The New Testament Concept

of

Union with Christ

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Introduction: Union with Christ in the New Testament.

One of the most remarkable facts of theological discussion over the last hundred years has been the emergence of the importance of the concept of union with Christ in the New Testament. Deissmann's famous publication [1] in 1892 marked the start of a new era in New Testament scholarship; up to that time the idea of union with Christ had received very little attention - it is almost incredible to see how such a scholar as James Denney could so largely ignore it, in the light of all the wealth of insight it has provided in the last seventy or so years.

And this scholarship is no longer confined to the Protestant Church, for the publication of "Die Christusmystik des Apostels Paulus" by Alfred Wikenhauser marks, to use his own words, "the first study of St. Paul's mysticism to appear from a Catholic source". This book [2] is a careful and extremely helpful consideration of the basic position of St. Paul.

This shifting of the centre from systematic theology as such to a consideration of the relationship between Christ and the believer

(1) "Die Neutestamentlich Formel 'in Christo Jesu'".
(2) Alfred Wikenhauser, "Pauline Mysticism", published in English in 1960. Quotation from p.9.

in the New Testament cannot be other than welcome. If we consider the change it will make to our approach to Pauline thought alone, we shall see the benefits. For if we regard the concept of union with Christ as central to Paul's thought, we have at least three worthwhile gains: they are the following.

First, we have an explanation of the way in which he was able to evangelize, and make his theology readily intelligible to his hearers, not all of whom shared his own background and upbringing. The field of personal relationships is one which is common to every human being, and thus one on which Paul could very well meet all those to whom he wrote, and whom he evangelised. In addition, the missionary situation, with its urgency and short stops here and there, seems to demand an insistence on the start of a new life, and the personal experience of a living relationship with Christ as the starting point and only sure guarantee of perseverance. It is doubtful if a theology based merely on orthodox statements of creed would have met the need of the new Christian in a pagan and hostile environment.

Secondly, this would deliver Paul from a great deal of misrepresentation, and put him in a better light than it often allowed him, for it can deliver his theology from a dead mechanical

touch, and from the charge of antinomianism or hyper-Calvinism.[1] If we regard his theology as the outworking of a conviction regarding the relation of the Christian to his Lord, and accept that he "was interested in speculation, not at all for its own sake, but only for its help in making explicit the meaning of Jesus' Lordship",[2] we can then understand apparent contradictions in his thought. For example, the "ransom theory" of the atonement is seen to be the logical development of a deeply valid experience, but is also seen to be foreign to the blazing genius of Paul's thought - and quite unnecessary to his basic position.

Thirdly, this would help to solve, once and for all, the problem of the relationship of theology and ethics, of faith and works, in Paul and the entire New Testament. There is n o other answer, as Paul himself recognised when faced with the challenge "shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?"[3] He could not answer that question, except by pointing out that it was simply unreal for the Christian. The dynamic and coherence of Paul's ethical teaching will be most clearly realised and understood when it is accepted that it is based on a deep understanding of the reality and significance of the union of the believer with Christ.

However, this thesis is not concerned only with Paul's idea of

(1) Cf. H.R. McIntosh, "The Christian Experience of Forgiveness", p. 129. (Fontana Edition)
(2) J.S. Stewart, "A Man in Christ", p.23.
(3) Romans 6; 1.

union with Christ. The concept comes up time and again, particularly in the writings ascribed to John; this alone should make us cautious about ascribing the entire conception to the genius of Paul, apart from certain questions we have to face even in the Pauline corpus.

For example, we do not find what we should normally expect from such a mind as Paul's, namely, a development of the theme. In one of the earliest of his epistles, Galatians, we have a profound use of the idea in 2;20, "nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me..." This contains the depths later exposed in Romans 6 and 7, at least so far as personal experience was concerned. The words of II Corinthians 5; 17 "if any man is in Christ, there is a new creation" are a further illustration. We may argue that there was development in the idea of the corporate relationship of the Church and Christ, but even that is in I Corinthians 12; 12 ff. This might suggest that there was a "given", a certain common strand of early Christian teaching, on which Paul built his theology, and this possibility is one we must examine.

The method to be adopted is fairly straightforward: if we are to attempt to find out where the concept originated, obviously our study must include the Judaistic and Hellenistic backgrounds to the

New Testament. We must ask of Judaism the following questions: is there in the Old Testament such personal union with God as could lead to the 'in Christ' idea? Is there in contemporary Jewish religious experience (a happier phrase than 'theology') such a mysticism as might have formed the starting point for the New Testament transformation of the idea? Are the New Testament concepts basically Jewish or Greek? And in turn we must ask of Hellenism such questions as: do we find any such connection of 'mysticism' with strong ethical inspiration? Does the New Testament "take over" the ideas behind the Greek language it employs, or does it use that language as a vehicle for basically non-Greek thought?

We must also study closely the concept of union with Christ in the New Testament, looking at passages and texts where it is mentioned and explained, and at words and phrases that are used to convey the meaning of the writers. One of the great difficulties about such work is that it has inevitably to be done all over again by each newcomer to the scene, as one's own presuppositions have a habit of influencing the conclusions drawn. While this study will be mostly in the epistles, we must not neglect any witness the Synoptic Gospels have to offer, particularly if we find ourselves without any adequate source elsewhere.

There is always a temptation to keep New Testament scholarship at a distance from the world of men; and yet J.S. Stewart could say "for one who seeks to interpret the vital religion of Paul (a religion, it should never be forgotten, hammered out in the turmoil of the mission field), the daily pressure of the demands of the active ministry may not be altogether a disadvantage".(1) There is current at the moment a real "shaking of the foundations", with a tendency away from the "personalization" of God. In such a time as ours, can union with Christ be a valid experience, and can the preaching of this be intellectually honest in a day of scientific advance? Can it stand as a corrective for modern theology, or take its place in that theology as the basis and sine-qua-non of Christian experience?

It appears to offer help in giving relief from the fearful dilemma of a rigid and dead orthodoxy on the one hand, and of a loose liberal view which lacks the dynamic of the New Testament on the other, just as in New Testament days it reconciled the heights of the new experience with the demand for a life of ethical quality and beauty and the enablement to live that life. Thus we will come, at the end of our study, to an attempt to put the New Testament concept of union with Christ alongside the essential message of the "new theology"; whether that will result in

(1) "A Man in Christ", p.viii.

justification of the modern thinkers or in a reprimand from "the faith once delivered unto the saints" [1] must depend on the outcome of our study.

(1) Jude 3.

The New Testament Witness to the concept of Union with Christ.

Although it may seem a long section to devote to New Testament quotations, it will be of the greatest assistance to have in one central place all the passages and texts to which we shall need to refer in the course of our study. All quotations are from the New English Bible translation of the New Testament; first we quote passages, and then more or less isolated texts. The extended passages are surprisingly infrequent, till we remember that this theme is an undercurrent throughout much of the New Testament; and while these passages are most helpful for the exposition of the theme, we shall perhaps catch the mood and feeling of the early Church better from our later consideration of phrases and words which are used in this connection.

Passages in the Johannine writings:

"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me shall never be hungry, and whoever believes in me shall never be thirsty ... I am the bread of life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert and they are dead. I am speaking of the bread that comes down from

heaven, which a man may eat, and never die. I am that living bread which has come down from heaven; if anyone eats this bread he shall live for ever. Moreover, the bread which I will give is my own flesh; I give it for the life of the world.

"In truth, in very truth I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood you can have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood possesses eternal life, and I will raise him upon the last day. My flesh is real food; my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood dwells continually in me and I dwell in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me shall live because of me. This is the bread which came down from heaven; and it is not like the bread which our fathers ate; they are dead, but whoever eats this bread shall live for ever".(1)

"I am the real vine, and my Father is the gardener. Every barren branch of mine he cuts away; and every fruiting branch he cleans, to make it more fruitful still. You have already been cleansed by the word I spoke to you. Dwell in me, as I in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself, but only if it remains united with the vine; no more can you bear fruit, unless you remain united with me.

(1) St. John, chapter 6.

"I am the vine, and you the branches. He who dwells in me, as I dwell in him, bears much fruit; for apart from me you can do nothing. He who does not dwell in me is thrown away like a withered branch. The withered branches are heaped together, thrown on the fire, and burnt.

"If you dwell in me, and my words dwell in you, ask what you will, and you shall have it. This is my Father's glory, that you may bear fruit in plenty and so be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Dwell in my love. If you heed my commandments, you will dwell in my love, as I have heeded my Father's commands and dwell in his love". (1)

Passages in the Pauline writings:

The question of the authorship of the epistles traditionally ascribed to Paul is a vexed one. But for our present purpose, which is simply to list the references to union with Christ through the New Testament, it is not particularly relevant; and for the sake of convenience, "Pauline writings" are taken to include all the epistles traditionally connected with the apostle.

"What are we to say, then? Shall we persist in sin, so that there may be all the more grace? No, no! We died to sin; how

(1) St. John, chapter 15.

can we live in it any longer? Have you forgotten that when we were baptized into union with Christ Jesus we were baptised into his death? By baptism we were buried with him, and lay dead, in order that, as Christ was raised from the dead in the splendour of the Father, so also we might set our feet upon the new path of life.

"For if we have become incorporate with him in a death like his, we shall also be one with him in a resurrection like his. We know that the man we once were has been crucified with Christ, for the desctruction of the sinful self, so that we may no longer be the slaves of sin, since a dead man is no longer answerable for his sin. But if we thus died with Christ, we believe that we shall also come to life with him. We know that Christ, once raised from the dead, is never to die again; he is no longer under the domination of death. For in dying as he died, he died to sin, once for all, and in living as he lives, he lives to God. In the same way you must regard yourselves as dead to sin and alive to God, in union with Christ Jesus." (1)

"Do you not know that your bodies are limbs and organs of Christ? Shall I then take from Christ his bodily parts and make them over to a harlot? Never! You surely know that anyone who links himself with a harlot becomes physically one with her (for Scripture says, 'the pair shall become one flesh'); but he who

(1) Romans 6; 1-11.

links himself with Christ is one with him, spiritually. Shun fornication. Every other sin that a man can commit is outside the body; but the fornicator sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a shrine of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and the Spirit is God's gift to you? You do not belong to yourselves; you were bought at a price. Then honour God in your body." (1)

"You cannot be unaware, my friends - I am speaking to those who have some knowledge of the law - that a person is subject to the law so long as he is alive and no longer. For example, a married woman is by law bound to her husband while he lives; but if her husband dies, she is discharged from the obligations of the marriage-law. If therefore, in her husband's lifetime she consorts with another man, she will incur the charge of adultery; but if her husband dies she is free of the law, and she does not commit adultery by consorting with another man. So you, my friends, have died to the law by becoming identified with the body of Christ, and accordingly you have found another husband in him who rose from the dead, so that we may bear fruit for God. While we lived on the level of our lower nature, the sinful passions evoked by the law worked in our bodies, to bear fruit for death. But now, having died to that which held us bound, we are discharged from the law,

(1) I Corinthians 6; 15-20.

to serve God in a new way, the way of the Spirit, in contrast to the old way, the way of a written code." (1)

"We are not better than pots of earthenware to contain this treasure, and this proves that such transcendent power does not come from us, but is God's alone. Hard-pressed on every side, we are never hemmed in; bewildered, we are never at our wit's end; hunted, are never abandoned to our fate; struck down, we are not left to die. Wherever we go we carry death with us in our body, the death that Jesus died, that in this body also life may reveal itself, the life that Jesus lives. For continually, while still alive, we are being surrendered into the hands of death, for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be revealed in this mortal body of ours. Thus death is at work in us, and life in you". (2)

"And so, to keep me from being unduly elated by the magnificence of such revelations, I was given a sharp pain in my body which came as Satan's messenger to bruise me; this was to save me from being unduly elated. Three times I begged the Lord to rid me of it, but his answer was: 'My grace is all you need; power comes to its full strength in weakness'. I shall therefore prefer to find my joy and pride in the very things that are my weakness; and then

(1) Romans 7; 1-6.
(2) II Corinthians 4; 7-12.

the power of Christ will come and rest upon me. Hence I am well content, for Christ's sake, with weakness, contempt, persecution, hardship, and frustration; for when I am weak, then I am strong". (1)

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has bestowed on us in Christ every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms. In Christ he chose us before the world was founded, to be dedicated, to be without blemish in his sight, to be full of love; and he destined us - such was his will and pleasure - to be accepted as his sons through Jesus Christ, that the glory of his gracious gift, so graciously bestowed on us in his Beloved, might redound to his praise. For in Christ our release is secured and our sins are forgiven through the shedding of his blood. Therein lies the richness of God's free grace lavished upon us, imparting full wisdom and insight. He has made known to us his hidden purpose - such was his will and pleasure determined beforehand in Christ - to be put into effect when the time was ripe; namely, that the universe, all in heaven and on earth, might be brought into a unity in Christ.

"In Christ indeed we have been given our share in the heritage, as was decreed in his design whose purpose is everywhere at work. For it was his will that we, who were the first to set our hope on

(1) II Corinthians 12; 7-10.

Christ, should cause his glory to be praised. And you too, when you had heard the message of the truth, the good news of your salvation, and had believed it, became incorporate in Christ and received the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; and that Spirit is the pledge that we shall enter upon our heritage, when God has redeemed what is his own, to his praise and glory". (1)

"I kneel in prayer to the Father ... that out of the treasure of his glory he may grant you strength and power through his Spirit in your inner being, that xkow through faith Christ may dwell in your hearts in love. With deep roots and firm foundations, may you be strong to grasp, with all God's people, what is the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ, and to know it, though it is beyond knowledge. So you may attain to fullness of being, the fullness of God himself.

