being central to Paul's phrase.

5.4   Eschatology

This subject was touched upon earlier while reviewing Schweitzer's work but here it will be treated more comprehensively. We shall here look at eschatology both as a possible explanation for Paul's 'in Christ' phrase and also at its relation to mysticism. Eschatology is a framework showing the fulfilment of major branches of theology including history itself, thus enabling believers to look forward and make free spiritual decisions from their standing in relation to the Christ event (see Rahner 1975: 436,438)[1]. The Christian creeds (Apostolic, Nicene and Athanasian) illustrate eschatology well: they describe present events and at the same time affirm what will happen in the future, e.g. *"the resurrection of the body"* (see Pannenberg 1968: 76n).

5.4.1 Background

Eschatology is attributed to Paul for over a century, hence we can understand his

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[1]This definition is similar to our definition of Christian mysticism, i.e. union with God through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit,

being called the *"father of Christian eschatology"* (see G. Vos 1986: preface). His letters show his end - time expectations and also the development of his understanding of this subject. Similarly A. Hodge (1991: 568) is probably correct in claiming that all the apostles expect Jesus to return while they are still alive (see 1Th.4: 15; Phil.1: 6; Heb.10: 25; Jas.5: 8; 1Pet.1: 5).

Initially Paul expects the second coming very soon (1 & 2 Th; 1Cor.7: 29 - 31; 15: 51); later he implies that he might die before Christ returns (Phil.1: 20 - 23); and he finally writes that some of his readers are already *"raised with Christ"* (Col.2: 12; 3: 1), although in 3: 4 he has misgivings about this (see Dunn 1977: 25; Ziesler 1990: 130).

The Old Testament prophets continually encourage people to look forward instead of looking backward; that is to expect fresh new revelations from God instead of living on past ones - *"remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it ?"* (Isa.43: 18 - 19). In a similar way Paul begins with a present - future eschatology, then changes it as is evident in Colossians and Ephesians, into an earth - heaven one (see Motyer 1986: 36).

We can also see Paul moving beyond the historical, temporal and spatial realms into the spiritual, or alternatively, the mystical, where people are leaving the flesh and now living 'in Christ'. Thus Paul sees Christ as *"abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man . . ."* (Eph.2: 15). He summarises the new situation by stating that no one need be called human any more, for the Church is the new humanity (Behm 1974: 3: 449), and therefore every believer is a new creation in Christ (2Cor.5: 16 - 17). The physical is first and then the spiritual (1Cor.15: 46); and, as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ (v.22). Paul here adds, eschatologically, *"each in his own order, Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ"* (1Cor.15: 23).

How, we ask, does this change in Paul's thinking come about? After Pentecost the Christian community members are very expectant for further eschatological revelations from the Lord, that is until they find out that what they are looking for *"is already present reality in the gospel"* (Bornkamm 1971: 115); i.e. *"the kingdom of God is in the midst of you"* (Lk.17: 21). Paul can confirm that *"the end of the ages has come"* (1Cor.10: 11), *"the old (creation) has passed away"* (2Cor.5: 17), and God has

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"transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Col.1: 13 - 14). Here Paul explains what it means to be 'in Christ', and Bultmann too summarises the situation clearly, *"history comes to its end in the religious experience of any Christian 'who is in Christ'"* (1975: 43); while W. Davies rightly expresses this reunion between God and humanity as *"the reconstitution of the essential oneness of mankind in Christ as a spiritual community, as it was in Adam in a physical sense"* (1980: 57; cf. Gal.3: 28 *"all one in Christ Jesus"*; Col.3: 11 *"Christ is all and in all"*). Paul's 'in Christ' phrase therefore seems to be an apt description of both God's plan, and humanity's hope, for a new creation which the gospel fulfils (see Bornkamm 1971: 115).

A close affinity may however be seen between eschatology and the 'in Christ' phrase, mysticism, apocalypticism and pneumatology. Earlier we suggest that when believers publicly confess their faith at baptism they become new creations in Christ; as well as members of the mystical body of Christ, the church; are filled with , or baptised by Christ in the Spirit; and, eschatologically, are sitting with Christ *"in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus"* (2Cor.5: 17; Eph.2: 6). The definitions given above of mysticism, apocalypticism and eschatology are basically similar, and their joint goals may be seen to be that of Christ, i.e. *"to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth"* (Eph.1: 10). Regarding pneumatology, Kritzinger rightly exegetes 1Cor.15 with 1Cor.12 - 14, thereby recognising throughout history the interplay between eschatology and pneumatology (1993: 257). All the above is in effect what is happening now, in the end time, as the church is gathered together mystically and eschatologically (Gal.3: 25; 2Cor.6: 2; see Jurgen Becker 1993: 441), as the original physical unity in Adam is now becoming a part of the 'in Christ reality' (Col.2: 20; 3: 1; see Ellis 1979: 34).

5.4.2 Eschatology and Mysticism

The above review of Paul's eschatology leads us to consider the relation between eschatology and mysticism, both of which areas of concern are defined above. Theologians attempt to dissolve tension between these areas in at least four ways which need careful attention, mainly because Paul's mysticism has received inadequate in -

depth study in the past.

The first approach is to follow J.C. Beker (1980: 272) *"the prepositional phrase 'in Christ' . . . should be considered within the apocalyptic context of Paul's thought".* *"For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive"* (1Cor.15: 22). Beker shifts the focus of the centre of Paul's thought from justification by faith to the interaction between coherence and contingency. His theory is rightly criticised for introducing this unnecessary but complicating factor into Paul's theology (see Fee 1995: 3); for failing to explain adequately how events on a cosmic scale can affect human situations (R. Martin: 1993: 92); and for imposing his interpretation upon Paul's writings without due consideration of their content (Kritzinger 1993: 254).

The second approach is that of Segal who suggests that the distinction between the apocalyptic and the mystic is minimal *"if not altogether artificial"* in spite of the fact that *"the two are clearly distinct literary genres"* (see Kreitzer 1993: 266). In our study of Jewish mysticism we note in particular that Merkabah mysticism is founded upon Ezekiel's, and perhaps Isaiah's visions, which could be called apocalyptic. An examination of definitions of eschatology and mysticism (see the beginning of this section), shows that there is little difference between them. The reciprocal of this opinion, i.e. the third approach, is held by Stewart who supports the mystical explanation adding that it is *"absurd to maintain Paul was primarily an apocalyptist or that his main concern with religions was eschatological"* (1935: 262). Stewart (1935: 262) sees early Christians as sanctified and reconciled (Rom.5: 11; 1Cor.6: 11), confident that Christ is with them, and that the Spirit is in control, but at the same time having hope (cf. Rom.5: 2; 8: 24; Gal.5: 5). Against Stewart, it is impossible to deny the existence of eschatology in Paul's letters. Thus Kreitzer (1993: 256) claims that *"an eschatological view point underlies the whole of Pauline theology";* while Fee (1993: 668) regards eschatology as the *"essential framework of all his [Paul's] theological reflection, and salvation in Christ as the essential concern within that framework".* This is acceptable provided 'in Christ', i.e. Christology, takes precedence over eschatology. In the same way 'newness' described in Cor.5: 17 is eschatological, but *"must be defined in terms which Paul sees new in Christ"* (Ladd 1997: 522). Even Christ is the 'new' Man by implication (Rom.5: 12 - 14; Behm 1974: 3: 449).

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The fourth approach is to combine eschatology with mysticism, without denying the existence of either doctrine. Thus Schweitzer (1953: 37; C. Barratt 1975: 7) refers to *"eschatological mysticism"*; a term which Hanse regards as misleading because *"only in terminology and not in content is Paul mystical"*.[1] Hanse finds Rom.8: 9 to be partly mystical but more ethical. In v.11 however he sees the Spirit as a *"pledge of the redemption of the body and therefore an eschatological advance"* (cf. Rom.8: 23; 1Cor.6: 19; 2Cor.1: 22; 5: 5). This argument however is inconclusive, and Hanse appears, all too cursorily, to deny the presence of true Pauline mysticism. In short 'eschatological mysticism' does not appear to be 'misleading', but rather to be descriptive of humanity's true position in Christ, i.e. in the new creation (indicative) and living a life that shares in the new life (imperative) (see Ladd 1997: 523).

This 'combined' approach is apposite because, as we are seeing, several of Paul's theological elements, in contrast to a single aspect, might be necessary for the fullest description to be made of any theological event (see J. Plevnik 1989: 477 - 478).

Earlier in our study we looked at Schweitzer's explanation that mysticism takes over in the early church as eschatology fails to deliver. C. Dodd (1966: 62 - 64) has a similar opinion - *"Christ mysticism"* comes into existence when the presence of the Spirit in the Church is identified with the presence of the Lord (*"the Lord is the Spirit"*, 2Cor. 3: 17). And since believers are *"one body in Christ"* (Rom.12: 5), they are both 'in the Spirit' and 'in Christ', and therefore members of the body of Christ. As Christ's personality extends into the life of His body on earth, so Christ's death and resurrection are re - enacted in the church's experience. Thus believers are *"righteous, holy, glorious, immortal, according to the prophecies, with the righteousness, holiness, glory, and immortality which are His in full reality, and are theirs in the communion of His Body - 'in Christ'"* (Dodd 1966: 63).

Because interest in Christ's soon - to - be - expected - return lapses after Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, Dodd holds that 'Christ - mysticism' replaces Paul's earlier 'futurist eschatology' and the church can therefore now develop a true social ethic

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[1] 1974: 2: 820n Hanse follows H.E. Weber, Eschalogie U. Mystik (1930) whose book is not available here

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(1966: 63 - 64). Throughout this argument C. Dodd defines mysticism as God's love given to people through the Holy Spirit on account of Christ's death for them (1966: 68). This is based upon Jn.3: 16 and is trinitarian, but is more descriptive than definitive.

It is strange that C. Dodd does not mention baptism, an event which seems to be the most likely point of entry to being in Christ, as we have already seen. Schweitzer holds to a *"consistent or thorough going eschatology"* which is entirely futuristic, while C. Dodd believes that the prophesied Day of the Lord, or eternal life, or the life of the Age to Come is already present (1966: 86 - 87).[1] More prophesied events will happen in the future (see Fitzmyer 1996: 1361). This latter approach has more general acceptance (see Fee 1995: 361; E. Gardner 1993: 204). In other words from the beginning of history to its end mysticism and eschatology are always present together in a mutually supportive relationship, but any influence or result attributed to eschatology needs to be closely examined to ensure that it takes place 'in Christ'.

'Maranatha' is Aramaic for 'Come, Lord', and since Paul is writing it to Greeks (1Cor.16: 22), Barclay deduces it must be a slogan or battle - cry which everyone knows, but needs to be continually reminded about (1972: 167).

5.4.3 Conclusion

Scholars, including Schweitzer and Fee, tend to give priority to eschatology over mysticism, but Christology should always be pre - eminent. Much of what is currently ascribed to eschatology could more accurately be ascribed to mysticism. Gutierrez, for example, believes eschatology is the key to understanding Christianity, for it creates tension between society and the future kingdom (see E.C. Gardner 1986: 204); but does eschatology provide the theological basis for the transformation of society? Does it direct attention to new possibilities for human existence arising in the old age? (E.C. Gardner 1986: 204). Are not these the duties of mysticism, not eschatology? Mysticism as we define it, ensures that in Christ there can be no tension between society and the future kingdom. Christ in the Spirit transforms society. Eschatology can certainly be a framework chronologically, provided Christ is the focus, e.g. the Christian creeds,

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[1] See Mt.12: 28; Acts2: 16; 2Cor.3: 18; 5: 17; Col.1: 13; Tit.3: 5.

Apostolic, Nicene, and Athanasian (see Fee 1995: 12).

This very close association between eschatology on the one hand and mysticism and pneumatology on the other hand enables us to understand better how, as Christianity enters the Hellenistic world, and later as rationalism appears on the scene, not only eschatology but also mysticism and the charismatic lose their centrality (cf. Kritzinger 1993: 254).

Paul's 'in Christ' phrase comprehensively describes both God's plan and humanity's hope for the new creation fulfilled by the gospel (see Bornkamm 1971: 115). The early church fails to understand this eschatological fullness, and therefore eagerly awaits further revelation. Paul thus emphasises his Christ - mysticism at the expense of his futurist eschatology, i.e. *"by the contemplation of all the riches of divine grace enjoyed here and now by those who are in Christ"* (Eph.1: 3; see C. Dodd 1966: 63). For the concept of 'realised' eschatology, for which this is an illustration, and 'not yet' eschatology we are indebted to C. Dodd. Kreitzer's approach to this realisation is by a 'de - eschatolisation' or spiritualising of the Christian hope of Christ's return into a mystical union between Christ and the church (1993: 260). In whatever way we describe this change it enables Paul's followers to realise they already have what they are hoping for - their union with Christ. The newness is already here (2Cor.5: 17), *"behold now is the acceptable time; behold now is the day of salvation"* (2Cor.6: 2; cf. 2Cor.4: 16 - 17; Gal.5: 24).

5.5   The Lord's Supper

We shall here examine the Lord's supper to see if there is any association between it and Paul's 'in Christ' phrase. Links between the 'in Christ' phrase, Baptism and the Atonement are studied above, and it is apparent that Paul also associates baptism with the Lord's supper (1Cor.10: 1 - 4) as does John (Jn.3: 5; 6: 53; 19: 34; 1Jn.5: 8). We shall use this term 'sacrament' when referring to baptism and to the Lord's supper, although of course the word only comes into use many years after Paul (see Goppelt 1974: 2: 237n). This theory is criticised because it bears no link with the union established between Christ and humanity at baptism. Furthermore the classic Lord's supper passage Jn.6: 52 - 58 may refer either to faith or sacramental union. (See Garrett

1997: 334 - 335 who lists several scholars for and against the Lord's supper effecting union with Christ principally on the basis of their interpretation of Jn.6: 52 - 58).

Paul does not often refer to the Lord's supper, but in 1Cor.11: 23 - 34 he gives the directions he *"received from the Lord"* for the service, and in 1Cor.10: 16 - 22 he warns against idol worship, enlightening his readers that *"the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread"* (1Cor.10: 16 - 17).

5.5.1 Sacrifice

It is difficult to give a precise definition of a Christian sacrifice, because Christ is active in it, nevertheless it will be regarded as an offering made to God consisting of three living agents, offerer, victim and priest. P.F. How rightly observes that while all the Old Testament sacrifices culminate either in the Day of Atonement or in the Passover, they never meet until in the Lord of Calvary (1962: 2, 5). Thus Paul writes *"Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed"* (1Cor.5: 7; cf. also Rom.15: 16; 1Cor.10: 18, 21).

In this sacrifice of all sacrifices Christ is the offerer, the victim and the priest. He dies on the cross; rises victoriously from the dead; offers to God in heaven His shed blood, (while still alive after passing through death); the sacrifice is accepted; and in heaven Christ continually offers Himself in sacrifice and intercession for believers. A new covenant is now in place, and Christ's sacrifice is offered back with glory and power (W. Maxwell 1963: 5).

5.5.2 Link with the 'In Christ' Phrase

The Lord's supper is believer's thank - offering in which they *"do this in remembrance"* of Christ by recalling and powerfully re - presenting His sacrifice. There is no power in the sacrament per se for all power comes solely from Christ, and is freely given to all who by faith worthily participate in Him. And here appears to be the link between the Lord's supper and the 'in Christ' concept. There is a union. Believers are in Christ, when Christ accepts the offering of themselves, and joins it with His offering of

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Himself. The initiative and the power are Christ's, while, from the believers' side, faith is essential for this union to take place. This release of faith enables the act of faith to become God's sacramental act. We agree with Johannes Betz that *"in the communion man enters into closest union with the sacrificial offering of Christ, and through it is united with the Father"* (1975: 458). The fulfilment of this salvation event is 'in Christ', both actually and eschatologically. Christ - already is all we can expect, for in Him *"the fullness of our eschatological expectation is already realised"* (Bouyer 1964: 184; Rev.19: 5 - 8). Christ on earth is the same Christ who is in heaven (see Hauck 1974: 3: 805).

While reviewing earlier the beliefs of the mystery - religions, we notice the emphasis pagans place upon a meal as an occasion to establish a living relationship with their gods. Relating this primitive truth to the Lord's table we see how Christ edifies His body the church, both individually and corporately. Who can deny experiencing a mystic realization of God's concern for humanity while relating to the cosmos by eating a meal? (See Bouyer 1963: 90, who discusses this in detail).

5.5.3 Benefits

The Lord's supper is a sacrament, concerned with the very presence of Christ, understood in various ways by faith. The bread and wine are vehicles of Christ's presence (Hauck 1974: 3: 805). Klappert states that each person eating the broken bread (we presume worthily and in faith) receives *"a share in the Lord"* (1975: 2: 534). Aquinas in claiming that *"spiritual food changes man into itself"*, gives classic formulation to what the Roman Catholic church later calls transubstantiation (Aquinas ST: 2: 2436; see ODCC: 1390). Ridderbos rightly maintains that by means of bread and wine Christ's presence *"effects communion with his body and blood, participation in his sacrifice"*, i.e. to share in the Lord's supper is to share in Christ's death, to be literally united with Christ's body (1977: 418, 364). This is truly being 'in Christ'. In whatever way Christ's presence is interpreted, (and it is unlikely that there will ever be full agreement regarding His body and blood as received in the Lord's supper), it is very real, for it is divine life shared with all who are in Christ. With this spiritual food and drink could be included also, liberation and rejoicing (with Ridderbos 1977: 420), and a share

of Christ's power (with Aquinas ST: 2378; cf. Rom.5: 5).

We cannot begin to understand the diverse benefits Christ shares with those participating in the Lord's supper service, the mystic nature of which is generally accepted by many scholars (Rom.5: 5), e.g. A. Hunter shows insight in seeing everyone sharing in something in which others also share, i.e. *"Christ's mystical Body, the Church"*, the one loaf of which all partake (1Cor.10: 17; 1966: 42). Similarly Fitzmyer says that Christians possess the Spirit of Christ sacramentally in this Christ - Christian union (1Cor.12: 13; cf. Rom.8: 9 - 11), which is the ontological reality that is the basis of the mystical union (1968: 824).

5.5.4 Conclusion

At His last meal on earth Jesus institutes the Lord's supper which is variously defined as the *"meeting place of God's Word with man's thanksgiving"* (Bouyer 1964: 149), and as *"the actualizing of the salvific reality 'Jesus' through the words of thanksgiving uttered over the bread and wine"* (J. Betz 1975: 448). This is the highest union between God and humankind - participation in some form in the body and blood of Christ. It is however an occasional experience of an inward and spiritual grace, which must be compared with the permanence of the mystical theory, of the 'in Christ' phrase.

Christ in sacrificing His life for humanity fulfills all previous sacrifices. He is the perfect offerer, victim and priest, dying on the cross, rising victoriously, offering his blood to God in heaven, and perpetually offering himself in sacrifice. A new covenant is established for which the Lord's supper is the thank - offering. Through this sacrament believers are 'in Christ' as He accepts their offering of themselves, and joins it with His offering of Himself.

Christ spiritually feeds believers individually and corporately and they enjoy the closest fellowship in Him and with one another through the grace given to them together with all the gifts won by Christ for them through His victory. Their confessed sins are forgiven and so above all, a divine unity in Christ is achieved by His acceptance of their offering of themselves in faith. Christ thus confirms this union in Himself through this sacrament expressing thereby a visible and even edible blessing (Betz 1975: 450).

5.6   Union with Christ

In this chapter five theories proposed as central to Paul's 'in Christ' phrase are critically examined. One factor common to these and possibly to other allied theories is their goal, which is union with Christ or God. It seems important therefore to look at this goal as an aid to understanding all the dimensions of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase as a preparation for the study of the mystical theory in the following chapter. Union with Christ or God is referred to several times in previous chapters. This is such an important theology that many scholars see it as the fulfilment not only of the 'in Christ' phrase but also of life itself. For example Calvin's mysticism model above seems to prove the truth of Brunner's comment that the doctrine of union with Christ is the *"centre of all Calvinistic thinking"* (see L. Smedes 1983: 31).

After defining 'union with Christ' several types and theories of union will be studied including mystical union, and a Christian union model will be constructed.

5.6.1 Definition

Union is defined as *"a new union with God in Christ, an ontological reality that is not immediately perceived by . . . conscious faculties"* (Fitzmyer 1968: 821; cf. Gal.2: 20; 2Cor.10: 5). Butler gives a similar definition[1]. Scholars are divided over whether 'union with Christ' : -

1.   *"Captures all the Pauline vocabulary"* (Smedes 1983: preface). Grudem (1994: 840) claims that *"every aspect of God's relationship to believers is in some way connected to our relationship with Christ . . . all has occurred in union with Christ"*. Similarly Stewart believes that only *"when union with Christ is kept central is sanctification seen in its true nature, as the unfolding of Christ's own character within the believers' life; and only then can the essential relationship between religion and ethics be understood"* (1935: 152 - 153). Schweitzer too recognises *"that Paul's great achievement was to grasp, as the thing essential to being a Christian, the experience of union with Christ"* (1953: 377). Here we find an inclusive approach, which Paul could

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[1] *"A union, that is not merely psychological in conforming the will to God's, but, it may be said, ontological of the soul with God, spirit with Spirit"* (1967: 5).

be said to favour (see Eph.1: 3; 1Cor.1: 9; and especially 2Cor.5: 17); or

2. *'Is an inclusive term for the whole of salvation; the various other doctrines are simply subparts"* (M. Erickson 1991: 948). Similarly H. Mackintosh holds that *"union with Christ is a brief name for all that the apostles meant by salvation"* (see Garrett 199: 2: 329).

Garrett identifies a third possibility, but this seems to be included in the first above. Of these two suggestions the first seems to be the one more acceptable, and in line with Paul's thinking.

5.6.2 Types of Union
5.6.2.1 Background

Studying the various types of union, which theologians formulate, gives us great insight into God's plan for humanity and assists our progress from one union or perfection state to another. Three fundamental unities link the divine with the human: - the union of essence of God the Father with God the Son, the union of hypostasis of the divine and human natures of Christ, and the union by adoption of human nature into Christ's glorified human nature (see Mascall 1959: 92 - 93). It is with the last of these that we are now concerned.

Before looking at types of union two issues must be addressed - the Christian 'atmosphere' and the nature of humanity's union with Christ. There are those who do not think of Jesus personally, but of His office as Messiah, representative or last Adam, or as a medium or atmosphere. Prat favours Jesus' 'office as the Messiah' (1959: 2: 298). Wikenhauser suggests that a more pregnant sense of the phrase is *"the environment or atmosphere in which Christians live"*; and offers *"the analogy of a fish whose vital element is water, and which lives only in water*[1] *"*, but he hastens to add that the nature of the union between God and humanity is personal (1960: 99, 31; see Moule 1977: 80). Deissmann perhaps initiates this concept of believers living in the air and having air inside them, as an illustration of being in Christ and having Christ inside them

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[1] It is striking to compare this analogy with Underhill's vision of the supreme degree of union, or theopathic state, in which the self is utterly merged *"'like a fish in the sea' in the ocean of Divine Love"* (1967: 132).

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(1957: 97; cf. Oepke 1974: 2: 541 - 542). Therefore union with Christ is not union with air or liquid, or with an image, a power, an office or a medium but is spiritual and with a Person, the Spirit of Christ. Schweitzer correctly refers to the mystical body of Christ and this body is a *"life - giving Spirit"* (1Cor.15: 45) personally radiating in the lives of all believers. Believers are such integral parts of the 'Whole Christ' that the union is virtually impossible to describe (Fitzmyer 1968: 823).

In our review earlier of Schweitzer's work we question his suggestion that the union of believers with Christ is a *"physical bodily union"*. Schweitzer makes the point that Christ can suffer for the Elect as can the Elect for Christ because *"the existences in question are physically interdependent in the same corporeity, and the one can pass over into the other"*, i.e. *"Being in Christ"* corresponds to and, as a state of existence, takes the place of the physical *"being in the flesh"*. He sees this union as identical to the bodily union between man and wife, noting that Paul uses *"the same word 'Kollasthai, cleave' derived from Gen.2: 24, for bodily union between man and woman, and union with Christ"* (1Cor.6: 16 - 17). Referring to 1Cor.7: 12 - 14 Schweitzer concludes that *"Paul is prepared to accept in the fullest measure the implications of his doctrine of the union of believers with Christ as a physical bodily union"* (1953: 127 - 128). Scholars are divided here. J. Robinson supports an organic interpretation (1977: 61 - 62), as do L. Richards (1991: 23) and R. Hays (1983: 48). On the other hand Best believes in a *"mystico - natural"* relation (1955: 16 - 17); while W. D. Davies refers to an *"almost corporeal"* relation and a unity of the Spirit (Rom.12: 4 - 5; 1Cor.12: 12; Eph.4: 4), and a fellowship created by the Spirit (Phil.2: 1; 2Cor.13: 13; see 1980: 178). Perhaps Fitzmyer is closest to the truth in seeing the union in Christ as *"an ontological reality that is not immediately perceived by man's conscious faculties"* (1968: 821). We must recognise the organic nature of this union but remain uncertain about its precise nature.

There appears to be a definite flow in the Christian life, whether it be, as traced above, the growth from the purgation stage to that of union, or whether it be from one type of union to another. Thus it seems wrong simply to list as some scholars do; one or two or even more types which bear hardly any connection between one another, and which should be regarded as characteristics rather than types of union. When we earlier examined the various prepositions Paul combines with Christ, we traced a flow, which

could relate to the flow we expect to find here. Pere Garrigou - Lagrange feels this, *"there is only one unitive way, which by docility to the Holy Spirit growing ever more and more perfect, leads to a mystic union, more and more intimate"* (quo Butler 1967: lii).

Many scholars analyse the union with God or Christ doctrine, and we shall here examine some of their attempts. Grudem suggests four aspects of the union with Christ: - ★ we are in Christ, ★ Christ is in us, ★ we are like Christ, ★ and we are with Christ (1994: 841). This seems an arbitrary division without any sense of progress, because all four events probably occur simultaneously. Furthermore we wonder why these and not other possible equally important prepositions, e.g. 'into' and 'through' are chosen.

J.P. Baker (1988: 697 - 699) favours union with Christ having five aspects of union: - incarnational, covenantal, sacramental, experiential and spiritual or mystical. These relate respectively to the restoration of humanity's image; Christ's atonement; baptism and the Lord's Supper, giving union and new life; entering and living out the position now ours in Christ; and deepening knowledge of the Lord in submission of love. This scheme is progressive and emphasises Paul's 'in Christ' phrase, but does not consider the pre - historical aspect of union. The aspects overlap too much, e.g. incarnational and covenantal, and also sacramental, experiential and spiritual or mystical.

A.A. Hodge (1991: 483 - 484) posits six aspects to the union of believers with Christ - the Spirit is the head; the indwelling Spirit sustains a 'vital union'; it embraces the entire person; it is a legal or federal union; it is an indissoluble union; through the Holy Spirit we are virtually united to and commune with the whole Godhead. This plan lacks a progression, does not include the pre - history period, and the aspects are undefined with consequent over - lapping especially on the role of the Holy Spirit.

Other systems are unconvincing because they are unstructured, e.g. W. Nee (1968: 2: 83); C. Hodge (1966: 31); Corduan (1991: 107). What is significant, however, is the number of scholars who consider mysticism to be one of the aspects of union with Christ, e.g. Graef (1966); Carmody (1996: 150 - 151); M. Cox (1983: 19); H.R. Macintosh (1931: 102). We shall now look at mystic union.

5.6.2.2   Mystical Union

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Adam Clarke (1824: 3: 209) regards mystical union which is formed between God and the soul through Jesus Christ by the Eternal Spirit as *"the closest, most intimate, solemn and excellent, that can be conceived";* for the person so joined to the Lord is one Spirit. Similarly N. Lohkamp sees it as *"the relationship between a person and God in the highest degrees of the mystical life"*, and as having three stages: prayer of union, prayer of ecstatic union, and prayer of transforming union (mystical marriage, 1967: 10: 174). This according to Underhill (1967: 72) is *"the science of union with the Absolute"*. It transcends all known analogies, e.g. vine and branches (Jn.15: 5)[1]; head and parts of the body (Eph.4: 15 - 16); husband and wife (Eph.5: 31 - 32). A. Hodge (1991: 483) notes how this union transcends *"in the intimacy of its communion, in the transforming power of its influence, and in the excellence of its consequences"*. Paul sums it all up as *"a great mystery"* (Eph.5: 32).