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or conceive, by the power which is at work among us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus from generation to generation evermore! Amen." (2)

"Wives, be subject to your husbands as to the Lord; for the man is the head of the woman, just as Christ also is the head of the church. Christ is, indeed, the Saviour of the body; but just

(1) Ephesians X 1; 3-14.
(2) Ephesians 3; 15-21.

as the church is subject to Christ, so must women be to their husbands in everything.

"Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the church and gave himself up for it, to consecrate it, cleansing it by water and word, so that he might present the church to himself all glorious, with no stain or wrinkle or anything of the sort, but holy and without blemish. In the same way men also are bound to love their wives, as they love their own bodies. In loving his wife a man loves himself. For no one ever hated his own body; on the contrary, he provides and cares for it; and that is how Christ treats the church, because it is his body, of which we are living parts. Thus it is that (in the words of Scripture) 'A man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become a single body'. It is a great truth that is hidden here. I for my part refer it to Christ and to the church, but it also applies individually; each of you must love his wife as his very self; and the woman must see to it that she pays her husband all respect". (1)

"I count everything sheer loss, because all is far outweighed by the gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I did in fact lose everything. I count it so much garbage, for the sake of gaining Christ and finding myself incorporate in him, with no

(1) Ephesians 5; 22-33.

righteousness of my own, no legal rectitude, but the righteousness which comes from faith in Christ, given by God in response to faith. All I care for is to know Christ, to experience the power of his resurrection, and to share in his sufferings, in growing conformity with his death, if only I may finally arrive at the resurrection from the dead.

"It is not to be thought that I have already achieved all this. I have not yet reached perfection, but I press on, hoping to take hold of that for which Christ once took hold of me. My friends, I do not reckon myself to have got hold of it yet. All I can say is this: forgetting what is behind me, and reaching out for that which lies ahead, I press towards the goal to win the prize which is God's call to the life above, in Christ Jesus". (1)

(1) Philippians 3; 8-14.

Texts in the Johannine writings:

The Gospel has very few such references, apart from the passages already mentioned: we may note the following:
"Out of his full store we have all received grace upon grace", 1;16.
"I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep and my sheep know me - as the Father knows me and I know the Father - and I lay down my life for the sheep", 10; 14-15.

The Epistles have, in view of their shorter length, many more references:
"What we have seen and heard we declare to you, so that you and we together may share in a common life, that life which we share with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ", I John 1;3.

"You must therefore keep in your hearts that which you heard at the beginning; if what you heard then still dwells in you, you will yourselves dwell in the Son and also in the Father", I John 2;24.

"When we keep his commands we dwell in him and he dwells in us. And this is how we can make sure that he dwells within us; we know it from the Spirit he has given us", I John 3;24.

"If God thus loved us, dear friends, we in turn are bound to love

one another. Though God has never been seen by any man, God himself dwells in us if we love one another; his love is brought to perfection within us", I John 4;12.

"We attest ... that if a man acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him and he dwells in God. Thus we have come to know and believe the love which God has for us. God is love; he who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him", I John 4;16.

"He who possesses the Son has life indeed; he who does not possess the Son of God has not that life", I John 5;12.

" ... for the sake of the truth that dwells among us and will be with us for ever", II John 2.

Texts in the Pauline writings:

Romans:

"You are on the spiritual level, if only God's Spirit dwells within you; and if a man does not possess the Spirit of Christ, he is no Christian. But if Christ is dwelling in you, then although the body is a dead thing because you sinned, yet the spirit is life

itself because you have been justified. Moreover, if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells within you, then the God who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give new life to your mortal bodies through his indwelling Spirit", 8; 9-11.

"For I am convinced that there is nothing in death or life ... nothing in all creation that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord", 8; 38-39.

"Overwhelming victory is ours through him who loved us", 8; 37.

<u>I Corinthians:</u>

"I thank (God) for his grace given to you in Christ Jesus. I thank him for all the enrichment that has come to you in Christ", 1; 4-5.

"You are in Christ Jesus by God's act, for God has made him our wisdom; he is our righteousness; in him we are consecrated and set free", 1; 30.

"Surely you know that you are God's temple, where the Spirit of God dwells?" 3; 16.

"Form your own judgment on what I say. When we bless the cup of

blessing, is it not a means of sharing in the blood of Christ? When we break the bread, is it not a means of sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, many as we are, are one body; for it is one loaf of which we all partake", 10; 15-17.

"For Christ is like a single body with its many limbs and organs, which, many as they are, together make up a single body. For indeed we were all brought into one body by baptism, in the one Spirit, whether we are Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free men, and that one Holy Spirit was poured out for all of us to drink", 12; 12-13.

" ... by God's grace I am what I am, nor has his grace been given to me in vain; on the contrary, in my labours I have outdone them all - not I, indeed, but the grace of God working with me", 15; 10.

<u>II Corinthinns</u>:

"As Christ's cup of suffering overflows, and we suffer with him, so also through Christ our consolation overflows", 1; 5.

"And if you and we belong to Christ, guaranteed as his and anointed, it is all God's doing; it is God who has set his seal upon us, and as a pledge of what is to come has given the Spirit to dwell in our hearts", 1; 21-22.

"When anyone is united to Christ, there is a new world; the old order is gone, and a new order has already begun", 5; 17.

"Put yourselves to the test. Surely you recognize that Jesus Christ is among you? - unless of course you prove unequal to the test", 13; 5.

Galatians:

"But then in his good pleasure God, who had set me apart from birth and called me through his grace, chose to reveal his Son to me and through me (Greek, ἐν), in order that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles", 1; 16.

"I have been crucified with Christ; the life I now live is not my life, but the life which Christ lives in me; and my present bodily life is lived by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and sacrificed himself for me", 2; 20.

"For through faith you are all sons of God in union with Christ Jesus. Baptized into union with him, you have all put on Christ as a garment. There is no such thing as Jew and Greek, slave and freeman, male and female; for you are all one person in Christ Jesus", 3; 28.

"For my children you are, and I am in travail with you over again until you take the shape of Christ", 4; 19.

"For if we are in union with Christ Jesus circumcision makes no difference at all, nor does the want of it; the only thing that counts is faith active in love", 5; 6.

"In future let no one make trouble for me; for I bear the marks of Jesus branded on my body", 6; 17.

Ephesians:

"But God, rich in mercy, for the great love he bore us, brought us to life with Christ even when we were dead in our sins; it is by his grace you are saved. And in union with Christ Jesus he raised us up and enthroned us with him in the heavenly realms, so that he might display in the ages to come how immense are the resources of his grace, and how great his kindness to us in Christ Jesus", 2; 4-8.

"You are built upon the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets, and Christ Jesus himself is the foundation-stone. In him the whole building is bonded together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you too are being built with all the rest into a spiritual dwelling for God", 2; 20-22.

"No, let us speak the truth in love; so shall we fully grow up into Christ. He is the head, and on him the whole body depends. Bonded and knit together by every constituent joint, the whole frame grows through the due activity of each part, and builds itself up in love", 4; 15-16.

"Finally, then, find your strength in the Lord, in his mighty power", 6; 10.

Philippians:

"For to me to live is Christ, and death gain; but what if my living on in the body may serve some good purpose? Which then am I to choose? I cannot tell. I am torn two ways: what I should like is to depart and be with Christ; that is better by far", 1; 21-22.

"You have been granted the privilege not only of believing in Christ but also of suffering for him. You and I are engaged in the same contest; you saw me in it once, and, as you hear, I am in it still. If then our common life in Christ yields anything to stir the heart ... fill up my cup of happiness", 1; 29- 2; 2.

"Let your bearing towards one another arise out of your life in

Christ Jesus", 2; 5.

"You must work out your own salvation in fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you, inspiring both the will and the deed, for his own chosen purpose", 2; 12-13.

"I have strength for anything through him who gives me power", 4; 13.

"And my God will supply all your wants out of the magnificence of his riches in Christ Jesus", 4; 19.

Colossians:

"This (suffering) is my way of helping to complete, in my poor human flesh, the full tale of Christ's afflictions still to be endured, for the sake of his body which is the Church", 1; 24.

"The secret is this: Christ in you, the hope of a glory to come", 1; 27.

"Therefore, since Jesus was delivered to you as Christ and Lord, live your lives in union with him. Be rooted in him; be built in him; be consolidated in the faith you were taught; let your hearts overflow with thankfulness", 2; 6-7.

"For it is in Christ that the complete being of the Godhead dwells embodied, and in him you have been brought to completion", 2; 9-10.

"For in baptism you were buried with him, in baptism also you were raised to life with him through your faith in the active power of God who raised him from the dead. And although you were dead because of your sins and because you were morally uncircumcised, he has made you alive with Christ", 2; 12-13.

"It is from the Head that the whole body, with all its joints and ligaments, receives its supplies, and thus knit together grows according to God's design", 2; 19.

"Were you not raised to life with Christ? Then aspire to the realm above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God, and let your thoughts dwell on that higher realm, not on this earthly life. I repeat, you died; and now your life lies hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is manifested, then you too will be manifested with him in glory", 3; 1-4.

"There is no question here of Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, freeman, slave; but Christ is all, and is in all", 3; 11.

I and II Thessalonians:

"We believe that Jesus died and rose again; and so it will be for those who died as Christians; God will bring them to life with Jesus", ~~II~~ I, 4; 14.

"We pray ... 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", II, 1; 12.

"It was for this that he called you through the gospel we brought, so that you might possess for your own the splendour of our Lord Jesus Christ", II, 2; 14.

The Pastoral Epistles:

"Now therefore, my son, take strength from the grace of God which is ours in Christ Jesus", I Timothy 2; 1.

"If we died with him, we shall live with him; if we endure, we shall reign with him. If we deny him, he will deny us. If we are faithless, he keeps faith, for he cannot deny himself", II Timothy 2; 11-13.

"I know who it is in whom I have trusted", II Timothy 1; 12.

Philemon:

"My prayer is that your fellowship with us in our common faith may deepen the understanding of all the blessings that our union with Christ brings us", v. 6.

"Now, brother, as a Christian, be generous with me, and relieve my anxiety; we are both in Christ!" v. 20.

The Epistles of Peter:

"You have not seen him, yet you love him; and trusting in him now without seeing him...", I, 1; 8.

"Through him you have come to trust in God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, and so your faith and hope are fixed on God", I, 1; 12.

"Surely you have tasted that the Lord is good", I, 2; 3.

"Christ suffered on your behalf, and thereby left you an example; it is for you to follow in his steps", I, 2; 21.

"It gives you a share in Christ's sufferings, and that is cause for joy", I, 4; 13.

"The God of all grace, who called you into his eternal glory in Christ", I, 5; 10.

" ... enabling us to know the One who called us by his own splendour and might", II, 1; 3.

" ... you come to share in the very being of God", II, 1; 4.

"These are gifts which, if you possess and foster them, will keep you from being either useless or barren in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ", II, 1; 8.

"They had once escaped the world's defilements through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ", II, 2; 20.

"Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ", II, 3; 18.

Words and phrases:

We come now to consider words and phrases which are used for the idea of union with Christ in the New Testament. They are of even greater significance for our study that the set passages, for they reveal much more of the unconscious way in which the writers used the idea as a background to so much of their writings. The full meaning and significance of the phrases will not concern us at the moment; we shall simply note those which are used to describe the concept of union with Christ.

We have already [1] referred to Deissmann's work as the breakthrough in New Testament studies. His work was concerned with the "in Christ" phrase so common to St. Paul, and we begin with this phrase. A list of all the occurrences of the preposition with Christ, Lord etc., is given in an appendix [2], and we now seek for definite conclusions based on that list. Although this has often been done, it is essential for each new student of this pregnant phrase to go back to the originals, and to beware of the temptation of building on another's foundation.

Deissmann counted 164 occurrences in the Pauline writings; the list in the appendix contains 161, and the balance could be accounted for by the failings in Schmoller's concordance to the

(1) Above, p. 1.
(2) Appendix I.

Nestle New Testament (two such were noticed and included in the list in the appendix). Where Deissmann allowed enthusiasm to run away with scholarship was in insisting that each occurrence had a 'mystical' significance; this extreme position proved untenable, but the impact his study made has shown us how important the phrase is - not only in its so-called 'mystical' uses, but even more in the normal uses it has through the New Testament.

Wikenhauser is extremely helpful in his analysis of the uses of the phrase (1), and gives useful summaries of the theological battles which have centred around it. But inevitably the division which he suggests is not everyone' shoice, and a personal classification of the different uses is given below, with a broad division into mystical and non-mystical references.

<u>Nonmystical references:</u> there are two sub-divisions of this group.

First, the group which contains those instances where Paul was obviously influenced by the language and thought of the Septuagint, and does not appear to have put any personal significance into the words. We can see this in I Corinthians 1; 31, on "boasting in the Lord", and II Corinthians 10; 17.

(1) Pauline Mysticism, pp.23ff.

The second group is that in which the phrase is used to suggest that Christ is the agent through whom or by whom something is done. Wikenhauser's translator uses the word "vehicle" for this idea.(1) We find it in texts like II Corinthians 5; 19, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself", and Colossians 1; 16, "in him everything in heaven and on earth was created". Wikenhauser suggests that Paul used ἐν for διά in these instances to indicate that "Christ is the abode of God's gracious presence"(2). A much simpler explanation would be that ἐν has regularly the meaning of διά, as evidenced in Moulton and Milligan(3), and the phrase in I Corinthians 7; 14, where we are told "the heathen husband now belongs to God through (ἐν) his Christian wife". If Paul was in the habit of using "in Christ" widely, then this meaning could very easily creep into his language.

<u>Mystical references</u>: these are notoriously hard to define, but we shall leave over the definition of mysticism till we come to deal with the meaning of union with Christ in Paul. The following classification of the bulk of the uses of ἐν Χριστῷ may prove helpful:

(a) Theological uses: examples could be Galatians 2; 7, "seeking to be justified in Christ", or II Corinthians 5; 21, "God made him

(1) Pauline Mysticism, p. 24.
(2) Ibid., p. 25.
(3) Vocabulary of the New Testament, p. 210.

one with the sinfulness of man, so that in him we might be made one with the goodness of God himself". There are many such uses when Paul is concerned with the problem of some weighty matter of doctrine.