Evidence of this mystical union may be found in many ways. H. Mackintosh finds mystic union *"on every page of St. Paul and St. John";* the phrases *'you in me'* and *'I in you'* revealing respectively the Christian's life rooted in Christ, and Christ as the *"animating principle of their inmost being":* thus Christology and soteriology are no longer separate (1931: 102, 107). Union with Christ, claims Macintosh, means that *"morality passes beyond itself"*, i.e. rights in human relationships no longer exist (1931: 109 - 111). Acts 4: 32 - 35 implies that believers being *"of one heart and soul"*, *"filled with the Holy Spirit"* (v.31); knowing that *"great grace was upon them all"* (v.33) and that *"there was not a needy person among them"* (v.34) must therefore be enjoying a mystic union with Christ. Here is the body of Christ (not simply of Christians or of believers) in action; having no need, i.e. perfect in Christ (Aquinas ST 1: 601 - 602) experiencing a foretaste of heaven, as did many of the early Christian martyrs (see Graef 1966: 49 - 50). So J. Bishop sees this union as *"extending through physical death and resurrection to sharing in Christ's future glory"* (Col.3: 4; 1975: 319).

Manifestations of the Holy Spirit are described above in connection with the Holy Spirit mysticism model. These short experiences may involve an intense mystical union which the body cannot stand, and hence the person is 'slain in the Spirit' in ecstasy, and

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[1]No fusion exists because vine and branches do not lose their identity.

senses may be suspended (see Lohkamp 1967: 10: 174). Roman Catholics used to explain mystical union as 'habitual union', attributed to sanctifying grace by which believers partake of the Divine Nature and are transformed in God (see G. Manise 1962: 1254).

Lonnie Kliever (1992: 180 - 181) gives a good account of three types of religious experience. The first is the 'predominant type' experience of sacred power, which he illustrates by Otto's 'Idea of the Holy' with believers being *"overwhelmed by their own nothingness in contrast to that which is supreme"* (cf.Is.6: 1 - 9). The second is the 'experience of ultimate concern' when God is met in daily living, illustrated by Tillich's definition of faith being ultimate concern both functionally and substantively. The third is 'mystical union' which is discontinuous with normal human experience.

The above classifications and stages have a certain merit in indicating spiritual progress, but they are purely relative, personal rather than general, and variable rather than permanent, e.g. Teresa of Avila in her writings several times gives different meanings to various spiritual experiences.

5.6.2.3 Christian Union Model

Arthur Pink's 1979 contribution to spiritual union is left to last because it deserves special attention being the most comprehensive and progressive. Pink suggests seven unions - mystical (prehistorical), federal, vital, saving, practical, experimental, and glory. 'Federal' deals with Christ acting as humanity's representative and surety; 'vital' covers the incarnation and regeneration; 'saving' includes exercising faith and cleaving to Christ; 'practical' is the exercise of obedience and enrolment for service; 'experimental' is faith's realisation of Christ's relation to believers and their relation to Him; and the final goal which all the other unions have in view is *"an everlasting union in glory"* (1979: 139).

The nature of the union between the church and Christ is supernatural, we see it 'dimly' (1Cor.13: 12); real; spiritual, the Spirit in Christ, faith in us; intimate, the saints are Christ's fullness (Eph.1: 23); indissoluble, (Rom.8: 35) (see Pink 1979: 15 - 16). The Christian union model has three phases Prehistoric, Incarnation and Pentecost, dominated respectively by God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, thereby revealing three unions.

1.   Prehistoric Phase

The first phase of our Christian unity model is pre - history union because it occurs before the creation of the world. Paul describes how God *"saves us and calls us with a holy calling, not in virtue of our works but in virtue of his own purpose and the grace which he gave us in Christ Jesus ages ago"* (2Tim.1: 9; cf. Eph.1: 4; 2Th.2: 13). The elect are chosen by God and are 'in Christ' as His church, in eternal unity with Christ.

This phase is rightly dominated by the Creator, God the Father. It takes place in heaven in eternity, and it ends when God's plan is actualised with the creation of Adam. During this first phase God reveals (Eph.1: 5 - 14) His second,Incarnation, and third Pentecost phases, which will be dominated respectively by God the Son (v.v.5 - 12) and God the Holy Spirit (v.v.13 - 14).

God is love (1Jn.4: 8) and His love both saves us (Jn.3: 16) and enables union with Christ to exist, for union is the consummation of the love of Christ in which all are commanded to abide, as He abides in His Father's love (Jn.15: 9 - 10; see Louth 1981: xv). Love is the only adequate word which can describe the initial, personal act of faith through which union with Christ becomes effective (see Manson 1967: 75). Aquinas is emphatically comprehensive maintaining that all things pertaining to the spiritual life are directed at humanity's union with God which is effected by love (ST: 2: 1374). Hence the aim of Paul's charge (1Tim.1: 5) is *"love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith"* (cf.1Cor.13). While the things of this world are certainly intended to be enjoyed they must also surely contribute in various ways towards union both with God and amongst humankind (see Au 1989: 177).

2.   Incarnation Phase

Phase two of our Christian unity model is Incarnation union which begins with the birth of Jesus Christ on earth and ends at Pentecost. This is the time when the *"law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus"* sets believers *"free from the law of sin and of death"* (Rom.8: 2). The church is born and *"the many are becoming one body in Christ"* (Rom.12: 5) *"for God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself"* (2Cor.5: 19). *"The old has passed away, the new has come, therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation"* (2Cor.5: 17).

In Christ God's plan for humanity continues to be actualised. *"In him we have redemption through his blood"* and all things begin to be united in Him as we *"live for the praise of his glory"* (Eph.1: 7, 10, 12). Within the Incarnation phase Jeremiah's new covenant prophecy (31: 31) is fulfilled and the 'legal', 'federal', 'covenantal' and 'sacramental' unions can play their part. The veil of division is torn down and humanity can be reconciled with and have access to God, for the works of Satan are overcome (1Jn.3: 8) through Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

It may be said that humanity comes of age when by faith it recognises God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and when believers receive God's love, and are thereby enabled to witness to God and to share in His plan to unite humanity and all things in Christ (Eph.1: 5, 10; Rom.8: 29; see Marc Lacan 1973: 624).

Scholars would probably agree that believers are publicly united with Christ at baptism where they are baptised into one body (1Cor.12: 13; cf. Gal.3: 27; Guthrie 1981: 645) through death (Rom.6: 7) and resurrection (Col.2: 12). Thereafter it is true that the more believers are in Christ the more they are in God (see Stewart 1935: 170; contra Schweitzer, see above).

Unity is fundamentally personal, as Jesus emphasises in His high - priestly prayer when He shares His ultimate goal *"that they may be one even as we are one"* (Jn.17: 11). Here is a summing up of all reality - the 'one' is a 'we'. As Jean Danielou remarks *"nobody, before Christ, had said this"* (1969: 46). Paul describes this ultimate unity as existing when *"we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"* (Eph.4: 13). God shows His love by sending His only Son in whom alone is true unity to be found (Jn.3: 16; Acts 4: 13 cf. Col.1: 13 - 14 *"He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins"*).

Unity for the believer must be Christ - centered or it has no value[1]. Peter is adamant on this issue, *"there is salvation in no - one else, for there is no other name*

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[1]According to C. Scott love flows to and from Christ through mystical union which is set up by saving faith (1961: 107).

under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4: 12). K - H
Bartels is in agreement here - *"the decisive advance in the New Testament, caused by
God himself, is the basing of the unity and uniqueness of God on the unique revelation
through and in the one man Jesus Christ, the Revealer and Lord"* (Mt.23: 8 - 10;
1Cor.8: 4 - 6; Eph.4: 1 - 16; see Bartels 1975: 2: 722).

3.   Pentecost Phase

From the beginning of creation the Holy Spirit is present on earth, but it is at
Pentecost that He is poured out upon all flesh, a sign of the 'last days' (Jl.2: 28 - 32;
Acts 2: 17). The Pentecost phase is the time when believers are *"sealed with the
promised Holy Spirit, which is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire
possession of it, to the praise of his glory"* (Eph.1: 14). Here we find fulfilled the
'spiritual', 'vital', 'ecstatic', 'unitive' and 'practical' unions which are proposed by
scholars. In this phase too, believers are not only chosen, saved, sanctified by the Spirit,
but also *"obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (2Th.2: 13 - 14).

Furthermore it is apparent that this union is spiritual, thus Paul begs his readers to
be *"eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"* (Eph.4: 3). It is
because of this existing unity that Paul can discern the seven great unities determined by
the Holy Spirit, i.e. body, Spirit, hope, Lord, faith, baptism and God (Eph. 4: 3 - 6; see
Dunn 1973: 161; 1975: 262). Believers have this inward union through being baptised
by one Spirit into one body and *"made to drink of one Spirit"* (1Cor.12: 13). Legal
conformity is here replaced by inner spiritual life (Jn.6: 63), which maintains the unity,
but without which the body would die and the Spirit be grieved (Eph.4: 30). When
united to the Lord believers become *"one spirit with him"* (1Cor.6: 17), and as the
Orthodox church holds (see above) believers are continually transfigured going from
glory to glory.

This diversity of interpretations of union with Christ given above seems to show a
reluctance on the part of certain scholars to think in spiritual terms rather than in
corporeal. Paul commands (1Cor.14: 1) to *"earnestly desire the spiritual gifts"*, and to
realise that *"he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him" (1Cor.6: 17)*.
Paul further clarifies the situation *"now the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the*

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Lord is, there is freedom. And we all with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit" (2Cor.3: 17 - 18). The Holy Spirit both unites and becomes the means of uniting, in so far as those concerned identify themselves with Christ as Spirit as He now is (see Dunn 1975: 323n).

5.6.3 Conclusion

It is generally accepted that the goal of the Christian life is to be ultimately united with God in Christ in heaven (Eph.1: 10). It is therefore right that the part this union progressively plays in the lives of believers be recognised and affirmed. This truth must remain fundamental to Christian teaching as it is vital to Christology; *"it is the real clue to an understanding of Paul's thought and expression"* (Stewart 1935: vii).

Union with Christ, as we have already seen, is the fulfilment of the 'in Christ' experience. It is trinitarian and it is mystical in that believers no longer live but Christ lives in them (Gal.2: 20), and *"he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him"* (1Cor.6: 17). The nature of this union cannot be determined, beyond admitting that it is organic and therefore not atmospheric or liquid. A wide diversity of types of union has been proposed by scholars, and a model is constructed of the union with Christ doctrine consisting of three levels prehistoric, incarnation and pentecost. This model illustrates the nature of the union as being trinitarian, and progressive in accordance with God's own revelation of Himself as humanity draws closer to its final goal in Christ (Eph.1: 10).

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter is an analysis of five theories which have been advanced as contributing to our understanding of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase together with the creation of a Christian Union Model, i.e. of the goal of the 'in Christ' phrase. The theories examined are linked to Ecclesiology, Justification by Faith, Reconciliation, Eschatology and the Lord's Supper. This is the last of the preparatory chapters before the mystical 'in Christ' theory is examined which is central to this study.

The 'in Christ' phrase attracts many scholars who seem to select one aspect of

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Paul's theology, or of Christology as a whole which is then magnified and regarded as central to Paul's thinking, if not to Christianity. This appears to be what is happening in all the above five theories, each one of which is vitally important in its own right but severely limiting when seen in the full picture.

Theology should be setting directions for the Christian life and therefore must be open continually for Holy Spirit anointings, e.g. the acknowledgment after a very long time that 'justification by faith ' is closely linked with 'living in Christ'. Furthermore doctrines and theories must be clearly defined or misunderstandings will easily arise, as is evident with Christian mysticism, cf. Ralph Martin's failure to define reconciliation. Nevertheless these five theories make valid contributions to our understanding of the doctrines on which they are based, while at the same time indirectly confirming the precedence of Christology over those doctrines, e.g. the Lord's Supper is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, which is occasional as compared with the permanence of the mystical theory.

Spiritual or mystical union with Christ begins publicly at baptism, and is the union of the Spirit which Paul commands his readers to be eager to maintain. This unity enables the seven great unities of Eph.4 to be established by the Spirit as well as preparing eschatologically for the ultimate union prayed for by Jesus (Jn.17: 21) and prophesied by Paul (Eph.1: 10). The Christian Union Model shows the progressive flow from Prehistoric to Incarnation to Pentecost dominated respectively by the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in love through faith.

CHAPTER 6

A MYSTICAL THEORY

Previous chapters are introductory to this one because they give backgrounds to mysticism, to Paul and his writings and to the 'in Christ' phrase and to various theories about this phrase. In this chapter we are dealing basically with the raw material of the subject examining the 'in Christ' phrase from the Christian mystical theology viewpoint. The aim is to be as comprehensive as possible. The chapter will close with an in - depth study of Paul's letter to Philemon which provides an example of the mysticism theory in action through Paul's strategic use of five 'in Christ' phrases[1].

6.1   Rationale of the Mystical Theory

Table Four above lists the frequencies of the 'In Christ' and variant phrases in Paul's letters. Table Six below lists the frequencies of these phrases in the breakdown into two categories: -

1.   God's Work in Christ

The first category, 40% of the total, contains the phrases which relate to events, i.e. what God has done, is doing and will do for humanity. These phrases may be described as objective, positional and indicative. This category is sub - divided into two - chosen and created in Christ and redeemed and Spirit - filled in Christ.

2.   Believers' Work in Christ

This second category, 60% of the total, contains the remainder of the phrases, all of which relate to what believers have done, are doing and should do in grace and by faith in response to what God does. These phrases may be described as subjective, practical and imperative. This category is subdivided into three - Christian attitudes / actions, Paul's appeals and Paul's associates.

For reasons given above we shall not be concerned with those 'in Christ' phrases

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[1]We acknowledge indebtedness to J. Garrett 1997: 2: 331.

in which the Hebrew *be* is replaced by the 'in' (Septuagint influence; see Wikenhauser 1960: 23). Neither will attention be given to the very few phrases in which the preposition grammatically belongs to the verb, e.g. 'boast in' (1Cor.1: 31), and 'hoped in' (1Cor.15: 19).

The allocation of texts to categories is fluid, principally because we are unsure of Paul's real intentions behind them. This difficulty makes it impossible to adequately define the 'in Christ' phrase.

Table Six

Frequency of References to God's and Believers' Work in Paul's 'In Christ' Phrases

Letter	Total	1.God's work in Christ		2.Believers' Work in Christ		
		Chosen and Created	Redeemed and Spirit-filled	Attitudes and Actions	Appeals	Associates
1Th.	7		1	3	2	1
2Th.	4			1	2	1
1Cor.	24	1	5	9	6	3
2Cor.	14	4	5	4	1	
Gal.	8	1	2	3	2	
Rom.	21	1	6	2	1	11
Philmn.	5				4	1
Col.	8	6	2	7	1	2
Eph.	36	18	8	7	2	1
Phil.	21		3	14	1	3
1Tim.	2		1	1		
Titus	0					
2Tim.	7		2	3	2	
Total	167	31	35	54	24	23
%	100%	19%	21%	32%	14%	14%

The distribution of phrases in Table Six has a similar pattern to those in Tables Three and Four above. It is significant that in Ephesians the Category 1 phrases are

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over double the number in Category 2, perhaps because it is a 'circular' letter; while in Colossians the number of Category 1 phrases almost equals the number in Category 2. It seems safe to conclude however that, whether consciously or unconsciously, Paul is giving his readers both sides of the 'in Christ' story, the objective and the subjective, the indicative and the imperative, the coherent and contingent.[1] We shall now examine these divisions, but first we shall consider the indicative - imperative classification of Paul's phrases.

6.1.1 Indicative and Imperative

Throughout the Bible we find the concepts of indicative and imperative together, usually in that order, under the covenant of grace, but in the reverse order under the covenant of law (see L. Keck 1989: 86). This feature is of assistance when we look closely at Paul's 'in Christ' phrases.

Furnish gives several possible origins of this theory, e.g. Christ is the perfect example, and His sayings and parables are recorded so that His example can be followed and God's will obeyed as did Christ. The most acceptable theory appears to be Tinsley's, i.e. *"all Pauline theology is centred on the imitation of Christ concept"*, where imitation is being mystically conformed to the Lord (see Furnish 1968: 220). Paul explains how this happens - *"you were buried with him in baptism in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God"* (Col.2: 12). This conforming is imitation because it is a following of Christ's example, and it is mystical because it is a union with God through Christ in the Holy Spirit and in faith.

The indicative and imperative concepts together form a unity, so we cannot say the former is divine and the latter human, (by grace through faith), although the latter does fulfil or actualise the former. In addition both concepts are by grace objects of faith, and are therefore eschatologically 'already' and 'not yet', being both positive and

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[1] J. Beker (1980: 14 - 15; 1988: 368) introduces these two latter adjectives which we refer to earlier as complicating rather than clarifying our understanding of Paul's meaning; for much in Paul's theology falls outside of the apocalyptic language realm, e.g. Christ's relationship with God and the believer's with Christ (see J. Plevnik 1989: 473). Nevertheless we would agree that the coherence of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase finds contingent expression in the lives of his readers.

negative in content (see Ridderbos 1977: 255 - 258; Rom.6: 21 - 22; Gal.5: 22).
Overall, the maxim 'become what you are' (Dodd 1932: 93; Bultmann 1952: 1: 332) is reductive but Moule (1968: 26) rightly gives this maxim and the 'in Christ' phrases a fuller meaning by combining the two - *"become in the Lord, what you already are in Christ"*. Here the imperative precedes the indicative. Obedience is fundamental to the new life, (cf. Rom.12: 1).

The phrases in Category 1 may all be considered as indicatives; each one referring to a gift which God makes available for humanity, and in return also makes a demand to which humanity should respond, cf. the imperative phrases in Category 2, e.g. Paul writes that all sinners *"are justified by his [God's] grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus"* (Rom.3: 24). This is the indicative 'in Christ' phrase which Paul now follows with God's claim - *"this was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins; it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies him who has faith in Jesus"* (vv 25 - 26). Thus the imperative or the ethical completes by implication the earlier indicative[1]. Tension is present here not only between spirit and body, but also because obedience is conditional in the redeemed life (Furnish 1968: 226). The victory must be continually proclaimed or evil enemy forces may repossess those who are now in Christ (see Bornkamm 1971: 153; Lk.11: 24 - 26).

In short the fact that Paul uses the indicative - imperative argument several times in almost all his letters lends support to his also using it in texts containing his 'in Christ' and related phrases thereby giving them a mystic connotation, as we have tried to reveal. What is equally relevant here is Paul's habit of interweaving doctrine with words of encouragement and practical advice. A good example of this is Ephesians 1 - 3 doctrine, 4 - 6 encouragement and practical advice. A study of Table Six confirms the scattering throughout Paul's letters of the Category 1 and Category 2 phrases, the latter deriving their meaning, authority and power from the former.

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[1]Stewart (1935: 199) follows L. Jacks observing that even truths become commands - *"its indicatives are veiled imperatives"*.

6.1.2 God's Work in Christ

The 66 passages in Category 1 are divided almost equally into Chosen (Elected) and Created, and Redeemed and Spirit - filled, which we shall now examine.

6.1.2.1 Chosen and Created

1. Chosen - (7)

Eph. 1: 3	*"blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing"*
1: 4	*"he chose us in him before the foundation of the world"*
1: 6	*"grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved"*
1: 9	*"according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ"*
1: 10a	*"to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens"*
1: 10b	*"and the things on the earth in him"*
1: 11	*"in whom also we were chosen"*

2. Created - (24)

1Cor. 1: 30	*"He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus"*
2Cor. 1: 19	*"in him it is always Yes"*
1: 20a	*"all the promises of God find their Yes in him"*
1: 20b	*"and in him the Amen" (alternative "through him")*
5: 17	*"if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation"*
Gal. 3: 14	*"in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles"*
Rom. 12: 5	*"we, though many, are one body in Christ"*
Col. 1: 16	*"in him all things were created"*
1: 17	*"in him all things hold together"*
1: 19	*"in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell"*
2: 3	*"in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"*
2: 9	*"in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily"*
2: 10	*"you have come to fullness of life in him"*
Eph. 1: 13	*"in him you also who have heard the word of truth"*
2: 10	*"we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus"*
2: 13a	*"in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near"*

2: 15	"that he might create *in himself* one new man"
2: 21a	"*in whom the whole structure is joined together*"
2: 21b	"and grows into a holy temple *in the Lord*"
2: 22	"*in whom you* also are being built together"
3: 6	"partakers of the promise *in Christ Jesus*"
3: 11	"the eternal purpose which he has realised *in Christ Jesus our Lord*"
4: 21a	"surely you have heard about him, and were taught *in him*"
4: 21b	"as the truth is *in Jesus*"

In using these 31 texts in the way he does Paul shares God's plan for humanity which begins and is fulfilled in eternity, but which realises itself in the dimension of time. Christ is the subject in these passages in which He forms a special relationship between Jesus Christ and God's people, which is different from that formed by faith or by sacraments (see M. Barth 1974: 70). We suggest it is in some way organic or mystical (see above). Best claims that Christ's relationship with believers is lost here because the setting is outside of history (1955: 6 - 7). We submit that Paul here is simply extending the locality of his phrases to include the cosmic realm, in order to reveal Christ as the *"first born of all creation . . . in him all things hold together . . . the head of the church"* (Col.1: 15, 17, 18), in whom believers are united. Paul stresses Christ's position as supreme, for not only does He create but He also sustains everyone and everything both in the universe and in the church (cf.Rom.8: 29).

Paul is also telling his readers that God knows, even before they are created, who will believe in and follow Him, that is, who are the chosen and called elect. James quoting from Isa.45: 21 confirms God's omniscience *"the Lord, who has made these things known from of old"* (Acts 15: 18; cf. 2Tim.1: 9; 1Pet.1: 20).

Colossians and Ephesians are two of Paul's captivity letters written at about the same time, and sharing similar ideas and phrases, but most significantly they both emphasise who and what believers are in Christ. For here Paul reveals God's 'mystery' as *"set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth"* (Eph.1: 9 - 10).

This statement accords with our definition of mysticism, for we realise that this union will be effected by the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul refers elsewhere to

'mystery' as *"Christ in you, the hope of glory"*, (Col.1: 27) adding that believers proclaim Christ and warn and teach everyone, *"that we may present every man mature in Christ"* (v.28). Paul's other 19 mystery / mysteries references cover a wide range of issues unimportant to our study, although his comparison of the husband and wife relationship with that of Christ and the Church as *"a great mystery"* does border on our study.

Christ is God's 'mystery,' and through Him we can trace all the mystery applications, but no new truths are being revealed, for Christ is the fullness of truth to the world. God's plan therefore is to unite all humanity in Christ and to present every person *"mature in Christ"*. In this context it may be said that the 'in Christ' phrase is being used mystically, ecclesiologically and eschatologically, and in this order of importance and sequence, i.e. the mystery would be revealed at baptism, when the candidate becomes a member of the church and thereby an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven (Eph.1: 11).

All believers are blessed and chosen in Christ before they are born. This is where the mystical theory begins - in predestination, where believers are already 'in Christ'. There is no absorption here, for all believers must have their own separate identities. Oliver Greene (1979: 20) suggests, probably correctly, that Ephesians 1: 3 - 14 is one sentence in the Greek because the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all involved in their being and activity concerning humanity's salvation. This passage is also baptismal with its themes of forgiveness, sons, grace and of 'the Beloved' (see J. Grassi 1968: 343).

It is significant too, in addition to the Trinitarian and baptismal content of Ephesians, that Paul writes *"to the saints who are also faithful in Christ Jesus"* (1: 1). M. Barth quotes Schlier's belief that Paul intends 'in Christ' here to mean the ground or sphere in which believers live. But, Barth rightly adds, faith must not stop there, for it is exercised not only *"on the ground of"* but also *"in relation to"* (1974: 70).

The mystery of Christ is now revealed, and Paul spells out the fullness of the mystery (Col.1: 19; 2: 9) perhaps to counter possible Gnostic or Stoic heretical beliefs in a universe filled by God as they believe. God's power is working through the 'pleroma' of Christ (Col.1: 19; Grassi 1968: 337), i.e. outside of God there is no power or

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existence (Ridderbos 1977: 388 - 389). We need not look anywhere else, Paul boasts, because Christ is the source of the believer's life, and He is *"our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption"* (1Cor.1: 30 - 31). We note that Paul is boasting in the Lord. This leads Paul to his significant declaration of the new creation of those in Christ (2Cor.5: 17). As Ridderbos (1977: 301) admits, believers, although still in the flesh, enter the kingdom of Christ (cf. Gal.1: 4; Col.1: 13). Paul thinks of a new relation between believers and God determined by Christ, a new dimension (Tannehill 1966: 20), a new life to be actualised by Christians (this is the indicative, the imperative follows) (see Behm 1974: 4: 899). Paul has in mind not only new people or a new community but a *"recreated human race"* (Mascall 1959: 79). Hence Christ is the last Adam (1Cor.15: 45). Christ's saving work enables believers to be members of this one body in Christ, the church (Rom.12: 5; 1Cor.6: 15; Ridderbos 1977: 376). The solidarity and unity of the new church is summarised by Paul as *"in himself (Christ) one new man"* (Eph.2: 15; cf. Eph.4: 13).

To summarise the purposes of the main passages which refer to prehistory it appears that God is revealing His omniscience (James in Acts 15: 18 quoting from Isa.45: 21), His sovereignty (Eph.1: 4 - 5), giving reassurance to church and to individuals (Rom.8: 29; cf. Rev.13: 8; 17: 8), but above all the passages point to Christ who would be manifested for humanity's sake (1Pet.1: 20; 2Tim.1: 9; Eph.1: 1 - 14; Col.1: 13 - 18). Thus the believer's progress flow is revealed - predestined, called, justified, glorified (Rom.8: 30). And finally everything in the universe returns to unity in Christ (Eph.1: 10; see Whiteley 1974: 94). More specifically pre - history places great emphasis upon the 'in Christ' phrase. Believers, as Parsons shows, are always in Christ - in the past, now and in the future (1988: 34). In addition all God's decisions were made in Christ (Eph.1: 9; 3: 11), and have taken place in Christ (Eph.1: 9; Parsons quotes Caragounis 1988: 34; cf. M. Barth 1974: 70).

It is apparent that Christ is seen originally as a cosmic ruler, parallel to the cosmic figure of wisdom in Judaism (see Jewish mysticism model above), but His role changes from cosmology to soteriology (cf. Eph.1: 22 with 5: 32; Bultmann 1952: 1: 132). Jesus Christ breaks down the old order of salvation (Eph.2: 14 - 15) and creates *"in himself"* the new order. Here is the new creation 'in Christ' (see Stauffer 1974: 2: 440).

6.1.2.2 Redeemed and Spirit - Filled

The 35 texts in this sub - division are: -

1Th.4: 16; 1Cor.1: 2, 4, 5; 6: 11; 7: 22; 2Cor.2: 14; 3: 14; 5: 19, 21; 13: 4; Gal.2: 4, 17;
Rom.3: 24; 6: 11, 23; 8: 1, 2, 39; Col.1: 14; 2: 11; Eph.1: 7, 13b, 20; 2: 6, 7, 13b; 4: 32;
5: 8; Phil.2: 1; 4: 7, 19; 1Tim.1: 14; 2Tim.1: 1, 9.

Paul narrates God's plan for humanity choosing, creating, redeeming and filling
His people with His Spirit. This sub - division of Paul's 'in Christ' texts completes, as it
were, God's preparatory work or His equipping of humanity for the work He has in
store for them. He therefore writes of redemption and forgiveness of trespasses (Eph.1:
7), being sealed with the Spirit (Eph.1: 13b), washed, sanctified and justified (1Cor.6:
11); reconciled (2Cor.5: 19); righteous (2Cor.5: 21); having life everlasting (Rom.6: 23);
and even sitting with God *"in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus"* (Eph.2: 6). And the
reason for this is that *"we should be holy and blameless before him"* (Eph.1: 4) and
finally, without spot or wrinkle (Eph.5: 27) become Christ's bride.

Rom.3: 24 is Paul's first use of the 'in Christ' phrase in Romans, in which he
shows that justification is by God's grace *"as a gift"*, and not by works. Beker
comments on Paul's 'incorporation' language here. *"All have sinned"* (v.23), and what
pertains to the one pertains as well to the 'all' 'in the one' (cf.Heb.2: 11 *"for he who
sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin"*, i.e. God (Beker 1980:
273). This observation contributes to our understanding of the believer's unity in Christ.
So Paul appeals to the Romans (6: 11) to realise this unity, i.e. that they are *"dead to
sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus"*. Living for God in Christ may thus be seen as a
battle between the past victory over sin and the victory to come (see Ridderbos 1977:
538), for all by themselves deserve death, but salvation is God's 'charisma' or free gift to
every believer, Christ Jesus the Lord (Rom.6: 23).