(b) Practical uses: as when Paul speaks in Philippians 4; 13 of his equipment for all that life may bring, "I have strength for anything through him who gives me power". This also means joy (Philippians 4; 10, "It is a great joy to me, in the Lord, that your care has blossomed again"), courage (Philemon v. 8, "I might make bold in Christ Jesus to point out your duty"), and confidence (Galatians 5; 10, "United with you in the Lord, I am confident that you will not take the wrong view").

(c) Personal mysticism: this comes out in a considerable number of references to life in Christ, such as II Corinthians 5; 17, "When anyone is united to Christ, there is a new world", and Colossians 1; 28, "So as to present each one of you as a mature member of Christ's body".

(d) Incidental uses: there is no other convenient word with which to describe the uses which abound in Romans chapters 14 to 16. Examples are the following (the A.V. translation is given first,

followed by the N.E.B. version): "In Christ before me (they were Christians before I was)"; (1) "approved in the Lord (well proved in Christ's service)"; (2) "eminent in the Lord (an outstanding follower of the Lord)"; (3) and so on.

From these various verses, none of them of vital theological value, and some even showing the 'technical' use of "in Christ", we can grasp something of the way in which Paul's mind used the concept. It was not only a tremendous theological weapon, as in Romans 6; nor was it only the language to deal with the vital experience of the Christian when it was attacked, as in Romans 6 and 7. It was also the word used to describe any Christian person, and any stage of Christian maturity; for the Christian could never be anything apart from Christ.

Nikenhauser, following Deissmann and others, sums up: "This survey is sufficient to demonstrate the variety with which Paul uses the phrase "in Christ". In spite of their xix diversity these texts all agree that Christ is the vital principle of the Christian. His new life depends on this mystical union with him. We would be justified in using the analogy of a fish whose vital element is water, and which can live only in water. In the same way the Christian lives in Christ, draws all vital power from him, and indeed is a Christian only as long as he lives in this union

(1) Romans 16; 7.
(2) Romans 16; 10.
(3) Romans 16; 13.

with Christ".[1]

The second phrase is in a real sense the corollary of "in Christ", and is "Christ in us". This is surprisingly rare in Paul, occurring only once for every fifteen or so times that "in Christ" appears. But we find in it some of the deepest expressions of the union of Christ and the Christian, and one of the most puzzling verses in the New Testament. For the depth of it, we can look at Galatians 2; 20, "I have been crucified with Christ; the life I now live is not my life, but the life which Christ lives in me; and my present bodily life is lived by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and sacrificed himself for me". We find equally close thought in Ephesians 3; 16-20, ".. that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith", and so on. In Galatians 4; 19 we have Paul's prayer for the church, that Christ "may be formed" among, or in, them. And in Colossians 1; 27, we have the Christian evangelists' aim as to present their converts "mature members of Christ" by helping them to grasp the heart of the Christian mystery, which is "Christ in you".

The puzzling verse in in Galatians 1; 16, "God ... chose to reveal his Son to me and through me"; now while we cannot argue that ἐν cannot have the double meaning of "to" and "through", it

does seem strange that this word should be used. It may well be that in the verse, when Paul's mind was reverting to his conversion experience on the Damascus road, he looked back to the start of the glorious concept of union with Christ, and that in some strange way which we may sense but cannot understand nor explain, this unusual expression conveys what it meant to him.

Our third discussion must be of the genitives which Paul uses, "of Christ". In dealing with these, Nikenhauser quotes Deissmann, Reitzenstein and Schmitz in his support, and von Dobschutz to represent the other side. This is very clearly a case where both sides are correct - we cannot say categorically that the genitive always, or never, carries any mystical sense. But we can look at some of the uses of the simple genitive and see that there are mystical overtones; three of these uses are studied in detail:(1)

(a) "The love of Christ": the best known expression of this is in II Corinthians 5; 14, "the love of Christ leaves us no choice". This can hardly be objective, for, as is pointed out,(2) the proposition εἰς is used by Paul when the love is towards a person.(3) While we may not feel that this is a purely subjective genitive, we allow for the mystical content of the phrase, to which the context bears its own witness.

(1) Pauline Mysticism, pp. 33ff.
(2) Ibid., p. 35.
(3) e.g., in Colossians 1; 4, "the love you bear towards all God's people".

A clearer usage is in the prayer of Ephesians 3; 14-19, where Paul speaks of his earnest desire that the church may "know the love of Christ". The N.E.B. translation simply follows the A.V. "know". And the use of that word reminds us of the Old Testament connotation, which appears to be present in Philippians 3; 10, "that I may know Christ", and signifies the closest possible intimacy. The knowledge of husband and wife is obviously a mutual knowledge, and in such a relationship any subject/object distinction becomes quite meaningless. Thus we must beware of an easy dismissal of the genitives as "subjective" or "objective", and remember the dictum of Charles Simeon: "I can say in words ... that the truth is not in the middle, and not in one extreme, but in both extremes".(1)

(b) "The patience of Christ": this we find in II Thessalonians 3; 5, "may the Lord direct your hearts towards God's love and the steadfastness of Christ". Here,"the meaning is ... that Paul desires for his readers the patience which must be in them because Christ abides and works in them (= 'Christ-patience')."(2)

(c) "The faith of Christ": this phrase, with all the ambiguity connected with it, occurs in Galatians 2; 20, already quoted. We can take it to mean "the faithfulness of Christ", as being the

(1) Charles Simeon: by H.C.G. Moule. P. 77.
(2) Pauline Mysticism, Wikenhauser, p. 37.

dependability of the Saviour in the heart, which is certainly valid in the text, or as "faith in Christ" which is also valid as being that which links us with the faithfulness of Christ. The same problem faces us in Ephesians 3; 12, "in him we have access to God with freedom, in the confidence born of trust in him", where the N.E.B. translators, by generous paraphrasing, have tried to obtain the best of both translations. We shall later have cause to examine Paul's concept of faith, and shall then be in a better position to understand this point; but certainly, any distinction between subject and object will lose something of the nature of union with Christ.

The fourth phrase is "with Christ". Practically all modern scholars (1) follow C.H. Dodd in his assertion "that Paul consistently uses 'with Christ' of the future state of Christians, as distinct from their present state 'in Christ'". (2) But an examination of the facts will demonstrate that while there is truth in the statement, there is at least as much evidence to show that "with Christ" is still a valid statement of the status of Christians on this side of the grave, and that Dr Dodd's conclusion, popular though it may be, rests on quite inadequate premises.

There are two main prepositions: the first is μετά, which is

(1) e.g., J.K.S. Reid, "Our Life in Christ", p. 15.
(2) C.H.Dodd, "Romans" (Moffatt N.T. Commentary), p. 89.
Fontant edition, p. 109.

used quite freely of the normal association of Christians with each other, or of attendant circumstances. For example, in Paul, it is used especially of the blessing, as in Romans 15; 33, "The God of peace be with you all", or in Philippians 4; 9, "The God of peace will be with you". And in the Acts and the Gospels, it is used in the normal, everyday sense. There is no significant usage of this preposition with Christ, to denote either present or future state of the Christian. This is left to the second preposition, which is συν .

This is used in the famous (and possibly much over-stressed) text of Philippians 1; 23, "what I should like is to depart and be with Christ; that is better by far". This is so well known that it is quite probably that it has coloured the associations of the preposition too much. The texts in which this proposition is used in connection with the future state of Christians are the following: (in addition to Philippians 1; 23)

(a) "Then we who are left alive shall join them, caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thus we shall always be with the Lord", I Thessalonians 4; 17.

(b) "He died for us so that we, awake or asleep, might live in company with him", I Thessalonians 5; 10. This text could also be applied to the present state of Christians - which is precisely the

point of the argument.

On the other side, the following uses of συν speak mainly of the present state of Christians:

(a) "If we thus died with Christ, we believe that we shall also come to life with him", Romans 6; 8.

(b) "He which establishes us with you in Christ ... is God", II Corinthians 1; 21.

(c) "We who share his weakness shall by the power of God live with him in your service", II Corinthians 13; 4.

(d) "You were raised to life with him ...", Colossians 2; 13.

(e) "Did you not die with Christ ...?" Colossians 2; 20.

(f) "Now your life lies hidden with Christ in God", Colossians 3; 3.

There is of course no case for trying to argue that "with Christ" is always an expression of the present state of Christians. But it is clear, from these uses, that this is still a normal description of the Christian's present standing. Despite his earlier statement (1), J.K.S. Reid is able to say: "It is tempting to think of the terms 'in Christ' and 'with Christ' as referring respectively to the two stages and as characteristic and so illuminative of them and of the difference between them. But the terminology of St Paul does not allow of such strict

(1) Our Life in Christ, p. 15.

differentiation".[1] It will be of interest, when we come to look at "with Christ" in the gospels, to realise that this phrase is still used as a description of Christians, and that it has by no means been entirely superseded by an eschatological meaning.

In addition to the prepositions, there are many compound verbs; for example, the Ephesian parallel to Colossians 2; 13 uses such a verb, in Ephesians 2; 4, "God ... brought us to life with Christ". These verbs normally speak of some act of God which has present significance for Christians - such as "being crucified with Christ" in Galatians 2; 20 and Romans 6; 6.

So then we must take "with Christ" into our view as well as the more widely used phrases which we have studied. Each has something to contribute to the overall picture we form.

(1) Our Life in Christ, p. 135.

Apart from the Pauline corpus and the Johannine writings, there is little emphasis on union with Christ as such in our New Testament, at least to this extent, that there is little point in trying to list typical phrases in any way comparable to Paul's "in Christ".

The book of Acts has little dealing with our theme; for example, the following are the occurrences of the normal words describing such union as we are discussing:

(a) Believe (intransitive), 11 times.

(b) Believe on him, 4 times.

(c) Believe that ... , twice.

(d) Believers, 4 times.

(e) Saved, 5 times.

We must add the Christological statement, and description of the disciples, of Acts 4; 12-13, "There is salvation in no one else ... they recognised that they had been with Jesus".

The Christians are so called twice, and are referred to as disciples 5 times, and very often as brethren (approximately 50 times). This last rather describes their relation to each other than to Christ, although the distinction cannot be forced.

When we come to look at the Johannine writings we find a good deal which is reminiscent of Pauline usage, along with some phrases that remind us of the Synoptic gospels, such as "following Christ". But there is an undeniable "shading-off" into theological interpretation, as in such passages as the Bread of Life in chapter 6, and the Vine and the Branches in Chapter 15. The idea of "believing on him" is quite prominent, in direct contrast to the Synoptics. We see the use of such phrases as "receiving him",(1) "abiding in him",(2) and "knowing him",(3) all used to some extent of the disciples with whom Jesus lived and worked, but all lending themselves far more to the expression of the experience of those who believed in the spiritual, ascended Christ.

One point which will be made again is how the gospel of John seems to provide a link between the "with Christ" of the Synoptics and the "in Christ" of Paul and the rest of the New Testament, by a linking of "abiding in Christ" and "abiding with Christ". We can suggest the following development:

In John 1; 39, we have the culmination and acceptance of the call of Jesus to his first disciples. ~~Thexxxx~~ Their response and obedience is given in the words "they abode with him from that

Πάρ' δόξ ?
But it can be taken either
way.

(1) John 1; 12.
(2) John 15; 1-10.
(3) John 17; 3.

hour". The word to abide (μενειν) is of course the same word as is used in chapter 15 for abiding in Christ. We have to accept the following premise: that "with" was the closest possible fellowship in the days of our Lord's earthly ministry, and that "in" is the closest possible fellowship open to believers in the time after the resurrection. Now if we accept that, that the different prepositions each serve the same end, of describing intimacy with Christ, we can see a connection. The early disciples "abode with him"; we are invited to "abide in him": and the thought is basically the same. For these disciples were now prepared to live in fellowship with him; in obedience to him (this seems an obvious condition of the terms on which they accepted his hospitality); and they were prepared to trust him to provide them with food and shelter. So for all those who live "on this side the Resurrection", the experience of "abiding in Christ" also involves constant fellowship with him, obedience to him, and a complete trust in him.

So we can see a deep and real unity following through from the "with Christ" experience into the even richer "in Christ" experience in John, and we see how much these phrases have in common. An understanding of this helps to avoid the sentimental nonsense of "I wish I had been with him then"; the entire New

Testament witness is that the experience of abiding in Christ is open to every believer, and that it is in essence the same as that of being with him.

The terms used in the Fourth Gospel to indicate the fellowship of Christ and his people are as follows:(1)

(a) Faith, as a noun, occurs not at all.

(b) Believing on him, 26 times.

(c) Believing that ... , 12 times.

(d) Believing (intransitive), 6 times.

(e) Receiving him, 5 times.

(f) Being in him, his being in us, 4 times.

(g) Knowing him, 3 times.

(h) Following him, 3 times.

In addition, in the two extended passages quoted on pp. 8 - 10 above, the following occur: abiding in him, 4 times (all in chapter 15); eating his flesh, 5 times, and drinking his blood, 3 times (all in chapter 6).

We also find in the Epistle of John that such phrases as "abiding in him", being "in him", "believing on him" and "knowing him" occur again to describe fellowship with the risen Christ.

(1) But cf. word studies below, pp.

The way is now clear for us to go on to a lengthy section in which we discuss the meaning of the words which are commonly used to describe the union of Christ and the believer. Obviously any selection must be to a certain extent arbitrary, but the words studied have been chosen because they have already occurred in sufficient frequency to be regarded as key words for this thought.

In addition, much of the present-day study seems to omit such basic work; just as in listing the "in Christ" occurrences in Paul, so a careful and individual study of these words will prove of great help in either proving or disproving much that is nowadays handed down on someone else's authority.