One of Paul's most encouraging and all - embracing assurances (1Cor.6: 11)
reminds the Corinthians that they are (past tense, aorist) washed, sanctified and justified
(or legally declared righteous) which could be a reference to baptism. Calvin however
maintains all three verbs refer to one event, though from different angles (see L. Morris
1964: 98). Nevertheless the trinitarian formula Paul uses could relate to the effects of
baptism, reminiscent of Mt.28: 19 (see R. Kugelman 1968: 261). The substance of this

passage is the union of the believer in the name, that is the character, of the fullness of (we note the full title) the Lord Jesus Christ, and in (not by) the Spirit of our God. In context Paul is being hard on the Corinthians by contrasting in the strongest possible way their sinful behaviour with all Christ has done for them. Christian living, Paul says, is only in the power shared by the Spirit of God (cf. L. Morris 1964: 98; and our definition of mysticism).

The Christian's new life in Christ is decidedly in the Spirit as opposed to the flesh (Rom.8: 2). This is first realised at Pentecost when the disciples are filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2: 4), and it is this supernatural, divine, or even mystical presence in them that enables believers to live and to love like Christ (see C. Dodd 1932: 122). True reconciliation is therefore found only in Christ (2Cor.5: 19).

6.1.3. Believer's Work in Christ

In Table Six the 101 passages in Category 2 are divided into Attitudes and Actions, Appeals and Associates which will be examined in this order.

6.1.3.1. Attitudes and Actions

At perhaps the beginning of his mission work Paul addresses the church as being both in God, the eternal Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, acknowledging that God is the atmosphere in which all those to whom he writes should live and move and have their being (1Th.1: 1; 2Th.1: 1; see Barclay 1981: 185). To emphasise this unity Paul also sends them Gentile and Hebrew greetings, i.e. grace and peace, not from himself but from God. And, to complete the Trinity Paul acknowledges that the Holy Spirit is the real power behind his gospel (v.5) where again we find a mystical ring. And as Paul begins his letter (1Th.) in God, Christ and the Spirit, so he commands his 'brothers' to imitate other churches in Christ (1Th.2: 14), and ends with reference to the Trinity (1Th.5: 18 - 19). Paul reaches a high point in describing God's call upon His people *"so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ"* (2Th.1: 12). Can one wish for anything higher than sharing in Christ's glory? Barclay (1981: 210 - 211) calls this Paul's *"most uplifting vision of all"*.

Paul continually encourages his readers to see themselves as a closely - knit family united with God through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit whom above all they must not 'quench' (1Th.5: 19). Thus he builds up a bank of Christian attitudes and actions, boasting about them only in the Lord (1Cor.1: 31). Everything Paul does is done in Christ, and thus Timothy, who is similarly faithful, is later sent to the Corinthians to remind them of Paul's ways (1Cor.4: 17), e.g. marriage must be in the Lord, i.e. with a believer (1Cor.7: 39).

Although Paul in his work is continually in danger of dying, he can at least once (see Bultmann TDNT: 3: 650 - 651) emotionally boast of the Corinthians, but only in Christ Jesus our Lord (cf. 2Cor.10: 17). Moffat translates this well *"by my pride in you"* (see L. Morris 1964: 220; Phil.1: 26). Paul never ceases to encourage them, *"your labour is not fruitless in the Lord"* (1Cor.15: 58), reminding them that to become sons of God and seeds of Abraham requires faith in Christ Jesus (Gal.3: 26, 28), for in Christ Jesus circumcision is of no importance (Gal.5: 6). Actions must therefore be acceptable both in conscience and in the Lord Jesus or else one remains in sin (Rom.14: 14; 1Cor.8: 8; 10: 26; see Ridderbos 1977: 292). Since we Jews, says Paul, are the first to hope in Christ we must *"live for the praise of His glory"* (Eph.1: 12). The fact that children must obey their parents in the Lord (Eph.6: 1) could imply infant baptism (Ridderbos 1977: 413; cf. Col.3: 20). Maturity is expected since believers are rooted and are being built up in Christ (Col.2: 7). Wives must be subject to their husbands (as is the social order at the time) in the Lord; though Paul later tempers this with love (Col.3: 18, 20; cf. Eph.5: 22 - 24; see G. Thompson 1967: 157). After encouraging the Philippians *"in Christ"* Paul commends them to have the same mind or attitude among themselves as they have *"in Christ Jesus"*, and gives the example of Christ's great sacrifice in humbling Himself and obediently dying on the cross (Phil.2: 1, 5 - 11). Thus the Philippians must rejoice in the Lord (3: 1; 4: 4; as Paul does 4: 10).

By way of a climax Paul shows that worshipping in the Spirit of God, and boasting or glorying in Christ Jesus means that with the Spirit in him he *"can do all things in him [Christ] who strengthens him"* (Phil.3: 3; 4: 13). Paul's ultimate goal is thus to gain and be found in Christ, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phil.3: 9, 14). In the Pastorals, Paul advises Timothy about boldness in faith in

Christ Jesus through enduring everything including persecution, in Him (2Tim.2: 10; 3: 12), and about using scripture to instruct others about *"salvation through faith in Christ Jesus"* (2Tim.3: 15).

6.1.3.2 Appeals

Paul makes at least twenty - four appeals to his readers which concern their growth, obedience and even Paul himself, all of them focussing on the 'in Christ' phrase.

1.   Appealing for Growth

By calling the Corinthians 'babes in Christ' Paul speaks the truth, for they are carnal and not yet spiritual; but they are planted and watered and God gives the increase (1Cor.3: 1, 6 - 7), in Christ. Paul addresses them as brethren - a friendly, encouraging term; although later he is being ironical in describing them as 'wise' (Vine's: 871; 1Cor.4: 10). Having founded the church in Corinth, Paul is their father 'in Christ' (1Cor.4: 15; 2Tim.2: 1), so he affirms 'in Christ' that all he does is for their edification (2Cor.12: 19). In fact he confesses he only really lives when his congregations stand 'in the Lord' (1Th.3: 8), for they are the seal of his apostleship (1Cor.9: 2) and his work 'in the Lord' (1Cor.9: 1). For growth to take place there must be agreement amongst everyone, especially between Euodia and Syntyche, which can really only fully come about 'in the Lord' (Phil.4: 2). Growth too involves the fulfilment of ministries received 'in the Lord' (Col.4: 17).

2.   Appealing for Obedience

Perhaps Paul directs his deepest and most urgent appeal to his readers to be sexually pure (see 1Th.4: 1 - 8), *"finally, brethren, we beseech and exhort you 'in the Lord Jesus'"* (v1). There is something commanding about the way he begins his two - fold appeal in the Lord Jesus for obedience, reminding them of how they learned *"to live and to please God"*. Barclay (1981: 198) explains that the Thessalonians have only recently come into the church from a *"society in which chastity was an unknown virtue"*, so it would not be easy for them to adapt. Furthermore at that time marriage vows were easily broken and divorce was very simple, hence the added emphasis *"in the*

Lord Jesus". Later Paul makes another sincere appeal to them *"in the Lord Jesus Christ"* that everyone who can should work - or else not eat (2Th.3: 10 - 12); having already expressed his confidence *"in the Lord"* that they will do all that he is appealing to them to do (2Th.3: 4; cf. Gal.5: 10).

The remaining four appeals are in Paul's letter to Philemon, which in itself is an appeal, and which we shall look at in detail at the close of this chapter. The 'in Christ' phrase appears five times in Philemon, i.e. in the four appeals and in v23, where Paul refers to Epaphras as *"my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus"*: -

1. *v.8 - 9 "though I am bold enough 'in Christ' to command you to do what is required, yet for love's sake I prefer to appeal to you . . ."*

2. *v.15 - 16 "that you might have him back for ever . . . as a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord"*

3. *v.20a "Yes brother, I want some benefit from you 'in the Lord'"*

4. *v.20b "Refresh my heart 'in Christ'"*

We can detect that Paul is progressively increasing the pressure he is placing on Philemon in these appeals although they are all 'in Christ' or 'in the Lord' which should make them superior in every way. They all serve nevertheless as masterly examples of persuasiveness.

3.   Paul's Personal Appeals

Paul admits that in the beginning he was unknown to the churches of Judea 'in Christ' (Gal.1: 22). He does this as part of his appeal to the Galatians to be accepted for his divine mission as an apostle who is converted and called by Christ Himself. In Romans 9: 1 Paul *"speaks the truth 'in Christ'"*, appealing to his readers to understand how he as a converted Jew feels about the inclusion of the Gentiles in the new covenant God makes with humanity. He is thus indirectly appealing for prayer to God for the Jews that they may be saved (Rom.10: 1). *" I the prisoner in the Lord beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called . . ."* (Eph.4: 1) is self - explanatory, and must be seen as indicating the close union or symbiosis between Christ and the believer, (see Fitzmyer JBC: 823). Similarly no comment is necessary over Eph.4: 17, an appeal 'in the Lord', not to live as the Gentiles do, (cf. 2Tim.1: 13 *"live in*

faith and love 'in Christ Jesus'").

6.1.3.3   Associates

The twenty - three passages in this sub - division of the Believers' Work in Christ are 1Th.1: 1; 2Th.1: 1; 1Cor.4: 17a; 16: 19, 24; Rom.16: 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12a, 12b, 13, 22; Philem.23; Col.1: 2; 4: 7; Eph.6: 21; Phil.1: 1; 2: 29; 4: 21. Of these 1Th.1: 1; 2Th.1: 1; and Philem.23 are referred to already.

"I sent to you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ , as I teach them . . ." (1Cor.4: 7). Timothy is certainly Paul's right hand man - *"I have no one like him, who will be genuinely anxious for your welfare. They all look after their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ"* (Phil.2: 20 - 21). Perhaps Timothy is a personal convert of Paul's, which could then explain his being Paul's *"child in the Lord".* Aquila and Prisca are also very close to Paul (Acts 18: 1 - 3) having a church in their home. *"Aquila and Prisca . . . send you hearty greetings in the Lord"* (1Cor.16: 19) implies more than the normal greeting (see L. Morris 1964: 246). Paul closes his first letter to the Corinthians (16: 24) *"my love be with you all in Christ Jesus"*, probably just sharing his love and reminding them of the importance of love in the Christian life as emphasised in this letter especially in Chapter 13 (see Fitzmyer JBC: 275).   Col.1: 2 reads *"to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ at Colossae ".* Paul first establishes his own standing *"Paul an Apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God"* and then addresses the Colossians as 'saints', set apart by God for service to Him, and as 'faithful brethren', members of God's family, to which he adds 'in Christ', which E. Scott (1930: 14) calls *"the idea of mystical fellowship"* (cf. Phil.1: 1; 4: 21).

The remaining 'greetings' which Paul mentions (Romans 16: 3 - 22), together with his inclusion of Tychicus (Col.4: 7; Eph.6: 21) and Epaphroditus (Phil.2: 29) are all to Paul's 'associates'. Almost every person (Tertius, Tychicus and Epaphroditus are in a separate category), has a different greeting, as well as a special message. We sense that Paul is very proud of these people, he respects those who become Christians before he does and everyone is encouraged and made to feel loved. Apelles is even congratulated, i.e. 'approved' (v.10), and several are commended for their work, and indirectly, made

to realise that they must continue with that work. But above all, although Paul uses the words 'my' and 'our', it is Christ who is directing everything, who is being served by everyone, and who is given all the credit.

C. Dodd (1932: 239) casts some light on the greeting in Romans 16 by observing that the heads of early Christian families had on their tombs the inscription *"sibi et suis fidentibus in Domino - for himself and those of his household who believe in the Lord"*. Hans Windisch is probably correct in suggesting that Paul popularises the giving of greetings in letters (TDNT: 1: 500). These greetings thus increase fellowship between associates serving the Lord. When the letter containing them is eventually read, the greetings are actualised with a hug or *"a holy kiss"* (Rom.16: 16; 1Th.5: 26; Windisch TDNT: 1: 501). It seems clear that Paul uses the 'in Christ' and 'in the Lord' phrases in Romans 16 and in other similar contexts to show that in each situation he is depending on Christ or on the Lord to effect what Paul has in mind (see Werner Foerster TDNT: 3: 1091; Rom.16: 2). On the other hand we could be more specific (Oepke TDNT: 2: 541) by noticing that for example: - Rom.16: 7, 11 - denote belonging to Christ and the church, Rom.16: 2, 3, 9, 12, 22 - are Christian actions and Rom.16: 8, 10, 13 - show Christian attitudes.

6.2   Conclusion

The theories advanced by scholars seeking to explain Paul's 'in Christ' phrase appear on the whole to be unnecessarily complex, hence the simplicity of the theory outlined above.

The mystical theory is an attempt to throw more light upon Paul's use of his 'in Christ' and related phrases in his letters. The division of these phrases into two categories seems to reflect Paul's thinking, both as he establishes his theology concerning the Christ - event and as he then applies it in his occasional correspondence.

Calling category 1 objective, positional and indicative and category 2 subjective, practical and imperative indicates the difference between the groups, and is in line with the general structure of the contents of Paul's letters, i.e. doctrine vs. encouragement and practice, and also with Paul's commendable strategy in maintaining the unity of the church in Christ and thereby preserving it from heresy. Table Six shows that Paul gives

an equitable proportion of texts from both groups to all his readers.

In previous chapters in this study the vital importance of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase both in the lives of Christians and in the Christian church is stressed. In this chapter we see the full spectrum of the mystical union between God and humanity extending from prehistory into eternity. The two divisions of texts in category 1 chart this revelation, i.e. chosen and created in Christ, and redeemed and Spirit - filled in Christ. In so far as the category 2 texts are concerned it is simply amazing how diversified Paul can be as he encourages and commands his readers to live almost every aspect of their lives in Christ.

The more Paul's 167 'in Christ' phrases are studied, the more meaning is revealed in them in their contexts, and it seems apparent that the only way in which he could get the fullness of his message across to his readers would be the supernatural mystical way. Thus Paul can, we suggest, in almost all instances both reveal something of the union of God with humanity and simultaneously inspire his readers personally to draw closer to God and to one another in their work in the body of Christ.

6.3   Paul's Letter to Philemon

It is difficult if not impossible to discover why Paul uses the 'in Christ' phrases in his various letters. Nevertheless a study of his letter to Philemon, which appears to be accepted as genuine by most scholars, gives insight into his use of the phrase and also into the letter's essentially mystical nature.