The words chosen are these: first, faith (including the πιστευειν word group) in Paul and John. This word is studied because of the extent of its use, and its close connection with the idea of union with Christ; and also because there is much misunderstanding of what it means, and a serious questioning whether it always carries the same meaning - as in Paul and John. After faith we study knowing and knowledge: the words γνωσις, γινωσκειν and εἰδεναι have obvious Gnostic connections, but their use in the New Testament should prove very helpful in determining the exact meaning to be placed upon them, and the right

way to understand them (i.e., whether they originated from the Greek or the Hebrew world of thought). Then there are two further words, connected with the ones already mentioned; in Paul, we study the use of λογίζεσθαι, to reckon; and in John, the use of μένειν, to abide.

A satisfactory and detailed study of the use of such words in the writings before us will be the best way to help us in the pursuit of the elusive source of our thought. At the back of our minds there must be the question whether our review of language will lead us to postulate Hellenistic or Judaistic connotations for the words; we shall have some guide to indicate to us wherein the source of the concept of union with Christ may lie.

New Testament Word Studies

The method employed may seem both laborious and simple, but it helps to prevent the overlooking of some text or other, and makes it harder to fall in with the presuppositions of another: it is to list all the occurrences of the word in question throughout the writings under discussion, and from these to try to draw the essential meaning of meanings of the word. The Authorised Version is the basis on which the task is done, although the concordance is Schmoller's.(1) The A.V. is chosen instead of the Greek text because it is more convenient to type; it is chosen instead of the New English Bible translation because it is more literal, and does not paraphrase as the N.E.B. does; and in addition, it is much easier for many to recall the context from an A.V. quotation than from one from the N.E.B., although this is an entirely individual matter.

The πιστευειν Word Group in Pauline Thought:

Section A - occurrences of the various words involved:

1. πιστις itself:

Romans: Obedience to the faith (1;5); your faith is spoken of (1;8); the mutual faith of you and me (1;12); revealed from faith to

(1) Bound with Nestle's Greek New Testament, Stuttgart 1953.

faith (1;17); make the faith of God without effect (3;3); propitiation through faith in his blood (3;25).

By the law of faith (3;27); justified by faith (3;28); justify by faith through faith (3;30); make void ... through faith (3;31); faith counted for righteousness (4;5); faith was reckoned (4;9); righteousness of faith ... the faith of Abraham (4;11-12); faith is made void (4;14); it is of faith... the faith of Abraham (4;16); strong in faith (4;20).

Justified by faith (5;1); access by faith (5;2); righteousness which is of faith (9;30); not by faith (9;32); righteousness which is of faith (10;6); the word of faith (10;8); faith cometh by hearing (10;17); thou standest by faith (11;20); the measure of faith (12;3); proportion of faith (12;6); weak in faith (14;1); hast thou faith? (14;22).

<u>I Corinthians</u>: Your faith should stand in the power of God (2;5); to another faith (12;9); through I have all faith (13;2); now abideth faith (13;13); your faith .. is vain (15;14); stand fast in the faith (16;13).

<u>II Corinthians</u>: Dominion over your faith ... by faith ye stand (1;24); same spirit of faith (4;13); we walk by faith (5;7); abound ... in faith (8;7); your faith is increased (10;15); whether ye be in the faith (13;5).

Galatians: Preacheth the faith (1;23); by the hearing of faith (3;2); they which are of faith (3;7); justify through faith (3;8); they which be of faith (3;9); the law is not of faith (3;12); receive promise through faith (3;14); before faith came ... unto the faith (3;23); justified by faith (3;24); after ... faith is come (3;25); righteousness by faith (5;5); faith which worketh by love (5;6); goodness, faith, ... (5;22); household of faith (6;10).

Ephesians: Saved through faith (2;8); dwell in your hearts by faith (3;17); one Lord, one faith ... (4;5); in the unity of the faith (4;13); shield of faith (6;16); love with faith, from God (6;23)

Philippians: Joy of faith (1;25); sacrifice and service of your faith (2;17); righteousness through the faith of Christ (3;9).

Colossians: Your faith in Christ Jesus (1;4); continue in the faith (1;23); built up in the faith (2;7).

I Thessalonians: Work of faith (1;3); your faith to God-ward (1;8); concerning your faith (3;2); to know your faith (3;5); good tidings of your faith (3;6); comforted ... by your faith (3;7); lacking in your faith (3;10); breastplate of faith and love (5;8).

II Thessalonians: Your faith groweth (1;3); the work of faith with

power (1;11); all have not (the) faith (3;2).

<u>I Timothy</u>: Son in the faith (1;2); edifying which is in faith (1;4); and faith unfeigned (1;5); faith and love which is in Christ Jesus (1;14); concerning the faith ... made shipwreck; holding faith (1;19); teacher ... in faith and verity (2;7); continue in faith (2;15); mystery of the faith (3;9); depart from the faith (4;1); words of faith (4;6); in spirit, in faith, in purity (4;12); denied the faith (5;8); cast off their first faith (5;12); erred from the faith (6;10); follow after ... faith (6;12); the good fight of faith (6;11); concerning the faith (6;21).

<u>II Timothy</u>: Over throw the faith of some (2;18); concerning the faith (3;8); my doctrine ... faith (3;10); kept the faith (4;7).

<u>Titus</u>: the faith of God's elect (1;1); sound in the faith (1;13); showing all fidelity (2;10); greet in the faith (3;15).

<u>Philemon</u>: Communication of thy faith (6).

There are also the following occurrences of πίστις with the object expressed:

<u>Romans</u>: by faith of Jesus Christ (3;22); of him that hath faith in

Jesus (3;26, R.V.).

Galatians: justified ... by the faith of Jesus Christ (twice in 2;16); I live by the faith of the Son of God (2;20); promise by faith of Jesus Christ (3;22); children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (3;26).

Ephesians: your faith in the Lord Jesus (1;15); access ... by the faith of him (3;12).

Philippians: the faith of the gospel (1;27); through the faith of Christ (3;9);

Colossians: through the faith of the operation of God (2;12); steadfastness of your faith in Christ (2;5).

Also the following: your faith to God-ward (I Thess. 1; 8); belief of the truth (II Thess. 2;13); the faith which is in Christ Jesus (I Tim. 3;13); faith which is in Christ Jesus (II Tim. 3;15); faith ... toward the Lord Jesus (Philemon 5).

2. The verb πιστευειν

First, the verb with Accusative, περι τινος , and ὅτι , or used absolutely:

Romans: salvation to everyone that believeth (1;16); unto all them that believe (3;22); to everyone that believeth (1;4); the father of all them that believe (4;11); who against hope believed in hope

(4;18); we believe that we shall also live with him (6;8); if thou shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him (10;9); with the heart man believeth unto righteousness (10;10); call on him in whom they have not believed; how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?(10;14); nearer than when we first believed (14;2); joy and peace in believing (15;13).

<u>I Corinthians</u>: to save them that believe (1;21); ministers by whom ye believe (3;5); and I partly believe it (11;18); believeth all things (13;7); a sign not to them that believe, but to them that believe not (14;22); unless ye have believed in vain (15;2); so we preach, and so ye believed (15;11).

<u>II Corinthians</u>: I believed, and .. have spoken. We also believe (4;13).

<u>Galatians</u>: to them that believe (3;22).

<u>Ephesians</u>: after that ye believed (1;13); power to us-ward who believe (1;19).

<u>I Thessalonians</u>: ensamples to all that believe (1;7); among you that believe (2;10); working effectually in you that believe (2;13); if we believe that Jesus died and rose again (4;14).

<u>I Timothy</u>: Christ ... believed on in the world (3;16).

Second, with the Dative of Person of thing:

Abraham believed God (Rom. 4;3); him whom he believed (Rom. 4;17) - also in Gal. 3;6, cf. Rom. 10;4, "believe on him"; they should believe a lie (II Thess. 2;11); believed not the truth (II Thess. 2;12); I know whom I have believed (II Tim. 1;12); they which have believed in God (Titus 3;8).

Third, with εἰς (τινα, τι).

In whom they have not believed (Rom. 10;4); we have believed in Jesus Christ (Gal. 2;16); not only to believe on him (Phil.1;29).

Fourth, with ἐπι (τινα, τι).

Believeth on him that justifies .. (Rom.4;5); if we believe on him that raised up (Rom.4;24); whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed (Rom. 9;33, also quoted in 10;11); should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting (I Tim. 1;16).

Fifth, in the sense of "commit", the passive:

To them were committed the oracles of God (Rom. 3;2); a dispensation of the gospel is committed to me (I Cor. 9;17); the gospel ... was committed to me (Gal. 2;7); allowed of God to be put in trust of the gospel (I Thess. 2;4); gospel committed to my trust (I Tim. 1;11).

Conclusions:

We notice first of all that the noun occurs over twice as frequently as the verb, which is in complete contrast to the use in the Johannine writings.(1) So we shall discuss first the meaning of the noun, then that of the verb, and then try to come to some conclusion regarding faith and believing in Paul.

Section B - meanings of the words used:

1. The noun:

(a) the faith, the Christian faith: almost a technical term, and used in this sense especially in the later letters such as the Pastoral Epistles. It is so used in, e.g., I Cor. 16;13, "stand fast in the faith" (N.E.B., "stand firm in the faith"), Gal. 1;23, "preacheth the faith" (N.E.B., preaching the good news of the faith"), and most clearly in I Tim. 1;19, "made shipwreck concerning the faith",

(1) See below, pp.

(N.E.B.,"made shipwreck of their faith"). This usage is not characteristically Pauline, but as we shall see it is not far removed from the other uses.

(b) faith, in the sense of hope: this is much more basic, and is the main meaning we would find in Hebrews (particularly chapter 11), but occurs in our texts in Rom. 4;20, where Abraham was "strong in faith" (and N.E.B.), which had a great element of hope for the future in addition to present trust.

(c) faith, as simple trust: used thus in Rom. 10;17, "faith cometh by hearing" (N.E.B., "faith is awakened by the message"), Eph. 6;23, "love with faith" (so also N.E.B.), and I Tim. 1;14, "faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (similarly N.E.B.).

(d) faith, as acceptance: this is the characteristically Pauline use of the word, and brings us right to the heart of the meaning of it. The double meaning of faith for Paul lies in the fact that faith is inextricably connected with the faithfulness (unfortunately also called πίστις) of God. Barth's great commentary recognises this: "faith is not a foundation upon which men can emplace themselves ... But the law of the faithfulness of God, or, what is the same thing, the law of faith, is the place where we are established by God".(1)

Nygren puts the same point in his much later commentary: "faith always has the action of God as its correlative. When Paul speaks of faith, he never means, so to say, a mere psychological operation;

(1) Commentary on Romans, p.110.

for faith is always determined by its object".[1]

There are passages in Paul where we cannot separate the two ideas, and where the translation "faith" could mean "faith in" or "faithfulness of". Such for example are Gal. 2;20, "The life I now live I live by the faith of the Son of God", where the N.E.B. sacrifices one to make the other explicit, "my present bodily life is lived by faith in the Son of God". Again in Eph. 3;12, "we have access ... by the faith of him", where the N.E.B. is rather more successful in its paraphrase, "we have access ... in the confidence born of trust in him". We find the same in Col. 2;12, "the faith of the operation of God", N.E.B., "your faith in the active power of God", and in Romans 3;22, "by faith of Jesus Christ", N.E.B. "through faith in Jesus Christ".

Now it is essentially this meaning that is significant for Paul; for by faith of this sort the believer appropriates to himself what God has done. There is no question of a subjective emotional quality - or activity - for that smacks of "works",[2] it is the simple acceptance of what God has done.

2. The Verb:

To believe εἰς , into union with, occurs only three times. Much more common are the other meanings, given to the verb when it

(1) Commentary on Romans, p. 170. Cf. also p.181f.
(2) As in Ephesians 2;8.

occurs alone: they are

(a) to accept as true, normal: so in I Cor. 11;18, "I partly believe it", N.E.B., "I believe there is some truth in it".

(b) to accept what God has done: so in Romans 1;16, "to everyone that believeth", N.E.B., "everyone who has faith", and frequently throughout the epistles.

(c) to be convinced of the truth of Christ: this has rather the flavour of intellectual conviction, believing that something is true. Such we find in Romans 10;9, "believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead", N.E.B., "in your heart the faith that God raised him from the dead", and in I Thess. 4;14, "we believe that Jesus died and rose again", where the N.E.B. follows the A.V.

Now, to our minds, there is a distinct difference between faith in Christ and believing certain statements about him, yet Paul uses both, and attributes to the second kind of faith very real value - the value of what used to be called "saving faith". With our obsession that "saving faith" must be distinct from intellectual assent, we find this difference hard to understand. But perhaps we can find a link to help us to hold the two together.

If we accept that faith, in Paul, is simply the means by which we rely on the faithfulness of God, then we have in our hands the key to the whole question. Faith in Christ, or faith simpliciter, is just

acceptance of what God has done, and recognising where God has placed us - in Christ. This is mentioned in II Cor. 1;21, "If you and we belong to Christ ... it is all God's doing", and I Cor. 1;30, "you are in Christ Jesus by God's act". Faith can be said to unite us to Christ only because it is faith alone that recognises that God has united us with Christ - faith brings it home to us and makes it real to us. And Paul's great insistence that only God's grace can save us supports this view - there is no place for our exercising some faculty of "faith", but only for our acceptance of what God has done. To quote Nygren again: "faith can never be just a function of the soul or an inner condition in man. In Paul's meaning it is impossible to separate the action of faith ... and the object of faith ... as if they were two independent things. There is no action of faith if we lose sight of the object of faith - of God and His promise".(1)

So we can say that the object of faith effectively defines the faith in question; and when the object is God's act in Christ, it defines the response we make. Thus there can be no hard and fast distinction between believing in Christ ("saving faith"), and believing something about Christ - for both have Christ as the object.