Paul is writing to Philemon whom Paul had converted, and who has a slave Onesimus who leaves him and goes to Rome where he meets Paul and also becomes a Christian. Paul finds Onesimus so helpful in his ministry that he would like Onesimus to remain with him, but since he legally belongs to Philemon, Paul sends him back asking Philemon to forgive him, for now they are all Christians and brothers in the Lord. Paul also offers to pay for any wrong Onesimus might have done, adding that he intends to visit Philemon soon, implying that he expects Onesimus to be returned in order to continue to be 'very useful' to Paul in his ministry as his name implies.

Paul confirms that he writes in the Lord by using five 'in Christ' phrases: -

v.8:   *"Accordingly, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do what is required . . ."*

v.16: *"No longer as a slave but more than a slave, as a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord"*

v.20a: *"Yes, brother, I want some benefit from you in the Lord"*

v.20b: *"Refresh my heart in Christ"*

v.23: *"Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greeting to you"*

Théo Preiss correctly discerns that Philemon, Paul's *"authority, his diplomatic tact, his love, and even his humour, all proceed from and are governed by one precise thought: this whole business is here seen, experienced, and decided by Paul 'in Christ'"* (1957: 34).

Let us examine Paul's letter to Philemon in detail. It was probably written about AD60 from prison in Rome. Beginning and ending with grace, Paul writes 335 words, thanking God, praying both for a sharing of Philemon's faith and for Onesimus' future in the Lord. What a joy it is to suffer together for God as Paul, Philemon and Onesimus are all doing in one way or another, and what a need therefore for grace (Matthew Henry 1989; 951). Paul combines the Greek and the Jewish forms of salutation expecting peace to come from God and the Lord Jesus Christ (v.3 cf. E.F. Scott 1930: 102 - 103).

Modern scholars incline towards believing that the Philemon letter is public as opposed to private in nature (Arthur Patzia 1993: 706; but see also Preiss 1957: 33 - 34). Reasons for this conclusion include the letter's length and its legal and business language, its similarity with Paul's other letters; its being addressed to several persons, who are given church titles such as 'fellow worker / soldier;' 'sister;' its content concerns the whole Christian community, Philemon's house church, (*"in the body of Christ personal affairs are no longer private"*); and of course the inclusion of the letter in the canon of Scripture (see Patzia 1993: 706).

It is significant that throughout the body of this letter Paul addresses Philemon personally; in his closing greeting he changes to the plural tense (vs. 22, 25), but ends again with the singular *"with your spirit"*. Here Paul stresses humanity's unity in Christ, that is whether Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female, *"you are all one in Christ Jesus"* (Gal.3: 28). It is this unity 'in Christ' which is the solution to the problem of Onesimus' relationship to Philemon (see E.F. Scott 1930: 115; Arthur Ruprecht 1994: 936; G.H. P. Thompson 1967: 180; Victor Furnish 1972: 896; Preiss 1957: 33 - 34).

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Paul shows the greatest tact and respect for Philemon, thanking God and praying that because of Philemon's love and faith towards the Lord Jesus and all the saints, the knowledge of all the good that is the believer's in Christ may be promoted. Perhaps Paul may best be understood mystically here. He writes of the highest 'agape' love which comes from faith in Christ growing and drawing others into (eis) a new relationship in Christ. Calvin notes that faith is said to be 'toward' Christ, because it looks specially to Him. It is through Him alone that God the Father can be known, and in Him alone can be found all the blessings that faith seeks (1964: 394). Paul has this same thought in Eph.3: 17 *"that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love . . .,"* and in 1Cor.1: 9 *"God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord".* Thus Paul expects Philemon and his other readers to grow in knowledge of God's blessing and thereby in union with and obedience to Christ (Herbert Carson 1960: 105 - 106; E.F. Scott 1930: 104 - 105).

Obviously Paul is praying here for Philemon's maturity and obedience in his treatment of Onesimus, and at the same time promoting the class of slaves (see Ruprecht 1994: 937). At no time, however, does he promote himself. Significantly he does not even refer to himself as an apostle although he does hint that he could 'command'! Paul's appeal instead is fourfold: -

* through his love for Philemon,
* his age,
* his being in prison and,
* the fact that he played some part in the conversion of both Philemon and Onesimus (Günther Bornkamm 1974: 683).

In verse 10 Paul comes to the real point of his letter *"I appeal to you for my child, Onesimus".* Perhaps it is true to claim that what Paul does not say in this letter is more important than what he does say. That could be why his actual purpose in writing is only mentioned seven verses later (see Patzia 1993: 704).

Slavery was an integral part of life in the Roman Empire[1]. Bernardo Hurault is probably right in stating that at that time *"no one thought that a change of social status*

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[1]Myer Pearlman estimates that then the Empire had about six million slaves (1935: 65).

was feasible" (1988: 413). Paul's rule was *"let everyone lead the life which the Lord has assigned to him, and in which God has called him"* (1Cor.7: 17). In other words *"were you a slave when called ? Never mind. But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity"* (1Cor.7: 20 - 21). In any event, as Paul writes later *"the form of the world is passing away"* (1Cor.7: 31b). Paul's concern was far more immediate than emancipation, which would take at least eighteen centuries to be resolved. Thus, Lightfooot suggests that *"the word 'emancipation' seems to be trembling on his lips"*, and if it is, it is rather that Onesimus may be permitted to return to continue his ministry to the imprisoned Apostle than that Christianity, as he conceives it, forbids slavery (see S. Green 1994: 721). Receiving Onesimus back is surely the benefit Paul wants from Philemon in the Lord (v.20), though he never really admits this. The request is made and, we may presume, is granted 'in the Lord', by agreement in faith in Christ (Jac Muller 1970: 189),and Paul's heart is refreshed in Christ (v.20).

Paul's long delay in coming to and not even expressing this real point of his letter has caused Forrester Church and others to propose a 'Rhetorical Criticism' approach. Love or friendship is first shown to prepare the hearer to consider the case favourably. The rhetorical device is then used to hide the real objective so that hearers may find it for themselves (Patzia 1993: 704; Jac Muller 1970: 184n). Attractive as this approach may be, it could equally well be said that Paul is encouraging Philemon to have the mind of Christ (1Cor.2: 16) or to complete his joy *"by being of the same mind"* (Phil.2: 2). This approach however is purely ancillary to the mystical theory.

Philemon's name means 'loving' and Paul mentions Philemon's love no less than three times (vs.5, 7, 9). Onesimus is a common name among slaves and means 'profitable', or better still, because of the prefix 'eu' to the Greek word, 'very profitable'[1] (Vine's 1991: 628). Paul implies in v.15 that God is in control of the whole situation,thus Paul can contrast 'for a while' (Philemon is without Onesimus), with 'for ever' (Onesimus is restored to Philemon). Preiss's relevant observation here would surely have appealed to Philemon; *"that you might have him back for ever"* (v.15)

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[1]The Greek word 'chrestos', here appearing as 'euchrestos' (v.11), sound like 'Christos'. The two words are distinguished earlier in connection with the origin of the 'in Christ' phrase (see also Ruprecht 1994: 935).

compares to a commercial receipt, as in Phil.4: 18; that is, in Christ *"one possesses only what one has given"* (1957: 39). Similarly in v.16 Paul can contrast 'slave' (a temporal low estate) with 'beloved brother' (an eternal relationship in the Lord) that is, implying emancipation (Ruprecht 1994: 935, 938; Jac Muller 1970: 186).

Paul makes it very clear v.14 that Philemon must make up his own mind and not be under any compulsion. Love must be the operative word (G.H.P. Thompson 1967: 181) and in this atmosphere slavery can have no meaning at all. Christian love operates through fellowship (cf. v.v.6, 17) which is really union 'in Christ'. Later (v.21) Paul writes that he is confident of Philemon's 'obedience' a word that often implies in the New Testament acting on the teaching of Christ (E. F. Scott 1930: 113). What more could Paul wish for to resolve this situation? Praying that Philemon, by sharing his faith will promote the knowledge of all the good that is the believer's in Christ.

Paul suggests that now Onesimus is a Christian, God might be giving Philemon a further opportunity to show his goodness, of his own free will (Furnish 1972: 895; Scott Bartchy 1992: 5; 307).

Onesimus is now a beloved brother to Paul, and much more to Philemon, both in the flesh and in the Lord (v.v. 10, 21); that is he has come to faith in Christ. Paul adds that if Onesimus has done anything wrong or owes anything to Philemon he must charge that to Paul's account. And Paul asks Philemon to receive Onesimus as he would receive Paul himself. We are reminded here of two beautiful parables, peculiar to Luke's gospel, of the Prodigal Son[1] and the Good Samaritan. It is significant that Luke is included in the greetings sent by Paul to Philemon at the end of this letter (v.24).

Matthew Henry rightly observes that *"one great evidence of true repentance consists in returning to practice the duties which have been neglected . . . The communion of saints does not destroy destruction of property . . . The example of Onesimus may encourage the vilest sinners to return to God"* (1989: 950 - 951).

Paul uses the word 'splagchna' three times in this letter, first (v.7) in the sense of refreshing the hearts or whole beings of the saints; second in refreshing Paul himself

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[1]Compare *"For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found"* (Lk.15: 24), with *"Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me"* (Philem.11).

(v.20) his whole being, and the third (v.12) in the sense of losing a piece of himself, hereby showing Paul's extreme concern and compassion for Onesimus (Hans - Helmut Esser 1975: 2: 600) and his involvement in settling this matter (Helmut Koster 1974: 7: 555). Thus Paul would regard Philemon's manner of dealing with Onesimus as treatment of himself (see v.17 Scott Bartchy 1992: 5: 307).

Paul writes in Phil.1: 8 *"for God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection (splagchnois) of Christ Jesus"*. The sense here is obviously transferred and 'splagchna' is thus a pointed term for personal love. But for Paul emotions which might be regarded as personal inclinations are an expression of his being 'in Christ', and they have their origin here. Only in the light of this basic relation of the believer to Christ, which is usually called Christ mysticism, can one understand the addition of 'Kristou Jesou' (gen.auctoris) to in 'splagchnois'. This love and affection which grip and profoundly move the whole man are possible only in Christ (Koster 1974: 7: 556). This same word 'splagchna' is used of the Good Samaritan in his concern and care for the man who was mugged.

In v.16 Paul is unique in writing the only verse containing the words 'flesh' and 'Lord' joined by the word 'and' thus mystically stressing how close Philemon and Onesimus now are to one another, since Onesimus has put his faith in the Lord. A spiritual revelation has broken into their social relationship and they are united in body and in the Lord (Eduard Schweizer 1974: 7: 127).

It seems that Paul steadily pursues his goal of inspiring Philemon to send Onesimus in the Lord's service until he climaxes both juridically and mystically with the words (v.17) *"so if you consider me your partner, receive him as you would receive me"*. Onesimus thus becomes Paul's messenger to Philemon *"a messenger in whom he intends to be really present"* (Preiss 1957: 36). No doubt Paul has in mind here the Rabbinic statement quoted in the Mishnah (Ber.5: 5) *"the one sent by a man is as the man himself"* (Karl Rengstorf 1974: 1: 415; cf. Dietrich Muller 1975: 1: 128). In this Jewish legal 'Saliah' we find a messenger, a person commissioned to act with complete authority on behalf of another person, i.e. a precursor for the apostle and ambassador (cf. 2Cor.5: 16 - 20; Muller 1975: 1: 127 - 128; Preiss 1957: 36: 39). The picture is now clear: Paul receives Christ as he would receive God, Philemon receives Onesimus as he

would receive Paul, then Paul receives Onesimus as he would receive Philemon, and the apostolic work continues.

Can we see here support for the theory that Onesimus is the same Onesimus who according to Ignatius in his letter to the Ephesians (c AD 110) was elected Bishop of Ephesus? Ignatius' language in his letter bears similarities to that of Paul in his letter to Philemon (John Knox 1963: 762). This theory, if true, would help to explain the canonization of the letter to Philemon in scripture.

Paul's climactic *"receive him as you would receive me"* (v.17) could be said to have been answered by Paul's request for *"some benefit from you in the Lord"* (v.20), and by his confirmatory *"knowing that you will do even more than I say"* (v.21).

This 'benefit' would be joyful because being 'in the Lord' Paul would know that it is the Lord who has made everything possible through His servant Philemon. Paul's heart would consequently be refreshed in Christ (see Carson 1960: 111).

Conclusion

Barclay describes Paul's letter to Philemon as a *"great romance of grace in the early Church"*, and this it is (see Patzia 1993: 706). It contains no theological doctrines or warnings against enemies or false teaching, but is saturated with the assurance that *"here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all"* (Col.3: 11; cf. Gal.3: 28). Dr. Wordsworth captures something of the mystical atmosphere surrounding this letter *"it was by Christianizing the master that the gospel enfranchised the slave . . . when the heart of the master was filled with divine grace and was warmed with the love of Christ, the rest would soon follow . . . every Onesimus would be treated by every Philemon as a beloved brother in Christ"* (see J. Van Oosterzee 1872: 24).

Paul's masterly use of his five 'in Christ' phrases, his tact, perfect diplomacy and his extreme compassion make us agree with Calvin that Paul *"seems to be thinking about the interests of the whole Church rather than the private affairs of a single man"* (1964: 393).

We are beginning to see the true meaning behind Paul's provocative letter. Sidlow Baxter rightly discerns an analogy here between the Philemon letter, as indeed

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also the Book of Esther, and the Gospel way of salvation (1966: 253). Keith Brooks summarizes well the mystical import of the letter, *"a perfect illustration of the doctrine of 'imputation' whereby guilty sinners believing on Christ are received by the Father as identified with the Son, and the sins of the believing one are reckoned to the account of Christ who paid the price on Calvary"* (1990: 275; cf. Marilyn Hickey 1989: 406). The results of this imputation are evident throughout the Philemon letter especially through Onesimus (and Philemon) becoming new creations in Christ (vs.10, 19; 2Cor.5: 17). Paul writes of faith towards Christ (v.5), that only through Him can God's will be known and His blessings that are the believer's in Christ be known (v.6). 'Justification by faith' we can begin to see now is but a synonym for life 'in Christ' in that it brings remission of sins and thus the mystical life 'in Christ' (Preiss 1957: 41). Perhaps Preiss is the first scholar to appropriate this truth, which here seems so evident. This new vital life in Christ can at one and the same time be so juridical, so mystical and so concrete (Preiss 1957: 41 - 42). Only in Christ and through the fellowship of the Holy Spirit is the glorious unity possible between Philemon and the house church in Colossae, and Paul a prisoner and his colleagues in Rome, through their faith, love, prayer and hospitality (van Oosterzee 1872: 26).