Faith in the sense of the Christian faith is the acceptance of certain truths about God and about Christ. We can call this body of doctrine "the faith" because it is essentially trustworthy, as coming from God himself. Admittedly it does become a shorthand form of

(1) Commentary on Romans, p. 181.

reference to the Christian doctrine, but we must not allow ourselves to argue that it is therefore merely intellectual assent. Any faith that confronts us with Christ is bound to have a far wider effect than merely on the intellect.

Faith in the sense of hope immediately makes sense; if we take the example of Abraham, following Paul, we see that faith involved hope for him simply because God's promise referred to the future. And so Abraham's acceptance of God as true and reliable inevitably made him hope in what was still to come; this is still a valid part of faith, but by no means exhausts the meaning of the word.

Faith as simple trust again is that which brings us to rest upon God in all his truth and dependability; again it is what links us to a God who is and will be forever true and reliable.

And so, back of the different meanings which lie upon the surface, we discover a deep unity. Faith is that which links us to God, who is faithful, dependable and reliable. That faith can be in words about which come from God, when we rest upon their essential veracity; it can be in statements about Christ, which are from the same source, and so bring us into touch with the same reality; or it can be simple trust in God himself as the utterly reliable one, who is eternally the God and Father of Christ, who loved us and gave himself for us.

We cannot say that faith places us in Christ; but we can say that is is by faith that we recognise that God has placed us in Christ. Faith is always that which brings us into contact with God in Christ; there is no place in the New Testament for the kind of understanding that leaves our lives unaffected by the act of God, only for the faith that comes into living contact with him.

The πιστευειν Word Group in the Johannine writings:

It is at once to be observed that the noun πιστις never occurs in the gospel or epistles of John. This can be accounted for by different reasons, two of which appear particularly strong:

First, that by the time the Johannine literature was written, the noun had become almost a technical term. We can see this actually happening in the Pauline letters, where within a verse or two the same word refers to a living faith in Christ, and to the body of the faith - see, e.g., Romans 1;5 and 8, or Colossians 1;4 and 23. To avoid any misrepresentation John deliberately left the noun out of his writings, and so was better able to emphasise the personal and dynamic nature of the faith of which he was speaking.

Second, in the gospel and epistles, there is a lack of nouns -

notably γνωσις , knowledge, and πιστις , faith, are missing, unlike the rest of the New Testament. A study of the use of language by the writer leads one to the conclusion that the thinking is essentially Hebrew in content, and that verbs and not nouns are the best vehicles for his thought. It has been pointed out that the Greek tended to think statically, while the Hebrew thought dynamically;(1) certainly in this part of the New Testament, the use of the verb seems to guard against two dangers - that of a wrong emphasis on the state of having believed rather than on what is involved in believing (this would be a typically Greek reaction); and the second danger, that what he wrote might be interpreted in terms of Greek thought rather than Hebrew. Thus, apart from the common use of πιστις there may well be a fundamental reason for avoiding the use of a noun to describe anything so real and vital as believing.

The verb us used frequently in the writings, and the same divisions will be used here as were used in the Pauline study:

<u>Section A</u> - occurrences of the verb.

1. The verb, used absolutely, with accusative, περι τινος and ὅτι .

<u>The Gospel</u>: that all men through him might believe (1;7); because .. believest thou? (1;50); if .. and ye believe not, how shall ye believe it if .. (3;12); whosoever believeth on him should .. have eternal life (3;15); whosoever believeth on him is not condemned; he

(1) Cf. Boman: "Hebrew thought compared with Greek", for a detailed and informative study of the whole question of the modes of thought of Greek and Hebrew.

that believeth not is condemned already (3;18).

Many more believed because of his own word (4;41); now we believe (4;42); except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe (4;48); himself believed, and his whole house (4;53); how can ye believe? (5;44); ye also have seen me, and believe not (6;36); he that believeth hath everlasting life (6;47); some of you that believe not (6;64); Jesus knew who they were that believed not and who should betray him (6;64); we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ (6;69).

If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins (8;24); the Jews did not believe concerning him that he had been blind (9;18); Lord, I believe (9;38); I told you, and ye believed not (10;25); ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep (10;26); to the intent ye may believe (11;15, N.E.B."for the good of your faith"); believest thou this? (11;26); I believe that thou art the Christ (11;27); if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God (11;40); that they may believe that thou hast sent me (11;42).

Therefore they could not believe (12;39); ye may believe that I am he (13;19); believest thou not that I am in the Father? (14;10); believe for the very works' sake (14;11); ye might believe (14;29); have believed that I came out from God (16;27); by this we believe that thou camest forth from God (16;30); do ye now believe? (16;31).

They have believed that thou didst send me (17;8); that the world

may believe that thou hast sent me (17;21); he saith true, that ye might believe (19;35); he saw, and believed (20;8); except .. I will not believe (20;25); hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, yet have believed (20;29); that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ ... and that believing ye might have life (20;31).

I John: We have known and believed the love that God hath to us (4;16); whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God (5;1); he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God (5;5).

2. The verb used with Dative or Person or thing:

The Gospel: they believed the scripture, and the word Jesus said (2;22); believe me, the hour cometh (4;21); the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken (4;50); that believeth on him that sent me (5;24); whom he hath sent, him ye believe not (5;38); had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me (5;46); if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words? (5;47); that we may see, and believe thee (6;30); those Jews which believed on him (8;31); ye believe me not (8;45); why do ye not believe me? (8;46); if I do not the works, believe me not (10;37); though ye believe not me, believe the works (10;38); believe me that I am in the Father (14;11); Lord, who hath believed our report? (12;38).

I John: should believe on the name of his son (3;23); believe not every spirit (4;1); he that believeth not God (5;10).

3. The verb with εἰς .

The Gospel: that believe on his name (1;12); many believed in his name (2;23); hath not believed in the name of the Son of God (3;18); his disciples believed on him (2;11); whosoever believeth in him should not perish (3;16); he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life (3;36); the Samaritans believed on him (4;39).

That ye may believe on him whom he hath sent (6;29); he that believeth on me shall never thirst (6;35); believeth on him (6;40); neither did his brethren believe in him (7;5); many ... believed on him (7;31); he that believeth on me (7;38); which they that believe on him should receive (7;39); have any of the rulers believed on him (7;48); many believed on him (8;30).

Dost thou believe on the Son of God? (9;35); that I might believe on him (9;36); many believed on him there (10;42); he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die (11;25-6); many of the Jews believed on him (11;45); all men will believe on him (11;48); ... and believed on Jesus (12;11); ... believed not on him (12;37); of the chief rulers, many believed on him (12;42); he that believeth on him that sent me (12;33); whosoever believeth on me (12;46).

Believe in God, believe also in me (14;1); he that believeth on me (14;12); ... of sin, because they believe not on me (16;9); for them which shall believe on me (17;20); while ye have light, believe in the light (12;36, N.E.B., "trust to the light").

<u>I John</u>: he that believeth on the son of God (5;10); to you that believe on the name of the Son of God (5;13).

4. The verb with ἐπί .

John 3;15: Whosoever believeth in him.

5. The verb, meaning to commit to:

John 2;24: Jesus did not commit himself to them.

<u>Section B</u> - meanings of the verb.

The verb has several distinct usages in the writings at which we have been looking, and we take them by turn, then try to draw some findings from our study:

1. The verb used absolutely: it is so used in two senses, which are very much alike:

(a) for the way of becoming a Christian: e.g., John 1;7, "all men through him might believe", N.E.B. "all might become believers through him".

(b) for the description of a Christian (compare our word "believer"): thus in John 20;29, "they that have not seen, yet have believed", N.E.B., "they who never saw me and yet found faith". It describes a person's response to Christ, either negatively as in 3;18, "he that believeth not", N.E.B., "the unbeliever", or positively, as in 4;41, "many more believed", N.E.B., "many more became believers".

2. The verb used with a ὅτι clause: in this sense it is always believing something about Christ, e.g. 8;24, "if ye believe not that I am he", and 11;27, "I believe that thou art the Christ". See also 6;69, 11;42, 13;19 etc.

This kind of belief (which we might call intellectual assent) is regarded as being of real value. For example, not to have it is to be condemned (8;24), and to have it is to have everlasting life (20;31 and I John 5;1). The reason for this appears to be that belief in something about Christ is proved by a response which can be called "believing" or "believing in him".

3. The verb with the Dative: it is of interest to list the nouns which appear in the dative case after the verb; they are

(a) Christ: so in 4;21, 5;46, 6;30, 8;31, 8;46, 10;37 and 5;38. The A.V. translations vary: e.g., "those Jews which believed on him" (8;31, N.E.B., "who had believed him"), "ye believe me not" (8;45, as in N.E.B.), and 14;11, "Believe me that I am in the Father".

(b) God: so only in 5;24, "believes on him that sent me".

(c) Jesus' works: so in 10;38, "though ye believe ~~not~~ me not, believe the works", N.E.B., "accept the evidence of the deeds".

(d) Scripture: 2;22, "they believed the scripture", as N.E.B.; this, being followed by the phrase "and the word Jesus said" leads us to

(e) Jesus' words: 2;22 above; 4;50, "he believed the word that Jesus had spoken", N.E.B., "believed what Jesus said", and 5;47, "how shall ye believe my words?"

(f) Also of the writings of Moses, connected with 5.47 above; in the previous verse, "had ye believed Moses".

Normal Greekmeaning of this word is "to trust".(1) While we may normally rest content with such a translation, it is too superficial to satisfy our present quest. It is not merely to accept as true, but perhaps we can the sense most clearly from 4;50, where "the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken, and went his way". Here we see that it involved accepting Jesus' word as true, and acting upon it.

So to gather the different objects together, we may say that to believe in this sense means to accept something as true, as conveying the truth, or as speaking the truth, and acting accordingly.

4. The verb with εἰς . We must note

(1) Cf. e.g. Moulton & Milligan, The Vocabulary of the New Testament, p.514.

(a) it is always so used only of Christ, with the exceptions of 12;36, where light is the object, and 14;1, where it is used of God and of Christ in the same verse.

(b) it is used of believing on God through Christ, e.g. in 12;44, "he that believeth on me believeth on him that sent me".

(c) such belief has certain effects: they are

i) eternal life - so in 3;16 and 11;25-6.

ii) possession of the water of life - so in 6;35 and 7;38.

iii) by this faith we have the right to become the children of God - so in 1;12.

iv) by this faith we are brought into the light - so in 12;46.

Summary:

We may gather up our discussion in the following conclusions:

First: this word is used to describe entry into the Christian life.

Second: this word is used to describe the union with Christ which is the Christian life, as in 11;26, "he that liveth and believeth on me". The preposition has the significance of in indicating the goal (1) that our belief is towards, into Jesus Christ. Our believing results in our being in him, just as in Matt. 21;10 our Lord's coming to Jerusalem resulted in his being in Jerusalem. We are then placed "in Christ", and can regard ourselves as "abiding

(1) Arndt and Gingrich, New Testament Lexicon, p.228.

in him". Faith is "an energy of the whole nature, an active transference of the whole being into another life. Faith in a Person - in One revealed under a new 'name' - is the ground of sonship".(1)

Third: we can then accept two meanings: first to be united with Christ. Second, to accept something about him and to act upon it.

Can we bring the two closer, and attempt to write the use of πιστευειν in John? For although to use they are quite different, to John they are very much the same. See, for example, the use of the word in the passage 11;42-5. Here our Lord prays that the people "may believe that thou hast sent me"; and his prayer is answered in v. 45, where "many of the Jews... believed on him". Obviously for John there is no rigid division between believing about Christ and believing in Christ.

In quite another setting, in 15;3, we have our Lord, and his words, used in what is to us a strange way: we should expect him to say "if you abide in me, and I in you;" instead, we find "if ye abide in me, and my words abide in you". Our modern view of belief finds this hard to grasp; how can we reconcile them?

We may legitimately trace the use of the verb in its different constructions in the gospel and epistle:

(1) Westcott: St. John, p. xxxix.

First, the most frequent use, with εἰς . This signifies personal union with Christ, a sense which we can understand quite easily. We find it easy to agree with Westcott: "this energy of faith in a person is to be carefully distinguished from the simple acceptance of a person's statements as true ... The phrase is characteristic of John's gospel".(1) But a study of John's actual uses of the words and phrases leads us to point out that he did not make any such distinction; the reason is that while normally such a distinction can and should be drawn, it cannot be made when the person involved is Christ, and the statements are concerning him - as John clearly shows.

The second sense, to which Westcott referred, is with the dative. Here we found John 4;50 a helpful example, when we realised that to believe Jesus' word meant not only the acceptance of its truth in the intellectual sense, but also in the moral sense - as dependable and reliable - and acting upon it. In other words, this kind of belief necessarily involved a commitment and response which is close to our first meaning.

The third sense is that with a ὅτι clause. And this follows very easily from the second; it is only another way of expressing e.g. 2;22, "they believed the scripture, and the word Jesus said". For this kind of belief, as we saw above in considering John 11;42-5, also involves a response which John actually calls "believing on him".

(1) Westcott, St. John: p. 35.

And so we can conclude our study by observing that for John there is no valid distinction between an intellectual knowledge of Christ and a commitment to him and union with him. They are quite inseparable: the words of Dr Robinson are rather more demonstrably true than those of Dr Westcott: "all credal statements, all doctrines, are explications, definitions in the intellectual field, of the commitment contained in the words, 'I believe in'. They describe not truths in themselves out of the context of any personal response, but a relationship-in-trust to the various aspects of the truth as it is in Jesus".(1) It is pointless to ask whether understanding or commitment comes first, for the one involves the other, and we cannot have the one without the other. Believing simply brings us into touch with reality as it is in Christ; and that automatically produces a response in us. Whether it is believing something said about him, believing him or believing in him, the end result is the same - union with Christ of a permanent and intimate nature, with all the benefits that such a union confers.

(1) "The Honest to God Debate", p.244.

The γνωσις Word Group in the New Testament.

Pauline Usage of the words:

Section A - occurrences of the words in Paul:

1. The verb γινωσκειν

Romans: when they knew God (1;21); knowest his will (2;18); the way of peace have they not known (3;17); knowing this, that our old man is crucified (6;6); know ye not, brethren ..? (7;1); I had not known sin but by the law (7;7); what I do I allow not (7;15); did not Israel know? (10;19); who hath known the mind of the Lord? (11;34, also quoted I Cor. 2;16).

I Corinthians: the world ... knew not God (1;21); none of the princes of this world know ... if they had known it .. (2;8); things of God knoweth no man (2;11); neither can he know them (2;14); The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise (3;20); I will know, not the speech, but the power (4;19); if any man thinketh he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing as he ought (8;2); the same is known of him (8;3); we know in part (13;9); now I know in part (13;12); how shall it be known? (14;7); how shall it be known? (14;9).

II Corinthians: ye might know the love I have to you (2;4); I might know the proof of you (2;9); known and read of all men (3;2); though we have known Christ after the flesh, henceforth know we him no more (5;16); Christ who knew no sin (5;21); ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (8;9); I trust that ye shall know that we are not

reprobates (13;6).

Galatians: perceived the grace given unto me (2;9); know ye therefore that .. the same are the children of Abraham (3;7); after ye have known God, or rather been known of God (4;9).

Ephesians: to know the love of Christ (3;19); for this ye know, that no fornicator ... (5;5); that ye may know our affairs (6;22).

Philippians: I want you to know (1;12); when I know your state (2;19); ye know the proof of him (2;22); that I may know him (3;10); let your moderation be known to all men (4;5).

I Thessalonians: I sent to know your faith (3;5).

II Timothy: thou knowest very well (1;18).

2. The verb εἰδέναι in Paul:

Romans: I had not known lust (7;7); knowing the time.. (13;11).

I Corinthians: I determined not to know anything among you (2;2); though I ... understand all mysteries (13;2); if I know not the meaning of the voice (14;11); he understandeth not what thou sayest (14;16).

II Corinthians: knowing therefore the terror of the Lord (5;11); we know no man after the flesh (5;16); God knoweth (11;11); God knoweth that I lie not (11;31); I knew a man in Christ (12;2).

Galatians: when ye knew not God (4;8).

Ephesians: that ye may know .. hope .. power (1;18); for this ye know (5;5).

Philippians: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound (4;12).

I Thessalonians: We beseech you to know them which labour among you and esteem them (5;12).

Also the following:

I know whom I have believed (II Tim. 1;12); thou hast known the holy scriptures (II Tim. 3;15); profess that they know God (Titus 1;16).

3. The noun γνωσις in Paul:

Romans: form of knowledge (2;20); knowledge of God (11;33); filled with all knowledge (15;14).

I Corinthians: Enriched in all knowledge (1;5); we all have knowledge (8;1); not in every man that knowledge (8;7); which hast knowledge (8;10); through thy knowledge (8;11); the word of knowledge (12;8); understand all knowledge (13;2); knowledge will vanish away (13;8); speak to you ... by knowledge (14;6).

II Corinthians: the savour of his knowledge by us in every place (2;14); knowledge of the glory of God (4;6); by ... knowledge (6;6); abound .. in knowledge (8;7); against the knowledge of God (10;5); rude, not in knowledge (11;6).

Ephesians: the love of Christ surpassing knowledge (3;19).

Philippians: knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord (3;8).

Colossians: in whom are hid ... the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (2;3).

I Timothy: opposition of science, falsely so called (6;20).

4. The noun ἐπίγνωσις in Paul:

Romans: retain God in their knowledge (1;28); by the law is the knowledge of sin (3;20); a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge (10;2).

Ephesians: spirit of wisdom in the knowledge of him (1;17); unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God (4;13).

Philippians: your love may abound in knowledge and judgment (1;9).

Colossians: filled with the knowledge of his will (1;9); increasing in the knowledge of God (1;10); the acknowledgment of the mystery of God (2;2); renewed in knowledge after the image of him (3;20).

I Timothy: the knowledge of the truth (2;4).

II Timothy: never able to come to the knowledge of the truth (3;7); the acknowledging of the truth (2;25).

Titus: the acknowledging of the truth (1;1).

5. The verb ἐπιγινώσκειν in Paul:

Romans: knowing the judgment of God (1;32);

I Corinthians: then shall I know ... as I am known (13;12); let him acknowledge (14;37); acknowledge ye them that are such (16;18).

<u>II Corinthians</u>: read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end (1;13); as also ye shall acknowledge us (1;14); as unknown, yet well-known (6;9); know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you? (13;5).

<u>Colossians</u>: knew the grace of God in truth (1;6).

<u>I Timothy</u>: .. them which believe and acknowledge the truth (4;3).

<u>Section B</u> - the meaning of the words.

1. The verb γινωσκειν can be considered as having different meanings in Paul; these are

(a) to know, of objective fact: such occurrences are in II Cor. 2;4, "ye might know the love I have to you"; Gal. 3;7, "know ye that the same are children of Abraham" (N.E.B., "you may take it, then, that ..."); and Eph. 5;5, "this ye know...", N.E.B., "be very sure of this..."

(b) to understand, perceive: so in I Cor. 2;11, "the things of God knoweth no man" (and N.E.B.); Gal. 2;9, "perceived the grace given unto me", N.E.B., "recognizing"; and I Cor. 3;20, "the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise" (also N.E.B.).

(c) of spiritual intimacy: the full implkcations of this will be discussed when we come to consider the noun (1), but we can note the occurrence of this meaning at the present. We find it in Phil. 3;10, "that I may know him" (so also N.E.B.); Eph. 3;19,

(1) See below, p.

"to know the love of Christ" (so also N.E.B.); and II Cor. 5;16, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, henceforth know we him no more", N.E.B., "our understanding of Christ".

2. The verb εἰδέναι has broadly similar meanings, as follows:

(a) to understand: so in I Cor. 13;2, "though I understand all mysteries", N.E.B., "understand all hidden truth".

(b) to know: II Cor. 11;31, "God knoweth that I lie not", and II Tim. 3;15, "thou hast known the holy scriptures", N.E.B., "have been familiar with". This meaning becomes rather blended with the next, of intimate personal knowledge, as in texts like I Cor. 2;2, "I determined to know nothing among you, except Christ crucified".

(c) to know intimately, of a person. Such uses are in connection with knowledge of human beings, as in II Cor. 12;2, "I knew a man in Christ"; with knowledge of God, Titus 1;16, "profess that they know God" and Gal. 4;8, "when ye knew not God"; and above all, in connection with the knowledge of Christ, as in II Tim. 1;12, "I know whom I have believed".

(d) to know, to experience: this is merely a subdivision of the meaning above, as in Eph.1;19, when Paul prays that his converts "may know ... the hope .. and the power of God".

3. The noun γνωσις has a similar variety of meanings:

(a) knowledge, learning, understanding: Col. 2;3, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge", and II Cor. 11;6, "rude, not in knowledge". Under this heading we can consider γνωσις as the highest reach of the human mind, as in Eph. 3;19, "the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge". This meaning also largely encompasses the compound επιγνωσις as in I Tim. 2;4, "the knowledge of the truth".

(b) we also note a sacrastic and significant use of the word to signify spiritual maturity in I Cor. 8; 10-11, where "knowledge" is the mark of those who regard themselves as spiritually mature. Here we come close to a Gnostic meaning, in that Paul regarded this knowledge as something which has remarkably little connection with love for the weaker brother; but it is obvious from the context that this is not a normal meaning in Paul's vocabulary.

(c) specially, of spiritual knowledge: it is so used:

i) by itself, as in I Cor. 12;8, 13;2 ("the deepest knowledge"); it is the word to convey "supernatural mystical knowledge" (cf. Arndt and Gingrich ad loc.).

ii) of Christ: particularly in Phil. 3;8, this use comes very close to the language of the mystery religions. Paul speaks of the knowledge of Christ and goes on to speak of his great desire to know him, the power of his resurrection and the fellowship

of his sufferings, so that he may come to the resurrection from the dead. This is so reminiscent of much that we find in the mysteries that many have assumed it came from such a source, and is a foreign importation into Hebrew and N.T. thought. But before we accept such a conclusion, we must ask if we could trace it to any other source, as the problem of dating such material as we have of the mystery religions is so acute. Can we, then, find such a possible source? We can take three steps in this direction.

First, remembering the use of γινώσκειν to signify sexual relations, very common in both the Septuagint and Greek literature, we have a possible origin in the Old Testament word ידע .

Second, we must bear in mind the analogy of Ephesians 5;22ff. between the marriage bond and the relationship of Christ and the church, where the close and intimate knowledge of marriage is a picture of spiritual union.

Third, from these considerations, we could postulate that the idea can be derived from the combination of O.T. background and the intense personal experience of Paul. We shall have occasion to return to the consideration of this point when we discuss the nature of the union with Christ which the word expresses.

The word λογίζομαι in Paul.

This word is used quite frequently in close connection with knowing, and the following study will help us to understand the words we have already considered.

Section A - occurrences of the verb:

Romans: thinkest thou this? (2;3); be counted for (2;26); therefore we conclude (3;28); counted to him for righteousness (4;3); reckoned ... of debt (4;4); counted for righteousness (4;5); imputed (4;6); impute sin (4;8); how was it reckoned? (4;10); imputed (4;11, 4;24); reckon ye (6;11); I reckon (8;18); accounted as sheep (8;36); counted for the seed (9;8); him that esteemeth (14;14).

I Corinthians: so account of us (4;1); thinketh no evil (13;5); thought as a child (13;11).

II Corinthians: to think anything as of ourselves (3;5); not imputing their trespasses (5;19); think (twice in 10;2); think (10;11, 10;7, 12;6); suppose (11;5).

Philippians: I count not myself to have apprehended (3;13); think on these things (4;8).

II Timothy: laid to their charge (4;16).

Section B - its meaning:

The word must be considered in connection with knowing in Paul, as it occurs in Romans 6 in a key passage dealing with the question of union with Christ. We can take the following development of the meaning:

(a) In a straightforward financial sense of accounting, laying to one's account. This normal and everyday sense is apparent in II Tim. 4;16, "that it may not be held against them" (so N.E.B.), better as in A.V., "be not laid to their charge."

(b) From this use, we find it used metaphorically, in the sense of accounting, or crediting someone with something. So in Rom. 4;6, where it is used of God "imputing" righteousness, and elsewhere.

(c) Hence it comes to mean to reckon, to count upon something as being in fact true: so in Romans 6;11, "reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed to sin", N.E.B., "you must regard yourselves as dead to sin", which rather weakens the original Greek.

(d) From this it takes on the simple meaning to think, to esteem. It is so used in Rom. 14;14, "if a man considers a particular thing impure ...", and I Cor. 15;5.

We can draw a handy distinction between knowing and reckoning in Paul, by saying that broadly speaking knowledge of something is objective (except in knowing Christ), as in Romans 6, where he is

laying the foundations for Christian living; and that reckoning is the realisation and acceptance of the implications of what is known. Although in Paul's own thought knowledge brings the response automatically, yet in his argument with his opponents he brings in this other word to stress that objective knowledge or appreciation of the facts is not enough - a response must be made; and that response consists of counting the facts as being true, and acting upon them.

Knowing in Johannine thought.

The verbs γινωσκειν and οἶδα in John:

Section A - occurrences in Johannine corpus:

1. The verb γινωσκειν.

The Gospel: The world knew him not (1;10); whence knowest thou? (1;48); he knew all men (2;24); he knew what was in man (2;25); knowest not these things (3;10); the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard (4;1); the father knew it was at the same hour (4;53).

He knew that he had been now a long time (5;6); I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you (5;42); Jesus perceived that they would come (6;15); we are sure that thou art that Christ (6;69); that ye may know ... that the Father is in me (10;38).

They have known surely that I came out from Thee (17;8); he shall know of the doctrine (7;17); know indeed that this is the very Christ (7;26); no man knoweth (7;27); knoweth not the Law (7;49); know what he doeth (7;51); they understood not that .. (8;27); shall ye know that I am he (8;28); ye shall know the truth (8;32); why do ye not understand my speech? (8;43); now we know that thou hast a devil (8;52); ye have not known him (8;55).

They understood not (10;6); I know my sheep and am known of mine (10;14); the Fatherknoweth me and I know the Father (10;25); I know them (10;27); if any man knew where he was (11;57); knew

that he was there (12;9); the disciples understood not (12;16); thou knowest not now (εἰδέναι) but thou shalt know hereafter (13;7); know ye what I have done? (13;12); no man knew for what intent he spake this unto him (13;28); all men know that ye are my disciples (13;35).

If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also (εἰδέναι) from now ye know Him and have seen Him (14;7); hast thou not known me, Philip? (14;9); the Spirit whom the world knoweth not; but you know him (14;17); ye shall know that I am in the Father (14;20); the world may know that I love the Father (14;31); ye know that it hated me (15;18).

Because they have not known the Father, or me (16;3); Jesus knew that they were desirous (16;19); that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent (17;3); now they have known that all things are of Thee (17;7); have known surely that .. (17;8); the world may know that Thou hast sent me (17;23); the world hath not known Thee; I have known Thee; these ha ve known that Thou hast sent me (17;25); ye may know that I find no fault in him (19;4); thou knowest all things (εἰδέναι); thou knowest that I love thre (21;17).

<u>The Epistles:</u> I John.