Paul's commands *"I want some benefit from you in the Lord"*, and *"refresh my heart in Christ"* are addressed not only to Philemon but also to Philemon's house church, (this letter could possibly be the one referred to in Col.4: 16 as from Laodicea, John Knox 1963: 762), but also to Onesimus, and indeed to every person in the world.

6.4   Conclusion

It is instructive to re - examine the Philemon letter by applying to it the mysticism theory of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase which has been outlined above. Considering the letter as a model its three constituents may be seen as: -

♦   vs.1 - 7   Salutation to Associates (worker, soldier and sister)

♦   vs.8 - 21   Appeals to Philemon 'in Christ' and 'in the Lord' (brother)

♦   vs.22 - 25 Greetings from Associates (prisoner 'in Christ Jesus' and workers).

6.4.1 God's Work in Christ

The letter contains no doctrine apart from imputation, i.e. one person paying another person's debt, which is central to Christianity and to Paul's life, here especially on behalf of Philemon and Onesimus. Paul writes from prison as a prisoner <u>of</u> Christ Jesus making no direct reference to his being an <u>apostle</u> but thankful instead for what his readers do *"for the Lord Jesus and all the saints"* (v.6).

This is Paul's only letter in which no mention or reference is made to the Holy Spirit, perhaps partly because Paul is stressing the redemption both of Onesimus (v.10) and Philemon (v.19).

6.4.2. Believers' Work in Christ

The letter is an appeal for a labourer (Onesimus) in the harvest, hence Paul first shares that he has much boldness 'in Christ' (v.8). This is where Paul comes <u>from</u>. Secondly Paul tells Philemon what he comes <u>with</u>, Onesimus - no longer a slave but a beloved brother not only to Paul but also to Philemon, *"both in (the) flesh and in (the) Lord"* (v.16). Thirdly Paul tells what he comes <u>for</u>, and here he writes with all his heart for *"help in (the) Lord"*, that thereby his heart will be refreshed *"in Christ"* (v.20). This is the mystical climax of the letter as Paul draws Philemon from the imperative of giving help in the Lord, to joining Paul in 'refreshment' through union 'in Christ'.

The appeal is made, Paul trusts in Philemon's obedience (v.21), and expects even more than he asks for (v.21). Paul says he has confidence in Philemon's prayers - even concerning a future visit to him some time. Although Philemon is free (and Onesimus too, in Christ) Paul concludes by encouraging him that although he and Epaphras are in prison, they are *"in Christ"* (v.23) and they send the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to be with Philemon's spirit (v.25).

It is the Believers' Work in Christ that changes Onesimus from being 'unprofitable' to becoming 'profitable'; that makes no mention of emancipation, but instead reveals the power of the gospel that solves all human problems. Unity in Christ is stronger than any purely human relationships, for only when brothers and sisters like Philemon, Apphia, Archippus and Onesimus, who are all in Christ, obediently serve the Lord, will slavery disappear and the harvest be reaped. That is surely the prayer of prisoners Paul and Epaphras and fellow workers Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke. Paul involves the

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whole community in solving Philemon's problem because he knows that changing people through Christ changes situations - *"I can do all things in him who strengthens me"* (Phil.4: 13).

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This study tests the hypothesis that Paul intends his 'in Christ' phrase to be understood principally in a mystical sense. For over a hundred years theologians have been giving the phrase close attention but there still seems to be little agreement over its real meaning. Many theological investigations into the phrase seem to be inadequately sustained hence the large number of sources consulted.

The subject is first approached by looking at mysticism through eight models constructed from specially selected sources giving an overall view not only of mysticism but also indirectly of Paul's phrase. This leads, secondly, to Paul himself whose background is reviewed specially with regard to four possible influences upon his thinking. Thirdly, the 'in Christ' phrase is considered, its origin, construction and variants. Critical assessments are made, fourthly, of five theories proposed by theologians to account for the phrase, and these are followed, fifthly, by an examination of humanity's union with God, the intended goal, we suggest, both of mysticism and of Paul's phrase. Sixthly, a mystical theory is proposed to account for Paul's purpose in using the phrase.

In this chapter the main findings of the study are referred to broadly in the sequence of the study's structure, but focussing in particular upon mysticism, synderesis, Paul, the 'in Christ' phrase and mystic union.

7.1   Mysticism

The two doctrines basic to this study - Christian mysticism and the 'in Christ' phrase - are very closely linked. Although Paul does not define his phrase, and although mysticism has as many definitions as it has scholars writing about it, the definition adopted here of mysticism could also, it is suggested, be applied to the phrase, - union with God through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, i.e. God's gift claimed by faith of *"adoptive union with God through Christ's human nature"* (Mascall 1959: 93).

God creates humanity in His image (Gen.1: 26), but this image is defaced through sin, so God mercifully decides to prepare humanity for the restoration of His

image. To make reunion with God possible a Messiah is promised (Gen.3: 15) and the preparation continues while the faithful become more and more thirsty and hungry for God (Ps.63: 1; 107: 4 - 9; 143: 6; Lk.2: 37). During this long period of time God seems to be testing His chosen people in unusual ways to increase their hunger for Him. Thus He commands Moses *"you cannot see my face; for man shall not see me and live"* (Ex.33: 20; cf. Gen.16: 7, 13), and yet He reveals Himself about forty - two times in the Old Testament, apparently without any harmful effects. Secondly, after liberating His people from Egypt, God reveals His intention for reconciliation by manifesting His immanent presence through pillars of cloud and fire, through the mysteries of sacrificial worship and appearances in glory in the tabernacle and the temple. In spite of all this however there is no hunger appeasement although Solomon realises God's omnipresence - *"heaven and earth cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built!"* (1Kg.8: 27). Thirdly through various prophets at different times God leads His people to expect a wide range of figures which could all stand for the Messiah. These allusions may be given both to increase the people's hunger for the Messiah, and also to give knowledge of His nature and the means of humanity's ultimate reunion with God. Principally because of competitive interests as we shall see, the prophetic vision and voice becomes fainter and fainter until not a word is heard for 400 years.

The real usually has its counterfeit, so the Hebrews 'create' pseudo - Messianic intermediaries during various historic periods by means of personification or hypostatisation to satisfy their hunger for the Messiah. It is when excessive attention is given to these, important though they are in their time and place (e.g. wisdom, temple, torah), that the real Messiah may not be recognised and worshipped.

Nevertheless Judaism throughout its history continually evidences its hunger for God. Scholars recently find Judaism more receptive to mysticism than has previously been claimed, for they trace it back to before 300BC. Schools of contemplative, and Merkabah chariot mysticism are shown to exist throughout the apocalyptic era, each one continually striving to bridge the gulf between Creator and creature. Throughout history Jewish mystical movements continue to exist, e.g. Kabbalah and Hasidism.

Scholars would probably agree that Christian mysticism has its roots in Jewish and apocalyptic mysticism, in this hunger for union with God that can be traced back to

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the Fall. Any suggestion that Christian mysticism is pagan in origin (e.g. derived from the work of Dionysius) or is foreign to or irreconcilable with the gospel has no true foundation (see Bouyer 1968: 3: 57).

The importance of interpreting scripture mystically is not generally appreciated but it does give the *"additional, allegorical or spiritual sense which is held to underlie the literal significance"* of what is written (Stone1928: 688). Thus Clarke argues that the mystical or spiritual sense is *"very often the 'most literal' sense of all"* (1824: 4: 201). Paul claims that *"all scripture is inspired by God . . . that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work"* (2Tim.3: 16). The Spirit therefore must not be quenched by faulty interpretation (1Th.5: 19). As Jesus interpreted to His disciples *"in all the scriptures the things concerning himself"* (Lk.24: 27; cf. Gal.4: 24) so the mystical interpretation is necessary for the Old Testament to be used in the New Testament, e.g. *"they divide my garments among them, and for my raiment they cast lots"* is almost meaningless unless understood of Christ (Ps.22: 18; see Stone 1928: 695).

What is surprising is the general prejudice that seems to exist almost throughout history against mysticism. This prejudice, ignorance or misunderstanding of the true essence of mysticism is in part responsible for the slow growth of mysticism over the centuries, as well as for the decline in charismatic mysticism in the early church.

Several scholars unfortunately seem too eager to point to *"possible and actual abuses of the mystical approach without acknowledging its world historical function of transcending the concrete mediums of revelation toward the mystery which is mediated by them"* (Tillich 1967: 1: 140); e.g. F.E. Bauer, whose teachings *"excluded the supernatural from history"*, (see S. Hafemann 1993: 667 - 668). Similarly, other scholars incline to project their ideals into the figure of Paul resulting in, e.g. the Hegelian Paul of the Tübingen school, the liberal Paul of the liberal theology school, the mystical Paul of the history of religions school and the existential Paul of the school of Bultmann. Thankfully Paul is far too big for his interpreters (see Macquarrie 1981: 145; Ridderbos 1977: 15; Stewart 1935: 12 - 13), as has been shown.

7.2   Paul

It would be difficult for Paul not to be influenced in his theology by the beliefs and practices of the Mystery religions, Jewish and Apocalyptic mysticism, Stoicism, Gnosticism and the Qumran Community as can be seen by the many parallels that exist and continue to be discovered. It seems generally accepted that Paul was a Merkabah mysticism chariot rider, and that he could have enjoyed other mystical experiences (2Cor.12: 1 - 4). His mystical style though is more dynamic and reacting as opposed to the static mysticism of Stoicism, for he is called by God and is thus ecstatic in being out of himself and in Christ. Similarly he is a charismatic, through whom are manifested the gifts of the Spirit, and also a postmodernist in his continual destroying of strongholds (2Cor.10: 4 - 5).

The word Christocentric sums up Paul's life well; the goals of his life - knowing, maturing, obeying and fulfilling - are all 'in Christ', as also is, God's goal for the universe (Eph.1: 9 - 10). Likewise Paul's 'mystery' which he applies in 18 directions, is basically Christocentric. He mentions 'great mystery' only twice - Christ's union with humanity (1Tim.3: 16), and Christ's union with the church (Eph.5: 32), - the former relating to Christ Himself the latter to Christ's mystical union with humanity, the church, and seen as the body and bride of Christ. His zeal is outstanding, especially in love for Christ and all around him, in building up the church, and maintaining its unity, thereby protecting it against heresy.

7.3   Synderesis

The anthropological synderesis model above suggests that human beings are specially designed, (the word 'programmed' is too technical), in God's image thereby providing for communication, and also for an indefinable organic union, between divinity and humanity. Thus at baptism believers by grace through faith become one spirit with the Lord (1Cor.6: 17), which means they are chosen, elected, adopted, redeemed, sanctified, justified and baptised in both water and the Spirit without any absorption or loss of identity. They are then in God, in Christ and in the Spirit, while Christ and the Spirit are in them. This would appear to be how God satisfies this built - in hunger that

humanity has for the mysterious divine[1]. So God mystically, comes to live in believers. However we term this point of contact (spirit, apex scintilla, synderesis, God spot, etc.) it is very much in evidence as the study above of the experiences of mystics across the centuries proves. Current medical and neurological research should add to our knowledge of this point of contact with the divine. The nature of the believer's union in Christ is better understood through the doctrine of perichoresis, or circumincession as it was later called in the sixth century by pseudo - Cyril and used to defend the doctrine of the Trinity (Moss 1961: 40, 43). This doctrine is by definition *"the technical term for the interpretation of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity"*, (ODCC: 295), and it gives insight into several other interpenetrations, e.g. God being in believers, believers being in God, and Satan / demons being in persons or animals (Lk.22: 3).

Several of Paul's texts containing 'in Christ' or related phrases may be seen to imply interpenetrations, (e.g. Rom.8: 1; 12: 5), which may be seen as mystical relationships between God and believers, unions in which there is perfect communion and yet no loss of identity or fusion of personality but simply a foretaste of heaven. Thus Best can rightly claim that *"the whole Christ dwells in each believer; but it is the corporate whole of believers who dwell in Christ"* (1955: 9).

A likely explanation of these interpenetrations is to understand them as processes of emptying and filling[2]. The Father empties Himself into the Son, thereby filling Him to empty Himself into the Spirit (Phil.2: 7; Jn.16: 7), thereby filling believers (Acts 2: 4). As Spirit - filled believers live in Christ and in the Spirit they are 'ecstatically' outside themselves (see W. Pannenberg 1968: 177). D.W. Allen holds that the parties empty themselves and so *"hide behind their disclosure"*[1] Thus the Spirit always points to Christ as He mystically guides in building up new lives.

The interpenetration of material things is virtually impossible, but in the spiritual realm it easily takes place, e.g. God's presence can be experienced during prayer, praise

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[1]This relationship cannot be fully explained but it is certainly superior to any similar union by faith or sacrament (see M. Barth 1974: 70; Mascall 1959: 226 - 227).
[2]For this idea we are indebted to D.W. Allen (1967: 20). Paul and other early Christian writers are more inspired to proclaim the truth that Christ is both God and man, than to explain relations between the Father, Son and Spirit (see ODCC 281).

and manifestations of the Holy Spirit (see Hurault 1988: 376: 377).

Paul sums up the Synderesis doctrine in the pericope *"he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him"* (1Cor.6: 17). God being Spirit communicates through any part of the nature of any human being, but if the human spirit is united with the Spirit of the Lord, as Paul says, then God could be likely to communicate this way, e.g. the Holy Spirit's gifts of healing would flow from God, first to the believer's spirit and then to that part of the body needing healing.

7.4 The 'In Christ' Phrase

7.4.1 Origin

The one experience unbelievers must have to become Christians is to be born again (Jn.3: 3). Thereafter they are in Christ, Christ and the Holy Spirit are in them, and they become temples of the Holy Spirit (2Cor.5: 17; Col.1: 27; Rom.8: 9; 1Cor.6: 19). Paul clarifies the experience, *"by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God"* (Eph.2: 8). Baptism is the public admission of believers into the church, the body of Christ,and it is probably in the baptismal liturgy of the early church that the 'in Christ' phrase has its origin. Baptism and being in Christ unite in a positional event - a sacramental union with God through Christ which is mystical for it transcends the earthly dimensions of time and space. The initiants *"put on Christ"* (Gal.3: 27) so each one can say with Paul *"I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me"* (Gal.2: 20). This pericope is rightly seen as the *"most impressive mystical statement, from which all our knowledge of Paul's mysticisms is derived"* (see Wikenhauser 1960: 46).