We know that we know him (2;3); I know him (2;4); hereby we know that we are in him (2;5); hereby we know that he abideth in

us (3;23); hereby we know that we dwell in him (4;13); ye have known him (2;13-14); we know that it is the last time (2;18); if ye know (εἰδέναι) that he is righteous, ye know that every one ... (2;29); the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not (3;1); he that abideth in sin .. hath not known him (3;6); we perceive the love of God (3;16); hereby we know that we are of the truth (3;19); God knoweth all things (3;20); hereby know ye the Spirit of God (4;2); hereby knew we the Spirit of truth and error (4;6); he that loveth not knoweth not God (4;8); we have known and believed the love of God (4;16); by this we know that we love the children of God (5;2); we know that the Son of God is come (5;20).

II John: all they that have known the truth (1).

2. The verb εἰδέναι.

<u>The Gospel</u>: one among you, whom ye know not (1;26); I knew him not (1;31); we speak that we do know (3;11); ye worship ye know not what (4;22); I have meat that ye know not of (4;32); how knoweth this man letters? (7;15); ye know me, and ye know whence I am; He that sent me .. whom ye know not (7;28); but I know him (7;29); I know whence I am .. (8;14); we know that God spake by Moses ... we know not whence he is (9;29).

If ye had known (γινώσκειν)me, ye should have known my Father also (14;7); we know that this man is a sinner (9;24); I know not -

one thing I know (9;25); we know that God heareth not sinners (9;31); they know his voice (10;4); ye know nothing at all (11;49); what I do thou knowest not now ... (13;7); if ye know those things, happy are ye if ye do them (13;17); whither I go ye know, and the way (14;4); we know not whither .. how can we know the way? (14;5); we are sure that Thou knowest all things (16;30); thou knowest that I love thee (21;15); (repeated in vv. 16 and 17) we know his testimony is true (21;24).

<u>I John</u>: ye know all things (2;20); not written because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it (2;21).

<u>Section B</u> - the meanings of the verbs.

When we try to draw conclusions regarding the use of this important word in the Johannine writings, we must realize the background against which the gospel should be considered. For knowledge in the New Testament world had at least three different spheres of thought - the Hebrew, the Greek, and the Gnostic. For an understanding of these different concepts, we follow C.H.Dodd (1), who in his turn follows Bultmann's original article.

"The Greek conceives the process of knowing as analagous to seeing; that is, he externalises the object of knowledge,

(1) The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, pp.151ff.
See also Boman, Hebrew Thought compared with Greek, pp.27ff.

contemplates (θεωρεῖ) as if from a distance, and endeavours to ascertain its essential qualities, so as to grasp or master (καταλαβεῖν) its reality (ἀλήθεια). It is the thing in itself, as static, that he seeks to grasp, eliminating so far as may be its movements and changes, as being derogatory to its real, permanent essence. Known and knower, therefore, stand over against each other, and direct communication between the two would be felt as introducing an element of κίνησις or γένεσις, and so as disturbing the pure apprehension of τὸ ὄν. This determines the Greek ideal of the βίος θεωρητικός.

"The Hebrew on the other hand conceives knowledge as consisting in experience of the object in its relation to the subject. ידע implies an immediate awareness of something as affecting oneself, and as such can be used of experiencing such things as sickness (Isa. 53;3), or the loss of children (Isa. 47;8), or divine punishment (Ezek. 25;14), or inward quietness (Job 20;20), where either πάσχειν or αἰσθάνεσθαι, rather than γινώσκειν, would be the true Greek equivalent. Thus it is the object in action and its effects, rather than the thing in itself, that is known; and in knowing there is also an activity of the subject in relation to the object. To know anything is to concern oneself about it, to take account of it, the will as well as the intelligence being involved.

"From Greek and Hebrew usage alike Bultmann distinguishes the 'Gnostic' usage of γινωσκειν and γνωσις. The decisive new factors he finds in the influence of the mysteries with their ecstatic vision, and of magic with its secret formulae of power. The Gnostic form ofknowledge is attached to the Greek in so far as it is a form of contemplation, θεωρια. But in its final form it lies beyond even the pure rational intuition of the eternal ideas which for Greek philosophy is the highest type of θεωρια. It is unlike all other knowledge; no longer an achievement of the human intellect, but a gift of God. It makes a man no longer that superior type of humanity, the philosopher ... but a being like God, or even a god himself. This is not properly Greek".

The influence of the mystery religions is of course an important debating point. But as C.H.Dodd points out: "it is doubtful whether when we have uttered the blessed word 'mystery-religions' we have really come much nearer to accounting for the kind of religion which has its centre in a mystical communion with God".(1)

When we come, then, to study the idea of knowledge in John, we have this background against which to measure his thought. And one important pointer is his refusal to use the noun, γνωσις, which obviously had all the implications of Gnosticism. But before we draw conclusions, there are two points to be made.

(1) The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, p. 154.

First, can we find any distinction between γινωσκειν and εἰδεναι in John? The original meaning of the words differed significantly, in that γινωσκειν stood for the process of learning, whereas εἰδεναι stood for complete knowledge. We could argue that there is a difference, for example in the use of εἰδεναι in 13;7, where it is used for "thou knowest not now", but γινωσκειν for "thou shalt know hereafter", when a further development in understanding is being contemplated. But on the other hand, we could argue quite the opposite from the same verse, and support our argument by quoting verses like 14;7, where they appear to be used almost interchangeably, and from the section 21;15-17, where the change in words (both of our group and the two words ἀγαπαν and φιλειν) is without vital significance. It is straining at a gnat to postulate significance in changes of words in these verses, although Westcott in his commentary says: "Peter ... throws himself wholly on the Lord, upon his absolute knowledge, and upon his special knowledge ... The Vulgate again fails to distinguish the two words".(1) It appears demonstrably true that the Vulgate grasped the heart of the matter rather more accurately.

Further, we must say that we can hardly distinguish the different uses of each verb in turn. I John 2;3 uses γινωσκειν twice, in quite different senses (of knowledge of a fact, and of knowledge of Christ) without any sense of difficulty or strain.

(1) St. John, commentary on 21;15-17.

In the gospel we have the same uses in 17;25, where the words describe the world's refusal to know God; Christ's knowledge of God; and the understanding of the disciples that Christ was sent by God. So, while we must endeavour to analyse the meanings of the words, we do well to remember that we are not moving in the world of the lexicographer, but of one who is trying to reduce to language what is essentially ineffable, "we beheld his glory". But we can arrange the various meanings as follows:

(a) To know, in the normal and usual sense of the word. E.g. in 11;57, "if any man know where he was", and 7;27, "no man knoweth". For this use of εἰδεναι, we can quote 9;29, "we know that God spake by Moses".

(b) To understand, come to know: both verbs are used in John 13;7, which speaks of Peter's comprehension of the significance of the washing of the disciples' feet. This, reflecting the original meaning of γινωσκειν, is not infrequent - e.g. in 8;43, "Why do you not understand my speech?", and in 12;16, "the disciples did not understand".

(c) To understand, of revealed truth: e.g., 13;17, "if ye know these things" and I John 2;20, "you know all things". Both verbs are used for this, εἰδεναι above, and γινωσκειν in 14;31, "the world may know that I love the Father", and 17;23, "the world may know that Thou hast sent me".

(d) To know God, or Christ: also of their knowledge of each other, and of their knowledge of men. This is a common expression in the text, perhaps most often used of the world not knowing God (here following the O.T. prophetic usage [1]), as in 1;10, "the world knew him not", 8;55, "ye have not known him", and 16;3, "they have not known the Father or me".

The positive idea of knowing God is less frequently used; the great example is in John 17;3, "that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent". Most interestingly, εἰδέναι is not used in this sense.

We may now draw the following conclusions:

First, we can say that the normal everyday use of the verbs occurs frequently, as we might expect. There is little profit in trying to read a 'mystical' sense into each occurrence of the words.

Second, we may say that knowledge, in the Gnostic sense, is present; this comes under our third meaning above, that of knowing or understanding revealed truth, where such knowledge is assumed to have importance for the one who possesses it.

Third, that knowing is a valid way of expressing union with Christ. For this, we must notice the reluctance to use εἰδέναι ,

(1) For a detailed study of this use, cf. C.H.Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, pp.154ff.

which can be explained by realising that any knowledge of God which is open to mortals in this life can at best be only partial and incomplete. To this extent the original meaning of the words still applies, in that the writer shrinks from saying that any knowledge of God is fit to be described as εἰδέναι , although Christ's knowledge of God is so described (e.g., 7;29). For an understanding of the meaning of the phrase, we turn again to Westcott:

"In such a connexion 'knowledge' expresses apprehension of the truth by the whole nature of man. It is not an acquaintance with facts as external, nor an intellectual conviction of their reality, but an appreciation of them (so to speak) as an influencing power into the very being of him who 'knows' them.(1) 'Knowledge is thus faith perfected; and in turn it passes at last into sight. It is remarkable that the noun is not found in the writings of St. John; the verb on the contrary is relatively more frequent in these than in any other section of the N.T. As in the corresponding case of 'faith', St. John dwells on the active exercise of the power, and not on the abstract idea".(2)

(1) Cf. also C.H.Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, p.151f, quoted above, pp.86ff.
(2) Westcott, Commentary on St. John, chapter 17 verse 3.

The verb μενειν in John.

This verb is one that is frequently used in both the gospel and the epistle to describe union with Christ, and we proceed to a study of it in these writings.

Section A - occurrences of the verb.

The Gospel:

1. With ἐπι

"The Spirit abode upon him (1;32); they continued there not many days (2;12); the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day (19;31).

2. The verb used absolutely:

"Master, where dwellest thou? (1;38); they saw where he dwelt (1;39); he abode there two days (4;40); therefore your sin remaineth (9;41); except a corn of wheat fall into the g round and die, it abideth alone (12;24); that your fruit should remain (15;16); if I will that he tarry till I come ... (21;22).

3. With παρα

"They abode with him that day (1;39); he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you (14;17); I have spoken, being yet present with you (14;25).

4. With ἐν

"Ye have not his word abiding in you (5;38); he... dwelleth

in me, and I in him (6;56); abide in me .. it abide in the vine .. abide in me (15;4); he that abideth in me .. (15;5); if a man abide not in me (15;6); if ye abide in me, and my words abide in you (15;7); continue ye in my love (15;9); abide in my love .. and I abide in His love (15;10); Jesus abode still in Galilee (7;9); and there he abode (10;40); he abode two days in the place where he was (11;6); there continued with his disciples (11;54); if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed (8;31); the servant abideth not in the house for ever (8;35); whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness (12;46); the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works (14;10).

5. With εἰς

"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat that endures unto everlasting life (6;27); the son abideth ever (8;35); we have heard that Christ abideth for ever (12;34).

<u>Also</u>: the only compound verb is used in 8;7, "they continued asking him".

<u>The Epistles</u>:

1. With ἐν

"He abideth in him (2;6); anointing abideth in you (2;27); abide in him (2;28); he that loveth his brother abideth in the light (2;10); the word of God abideth in you (2;14); let that ... abide

in you. If it remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father (2;24); ye shall abide in him (2;27); whosoever abideth in him (3;6); his seed remaineth in him (3;9); he ... dwelleth in him (3;24); he that loveth not ... abideth in death (3;14); how dwelleth the love of God in him? (3;17); if we love.. God dwelleth in us (4;12); hereby we know that we dwell in God, and He in us (4;13); God dwelleth in him (4;15); he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him (4;16); abideth not in the doctrine of Christ ... abideth in the doctrine of Christ (II, v.9).

2. With τίς

"He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever (I,2;17).

3. With μετά

"They would no doubt have continued with us (I,2;19).

Section B - the meanings of the verb.

This verb is obviously an important one in Johannine thought; a rough count shows that it occurs some 36 times in the gospel, 27 times in the epistles, as against 9 times in the synoptic gospels and 17 times in the Pauline corpus. As we might expect, it has different meanings.

The lexicons uniformly give the usual meanings in secular Greek; they are:

1. To remain, abide, of place and time (Moulton & Milligan).
   To live, dwell, lodge; to remain, continue, abide; to persist, last, remain (Arndt & Gingrich).
2. To await - used transitively.

In the gospel, we can see three stages in the use of the verb - first, the normal "practical" use; then a "bridge" where we see the normal use alongside John's special meanings; and finally, those verses where the word has an entirely spiritual significance. We can illustrate these stages as follows:

1. The normal use of the verb; every time the verb is used absolutely, it has such a normal meaning; e.g., "Master, where dwellest thou?" (1;38, N.E.B., "where are you staying?"); or, in 15;16, "that your fruit should remain" (N.E.B.,"fruit that shall last"). We can also include certain uses with prepositions, e.g. with ἐπί : "they continued there not many days" (2;12, N.E.B., "they did not stay there long"); with παρά : "they abode with him that day" (1;39, N.E.B., "spent the rest of the day with him"); and with ἐν : "Jesus abode still in Galilee" (7;9, N.E.B., "He stayed behind in Galilee").
2. Then there are the "bridges" by which we can trace the development of the word into one of John's special vehicles for

conveying the truth of union with Christ. Such references are particularly clear in John 15. Verse 4 speaks of the branches "remaining" or "abiding" in the vine - a normal, clear illustration; and then immediately John speaks of Christ "abiding" in the believer, and of the believer "abiding" in Christ. "Abiding is the correlative to following; and according to the manifold significance of this word it expresses the calm waiting for further light, the patient resting in a fixed position, the continuance in life".(1)

3. Then we come to the peculiar sense in which John uses the word; it is used to speak of God - but in the gospel, only of God dwelling in Christ; in the epistle, of God dwelling in the Christian. It is used of Christ abiding in the believer, and this is perhaps the best known of all the uses in these writings: "the believer is quickened by Christ's presence, and he is himself incorporated in Christ".(2) Thus it is used at the same time of the believer's being in Christ: "the love of Christ is, as it were, the atmosphere in which the disciple lives. It is not something realised at a momentary crisis, but enjoyed continuously".(3) And we must also notice that it is used of men, as in 12;46, "abiding in darkness" as "being the normal state of men without Christ".(4)

These then are the surface meanings of the word; but what is the actual significance of using this word of Christ and the

(1) Westcott: St. John, p. 305.
(2) Ibid., on "abiding in Christ".
(3) Ibid., on 15;9.
(4) Ibid., on 12;46.

believer? Surely to demonstrate that the union into which he has entered is mutual, intimate and permanent. The development already referred to [1] can be repeated in its proper context here.