The unusual striking combination of the preposition 'in' relating to a person appears for the first time in the Septuagint (Gen.12: 3) *"in you (Abram / Abraham) shall all the nations be blessed"*. Possibly Paul is influenced by this grammatical construct, because, apart from Christ, he applies it to Abraham and also to Adam. These three figures may be regarded as corporate and thereby as mystically representative, firstly of humanity in sin in Adam, secondly of all nations in covenant blessing in Abraham, and thirdly of believers in new covenant redemption in Christ (1Cor.15: 22), Abraham's

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blessing is contained in Christ's redemption (Gal.3: 14).

The preposition 'in' is most versatile and gives the 'in Christ' phrase flexibility, making it superior to other ways of being (cf. Acts 17: 28). From this indicative situation all Paul's corresponding moral imperatives can radiate to encourage believers to live the perfect Christ life. By using different variant phrases and prepositions Paul reveals a progressive flow in the Christian life from beginning to consummation , i.e. through Christ - into Christ - with Christ - in Christ - Christ in the Believer - in the Lord - in the Spirit - Spirit in the Believer - with Christ - in God. At no stage in this flow is humanity's hunger for reunion with God fully or permanently satisfied, but the union itself becomes progressively deeper and thereby more mystic.

7.4.2 Classification

Table Three above shows that of the 167 'in Christ' phrases 44 (26%) are 'in Christ Jesus', 41 (24%) 'in the Lord' and 35 (21%) 'in Christ', the remaining 47 (29%) are used less frequently in eight other phrases. It would be speculative to regard one or more phrases or a phrase variant as more important than any other, apart from noting that when the title 'Lord' is used the phrase tends to be imperative and ethical, i.e. 'become in the Lord what you already are in Christ'. Against this Conzelmann argues that 'Lord' denotes command and also protection, i.e. we can call on Him (1976: 212).

In the Table Six above the phrases are classified into two groups: -

God's Work in Christ	- 66(40%)	-	Believers' Work in Christ - 101(60%)	
Chosen and created	- 31(19%)	-	Attitudes and Actions	- 54(32%)
Redeemed and Spirit - Filled	- 35(21%)	-	Appeals	- 24(14%)
			Associates	- 23(14%)

Paul appears to be ensuring that his readers know what God has done for them in Christ (objective, positional, indicative), and in consequence of this, what God expects them to do for Him in Christ (subjective, practical, imperative). This twofold division is effectively used by Paul in his letters, i.e. doctrine followed by encouragement and practice.

7.4.3 Purpose

After his dramatic call and conversion Paul's thinking is eminently Christocentric and it becomes his foremost task to write of all that Christ has done and continues to do for humanity. Before the foundation of the world God plans in Christ that believers would be blessed in Christ, chosen in Christ, redeemed in Christ, sealed with the Holy Spirit, and in the fullness of time be united in Christ with all things in heaven and earth (Eph.1: 3 - 13). Christ sets this plan in action with His Incarnation and He will fulfil the plan when He returns to earth. Here both mysticism and the 'in Christ' phrase are operative pre - historically, and will continue to operate through the present dimensions of time and space until humanity's ultimate reunion with God in heaven.

In addition to Paul's focus upon Christ it is possible to note his other themes which will later be developed into theological doctrines to be formulated by the church. The primacy of Paul's Christology over these must be maintained or there could be a lapse into heresy. Believers first and foremost are united in Christ, *"you are all one in Christ Jesus"* (Gal.3: 28). Whatever else is said about this relationship, for example "you are all sons of God" (v.26) is *"derivative"* (see Tannehill 1966: 20).

Applying this principle to Paul's 'in Christ' phrases it is permissible to label them as eschatological, ecclesiological, juridical, reconciliatory etc. just because they are Christological. It is a fundamental spiritual truth that anything that is not 'in Christ' cannot be accepted by God, thus for example all the Christian virtues are in Christ. The new creation in Christ is pivotal, and is the foundation of the 'in Christ' phrase including everyone and everything that has come out of the old, i.e. out of the flesh, and into the new, into Christ (Eph.2: 15). Bultmann, in spite of his antagonism towards mysticism and unbelief in the supernatural, shares this constructive insight *"the original meaning and context of the Old Testament sayings are entirely irrelevant. God does not speak to men through history but through Christ, who is the end of history, and through the word which proclaims him"* (1962: 222).

Paul's main purpose behind the 'in Christ' phrase could be to encourage his readers to keep Christ first in their lives. The Messiah has come *"and God has filled the hungry with good things"* (Lk.1: 53), but everyone must remain hungry, wanting *"to gain Christ and be found in him . . . (to) know him and the power of his resurrection. . . to share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death . . ."* (Phil.3: 8, 10).

Reconciliation, justification and sanctification may be viewed as gifts won by Jesus on the cross and offered to believers (Col.1: 19 - 20). The Lord's Supper is also a gift, a periodic gift of union through grace and thanksgiving. The church may eschatologically be said to have served its purpose, for 'in Christ' history has come to an end, and all things are therefore united in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth (Eph.1: 10), for He is *"the beginning and the end"* (Rev.21: 6)[1]. Believers need to know who they are in Christ, and they can only fully know this mystically, and thereby realise that with faith everything else in Christ must follow (Lk.12: 31).

Paul's second reason for promoting the 'in Christ' phrase could be *"to maintain the unity of the Spirit"* (Eph.4: 3). There is a similarity between the environment of the early church and the present postmodern age, where various movements, e.g. ecumenical and charismatic, meet, as do also divine guidance and human initiative, grace and faith; and similarly, where multiple phenomena and binary oppositions collapse, e.g. between art and science; and where the negativity of modernity's fundamentalism and relativism is replaced by postmodernity's ecumenism[2] and mysticism.

The foundation stone of the mystical model of postmodernism suggested above is the ecumenical movement which, as a consequence of the curtain of the temple being *"torn in two"* (Lk.23: 45) is now deconstructing the various walls and barriers between Christian church denominations in order that they may be fully one in Christ. It is Christ's presence through the Spirit that enables the playing fields to be levelled, for the 'in Christ' phrase is not symbolic, representative or substitutive but is the revelation of a new creation. Traces of the ecumenical movement can be found in Acts (19: 1 - 6) and in Paul (1Cor.1: 10 - 13), but in Christ alone the full truth is revealed. Thus every

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[1]Francois Möller, a theologian and former president of the Apostolic Faith Mission in South Africa, correctly emphasizes that the name 'pentecostalism' is misleading, as the Spirit is not central to Pentecostal experience or thought, but Christ Himself is the Pentecostal 'paradigm' (1998: 185). Aligning his belief with the Four - square Gospel, i.e. Jesus Christ is Saviour, Baptizer in the Spirit, Healer and coming King, he quotes Oral Roberts on the spiritual gifts, *"the ultimate purpose of every gift is to reveal Jesus Christ, to testify of Him and to enable believers to be more complete in Him"* (Möller 1998: 187; Rom.6: 4 - 5).

[2]Kung prefers 'ecumenism' to 'postmodernism', in the sense of a *"new global understanding of the various denominations, religions, and regions"* (1991: 3 - 4).

person has the freedom to decide to follow Christ. It seems true to say that Jesus and Paul are 'post - modernists'. They pull down strongholds of all types wherever they go (1Jn.3: 8; 2Cor.10: 4), and radically come against and overcome 'mega - narratives' (Jn.1: 29). Both postmodernists and Christians can claim, that *"the signpost marking our age is the 'post' sign"*, but in different ways (see Tilley 1995: vi).

Unity of the Spirit is mystic unity in Christ. All other unities are counterfeit. The current Holy Spirit revival is lifting believers and whole churches above their limiting denominational confines and into that perfect union in Christ.

Paul's third purpose behind his use of the 'in Christ' phrase is the empowerment of human beings to participate in life with a new vision of God which *"frees the mystical part of the mystical - political option to its own understanding of God as love"*, as Campolo expresses it, i.e. *"those who are experiencing real love are experiencing God, whether they realize it or not"* (1Jn.4: 16; 1997: 137). This is the context of the mystic experiencing God at the deepest level (1Cor.13: 12), and having an emerging consciousness that allows for the mystical and miraculous that is beyond and 'other' than the rational and scientific (Campolo 1997: 138, 130). Paul could be referring to this when he tells the Corinthians that his message is *"in demonstration of the Spirit and power"*, explaining that *"we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God"* (1Cor.2: 7). Believers are redeemed, as Paul indicates here, and also inwardly strengthened by the Holy Spirit, with Christ dwelling in their hearts through faith, that through love they may know Christ's love, and be filled with all the fullness of God (Eph.3: 16 - 19)[1]. The immense spiritual power arising mystically through corporate unity in Christ cannot be comprehended[2]. Paul writes that *"God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power"* and then he wonders if the Corinthians realise the power behind their union in Christ *"do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?"* (1Cor.6: 14 - 15).

When manifestations of the Holy Spirit occur humanity is operating on a deeper level than in normal religious rites, and mystics sense the Spirit moving in prayer,

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[1]Graef asks which of the Old Testament saints would have dared to say *"it is no longer I who live, but Yahweh lives in me"*?(1959: 119).
[2]Deissmann claims that *"the experiences of the great enthusiasts are the sources of power in the history of religion"* (1957: 80).

blessing, anointing healing, deliverance, etc. (see McGinn 1992: xix; R. Knox 1961: 250). The Holy Spirit is Christocentric in the sense that He manifests or makes effectual what Jesus does as God wills (see Fee 1993: 669). If believers in the past had a fear of the inner world, including mysticism, and therefore God judges the church by sending the Pentecostal movement, as H. Berkhof suggests, then possibly postmodernism is also being used to judge people who have a fear of the beatific vision or of experiencing 'ultimacy' (see Ellwood 1980: 187), and of having a fear of making *"contact with mystery and deeper meaning"* (Mark Macintosh 1998: preface).

So close can communion between humanity and divinity be (see Mystics Synderesis study above) that the Christian can rightly claim to be married to Christ (cf. Hos.2: 19 - 20 *"I will betroth you to me for ever"*; cf. Is.54: 5; S of S 2: 16; and especially Eph.5: 31 where Paul describes a man and his wife as becoming 'one flesh' an image he then applies to Christ and the church). Marcoulesco traces the spiritual marriage theme back into pre - Christian and gnostic religions (1987: 8: 241), and the concept is often referred to by Plotinus, Origen, Augustine, St. Bernard and later mystics (See Butler 1967: 110 - 111).

Spiritual marriage leads inevitably to deification where believers are one in God (Jn.17: 21), and *"partakers of the divine nature"* (2Pet.1: 4). In spite of both scriptural and experiential evidence, the claims of mystics, and the practice of the Orthodox church, it seems to be morally wrong for believers to claim they are 'gods'. Nevertheless deification is central to mysticism, philosophy and most religion, as Underhill shows (1967: 419 - 420), and involves no pride, but simply a mystic union with God[1]. Mystics justify this as necessary because *"God became man that we might be made God"*; and because in deification the human personality is not lost but made more real (p. 420). Paul's answer here is *"whatever you do, do all to the glory of God"* (1Cor.10: 31). In writing this Paul may recall King Herod Agrippa's untimely death *"because he did not give God the glory"* about eight years earlier when his words were acclaimed as *"the voice of a god"* (Acts 12: 22 - 23; cf. Jezebel calling herself a prophetess Rev.2: 20).

It is fair to admit that the empowerment or anointing on those in Christ

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[1]Underhill uses the phrase *"transmutation of the self"* p.420.

individually or corporately, increases as they are drawn by faith closer to Christ. The various manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit are referred to above, and are increasingly being shown on TV. religious programmes, and described in other media - radio, tapes, books etc. Prophecies show that world - wide conflicts are becoming increasingly supernatural (cf. light vs. darkness), that intellectual religion is giving way to religion of the heart and that believers are being prepared to rule with Christ and not simply under Him (see Joyner 1997: 73, 140, 197).

7.5   Summary

In summary Paul's 'in Christ' phrase may be seen as an effective catalyst between the old creation in the flesh personified by Adam, and the new in the Spirit personified by Christ. It spans the whole cycle from eternity in pre - history, through time and back to eternity. It is the focal point for all aspects of unity, and because of its link with Christology it takes precedence over all other branches of theology (except the Trinitarian) which derive from it.

Both mysticism and the 'in Christ' phrase may be defined alike and are gifts from God which are not reached by human effort. They are together in pre - history, throughout time and in eternity again. Both mysticism and the 'in Christ' phrase are Christocentric, (since the mysticism is Christian, a mystic would need to have been a Christian before becoming a mystic). In the same way that the mystical interpretation of scripture can give the fullest understanding of its meaning, so mysticism as lived in the lives of mystics can give the fullest understanding of the 'in Christ' phrase.

We conclude with the assurance that the hypothesis that Paul uses the 'in Christ' phrase principally in a mystical sense is confirmed.

7.6   Further Research

It is beyond the scope of this study to investigate the factors causing the historic decline in the early church's mysticism, enthusiasm and use of the 'in Christ' phrase. It underwent several persecutions, heresies and tests of which certain scholars claim the most challenging and influential heresy was Montanism. This arose in the second century with the purpose of delivering the church prophetically especially from

worldliness. It was soon condemned by church synods, but its far - reaching effects are perceptively described by Tillich (1968: 41): -

1. The canon is victorious against the possibility of new revelations,

2. The traditional hierarchy is confirmed against the prophetic spirit,

3. Eschatology becomes less significant,

4. A growing laxity infects the church.

A documented study on the impact of the Montanism heresy upon the early church might prove very enlightening, but possibly this has already been done.

In the light of the above findings in our study of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase and mysticism it is recommended that : -

1. The World Council of Churches be invited to propose a definition of Christian mysticism. The Word 'Mysticism' first occurs in 1736 (SOED 2: 1381).

2. A study be made of Paul's 'in Christ' phrase as documented throughout church history (cf. Dunn 1977; Comblin 1989).

3. A comparative study be made of the theologies of the Eastern Orthodox church and the Pentecostal church, both of which churches claim to live according to the practices and teachings of the early church.

4. An attempt be made to reconcile mystical and Eastern Orthodox theology with dogmatic theology. Louth wonders how they ever separated (1981: intro; cf. Moltmann 1980: 51).

5. Although church revivals begin and end throughout history, the 1901 Azuza Street Los Angeles revival continues to spread throughout the world. Can this event be accepted as the 'renaissance' of the church?

6. Enquiries be initiated into the neuro - scientific study of the brain's 'God Module' (D. Trull 1997), proof of which could have significant theological and therapeutic consequences.

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