In 1;38-39 we are told that the disciples asked where Jesus dwelt; at his invitation they came and saw, and "they abode with him that day". Westcott comments: "if they could be with Christ, that, and nothing less than that, would satisfy their want". [2] And later: "the act of faith goes first; knowledge is placed definitely after ... John is here looking back upon the date of his own spiritual birth". [3] The closest union possible then was to abide with Christ. Hence we can see that, when Christ had died and risen, and being "with him" was no longer possible in a purely physical sense, being "in him" was the spiritual equivalent, and that "abiding in him" expressed most admirably the closeness and perhaps in a new way, was able to express the permanence of that union. For while the disciples could be with him one day, the next they might not be with him; but being "in him" is a permanent condition.

So we have a word which has been transformed; but we are not allowed to forget its original meaning; indeed, we are encouraged to remember that meaning, and to grapple with the significance of its being used of the union of Christ and his followers.

(1) Above, p.43.
(2) Westcott: St. John, on 1;38ff.
(3) Ibid.

The Nature of Union with Christ in the New Testament.

We come not to the most difficult part of the theme, and to one which has excited controversy over a good number of years; but our earlier study of the basic language which the New Testament uses in connection with this concept will be of great assistance in our future study.

It is proposed to divide the discussion into its constituent parts by posing, and attempting to answer, the following questions:

1. Is this concept mysticism?
2. What does it mean?
3. How is it entered upon?

And as our discussion will be concerned mainly with the idea of union with Christ in Paul, there will be need for a further question:

4. Is this consistent with the rest of the New Testament?

I: Is the conception of union with Christ in Paul Mysticism?

An affirmative answer would appear to be given by the titles of many of the works on Pauline theology which have appeared, from Schweitzer's "The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle" up to Wikenhauser's "Pauline Mysticism". In the preface Wikenhauser says:

"the mystical union between the faithful and Christ has been described as the heart of St. Paul's piety".(1) Deissmann says: "there is no doubt that the assurance of Damascus, 'Christ in me', with the corresponding assurance 'I in Christ' is the really creative power for his (Paul's) religious thought and language. These mystic experiences have concentrated in the deep and sensitive soul of the convert an inexhaustible religious energy".(2) Again, "we must not ... isolate the Damascus experience, but regard it as the foundation occurrence in mysticism, as the inaugurating mystical experience of this religious genius".(3)

But it is necessary to qualify the use of the word "mysticism" in Paul, as is realised by most of the scholars who discuss the word. We can accept that Paul's idea of union with Christ comes within the sphere of mysticism, but "we have to realise that there are important differences even within the range of what may properly be called mystical experience",(4) and indeed that "in some degree.. every real Christian is a mystic in the Pauline sense".(5) We must point out three distinctions between mysticism as it is generally understood and the mysticism we find in Paul.

First, there is in Paul no absorption of the finite in the infinite, no confusion of the persons of God and man. "We must

(1) Pauline Mysticism, p.9.
(2) The Religion of Jesus and the Faith of Paul, p.201.
(3) Ibid., p.185.
(4) J.S. Stewart, A Man in Christ, p.161.
(5) J.S. Stewart, A Man in Christ, p.162.

guard against conveying the impression that such union implies virtual absorption of a pantheistic kind. Nothing was further from Paul's thoughts. Here again his doctrine runs along a different line from that of Philo. 'When the divine light blazes forth,' said Philo, 'the human light sets; and when the former sets, the latter rises. The reason within us leaves its abode at the arrival of the divine Spirit, but when the Spirit departs the reason returns to its place'.(1) This suggests that that the divine immanence does is to impair or even destroy the distinctiveness of the human personality. But there is certainly no hint of any such idea in Paul. He never thought of Christ as overriding any man's individuality. Union with Christ, so far from obliterating the believer's personal qualities and characteristics, throws these into greater relief".(2)

Other witnesses are plentiful: "St. Paul does not represent his own personality as 'completely fused' with Christ",(3) "Even Deissmann realises that the paradox 'I yet not I' modifies profoundly any mysticism that can be attributed to Paul".(4) This at once marks off the Pauline mysticism from what is generally called mysticism, and has provoked the comment "I cannot regard as mystical a relationship between two persons where each retains his separate personality".(5) Perhaps not; but if we can regard such

(1) Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres Sit, 249, quoted by J.S.Stewart.
(2) J.S.Stewart, A Man in Christ, p.166.
(3) J.K.S.Reid, Our Life in Christ, p.21.
(4) J.K.S.Reid, " " " " , pp.22-23.
(5) P.Feine, Apostel Paulus, pp.559ff, quoted by Wikenhauser, Pauline Mysticism, p.95.

a relationship as mystical, then we are content to call St. Paul a mystic.

The second major qualification of the name "mysticism" as applied to the thought of Paul is that in Paul's view this experience is not confined to a selected or gifted few, but is open to all. "St. Paul makes it quite clear that this mystical union with Christ was not a personal privilege reserved for himself or a chosen few. It is a precious gift which God gives to every Christian, and it carries with it serious obligations".(1) "This union with God was not the reward only of a privileged minority. Outside the comparatively small circle of elect, initiated souls, the crowning experience remained unknown ... This was the Philonic mysticism - noble so far as it went, but too esoteric to be a Gospel, far too restricted and aloof to be good news for a perishing world. What Paul by the grace of God discovered was that the glorious experience was waiting for any soul which gave itself in faith to Christ. Not only so; such union with the divine, he knew, need be no transient splendour ... it could be the steady radiance of a light unsetting ... Unhealthy reactions such union could never engender".(2) We have ample testimony to this in the writings of Paul - or those ascribed to Paul - as in Colossians 1;28, "We admonish everyone without

(1) Wikenhauser, Pauline Mysticism, p.9.
(2) J.S.Stewart, A Man in Christ, p.162-3.

distinction, we instruct everyone in all the ways of wisdom, so as to present each one of you as a mature member of Christ's body".

This is of course an important qualification of mysticism; for the very heart of Paul's evangelical concern was that he had a gospel for everyman, and that there were no selected people - no "respect of persons" - with the God who had revealed Himself in the person of Jesus Christ.

The third major qualification is that in Paul's thought there is no cleavage whatsoever between his 'mysticism' and his ethics. "Paul himself was quite aware of the danger of mystical excitement alone, and (that) his reacting mysticism was, as a matter of fact, united with an active ethic of unparalleled intensity".(1) And Deissmann finely concluded: "what we, in our study call Mysticism, the great religious practical man called Faith; and what we call Ethics, he called Love".(2) J.S. Stewart comments, "There is, of course, no such thing as a union with Christ which does not have the most far-reaching effects in the moral sphere. The man who comes to be 'in Christ' has found the supreme ethical dynamic.. So with that divine union in which Paul's religion centres; it is ethical through and through, never for a moment is it anything but ethical; and yet it is in simple justice to the facts that we

(1) The Religion of Jesus and the Faith of Paul, Deissmann, pp.246-247.
(2) Ibid., p.249.

press beyond the idea of a moral to that of a mystical union".[1]

A helpful concept is that of Deissmann, that of acting and reacting mysticism. He gives a general definition of mysticism: "there exists an immediate contact, and 'I' speaks to a 'thou', unites with Him; in Him lives, moves, and has its being. That is the general description of what we call mysticism".[2]

"Now there are two main types which seem to me to be distinguished from one another. The one type is everywhere present where the mystic regards his communion with God as an experience in which the action of God upon him produces a reaction towards God. The other type of mysticism is that in which the mystic regards his communion with God as his own action, from which a reaction follows on the part of Deity".[3]

J.S. Stewart summarises Deissmann's ideas of acting and reacting with approval, and adds: "Paul's mysticism was essentially of the reacting kind. Christ, not Paul, held the initiative. Union with the eternal was not a human achievement; it was the gift of God. It came, not by any spiritual exercises, but by God's self-revelation, God's self-impartation. The words "it pleased God to reveal His Son in me" which remind us that the Damascus experience itself was the foundation of the apostle's mysticism, are Paul's emphatic way of saying that God's action

(1) A Man in Christ, p. 164.
(2) The Religion of Jesus and the Faith of Paul, p.195.
(3) Ibid., p.195.

always holds the priority; His servant simply reacts to the action of God. Here, as everywhere in Paul, all is of grace".[1]

In this greatly qualified sense, then, we can speak of Paul's 'mysticism'; and certainly it is a helpful word to retain, because much of the idea of union with Christ does shade into mysticism; but we must always bear in mind the qualifications outlined above, and that it is the reaction of the Christian to God's act in Christ.

(1) A Man in Christ, p.164.

II: What does union with Christ mean in the New Testament?

We come now to the section of our study which leads us right to the heart of our theme, and into some of the most complex ideas in the entire range of the New Testament. We would do well to take as our starting point the quotation by J.K.S. Reid from the work which so greatly stimulated the interest in the 'in Christ' idea.

"The phrase (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) characterises the relation of the Christian with Jesus Christ as an existence in the pneumatic Christ locally conceived. For this thought there is no analogy in any other relation of man with man. But we may clarify it by the analogy of the concept underlying the expressions ἐν πνεύματι and ἐν τῷ Θεῷ, the concept of dwelling in a pneuma-element comparable with air. The question whether the idea of locality which is the basis of the formula is to be understood in its proper sense or merely as a rhetorical metaphor cannot be certainly decided; but the first possibility has the higher degree of probability. In any case, whether understood literally or metaphorically, the formula is the characteristic Pauline expression for the most profound fellowship conceivable between the Christian and the living Christ".(1) Then, later,

(1) Die N.T. Formel, 70: quoted by J.K.S.Reid, "Our Life in Christ", pp.16-17.

he quotes the famous analogy: "Just as the air of life, which we breathe, is 'in' us and fills us, and yet we at the same time live in this air and breathe it, so it is also with the Christ-intimacy of the Apostle Paul; Christ in him, he in Christ".[1]

After a detailed study of texts and phrases, Wikenhauser's summary of the concept of union with Christ demands close attention: "Paul uses the phrase 'in Christ' to express his conviction that the Christian lives on a plane where his entire life is profoundly influenced by a divine power, and where to some degree the very quality of his life has been changed. This plane is confined to life before death, as we see by examining the Apostle's use of the other phrase 'with Christ' [2]... When Paul uses the expression 'in Christ', he is not thinking of physical location in Christ nor of being under the influence of an impersonal power ... In Paul's mind, to be in Christ means being under the power and influence of the personal Christ.

"An instructive parallel is found in I Cor. 7:14, 'the unbelieving husband is sanctified by (ἐν) the believing wife; and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the believing husband'. Here Paul thinks of the Christian husband or wife as a person. It is clear how he envisages the sanctification of the pagan by the Christian partner; the Christian exercises a sanctifying influence

(1) Pauline Mysticism, pp.63-64.
(2) But cf. above, pp. 37-40, for a refutation of the view that 'with Christ' refers to the future state alone.

on the pagan, and the pagan partner is under this influence; in other words, he is within the sphere of a personal power which affects him strongly. There is no question here of any idea of spatial presence. Similarly we must conceive of the spiritual Christ as a spiritual and personal power which continually influences all who have entered a vital union with him".(1)

Wikenhauser's summary is clear and concise; but we may question whether in his outright dismissal of any "spatial" idea he is being true to the mind of Paul. One of the most interesting features of the formal introductions to these letters is a verbal parallel, which must have struck the Christians who first heard them: e.g., with a literal translation: "The Church of God which is in Corinth, sanctified in Christ Jesus", I Cor. 1;1-2. Again, "... the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi", Phil. 1;1; and Colossians 1;1-2, "The saints in Colossae and faithful brethren in Christ".

Formal these introductions may be; but surely there is more than a hint that a spatial analogy can be helpful in grasping the meaning of 'in Christ'? Just as they lived in Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi or Colossae, so they lived in Christ. Just as all their lives, all their relationships, were in Corinth etc., so they were all in Christ: and just as the different places affected and to

(1) Pauline Mysticism, pp.63-64.

some extent governed their lives, so did being 'in Christ'. We cannot, of course, make a great deal of this; but we can rise to defend Paul against those who would try to narrow him down to a twentieth century precision, for we feel with J.S. Stewart that "Paul was interested in speculation ... only for its help in making explicit the meaning of Jesus' lordship, and so leading to a deeper surrender to Him in faith and hope and love".(1)

On the similar idea of Christ dwelling in us, Wikenhauser has the explanation: "When Paul was converted on the road to Damascus, he saw Christ as a glorified spiritual Being, and ever afterwards he was aware that Christ - whom he had once persecuted in his followers - held his whole being, transformed his soul, transferred him to a new life, and filled him with a heavenly power. In view of this it is quite natural that, instead of speaking of an impersonal divine power, he should speak of the Lord Triumphant who held him and changed his being. At Damascus Christ had personally intervened in Paul's life, and had changed him from a persecutor to a vessel of election. Paul could use the expressions which he does, because he regarded Christ Triumphant as a spiritual Being free from the limitations of time and place which bound Christ during his life on earth".(2)

There is no doubt whatsoever that Paul conceived of his

(1) A Man in Christ, p.23.
(2) Pauline Mysticism, p.89.

relationship with Christ as a personal relationship with a living person. Only this can make sense of many of his statements; but we must say most emphatically that this was no "man to man" relationship. He remained true to the definition of the reacting mystic, and always insisted it was Christ who laid hold on him, and emphasised his utter dependence on Christ.

We continue with Wikenhauser: "Paul regards this union as something real, an objective state, which is brought about by becoming a Christian and thereby being joined to the Person of Christ Triumphant ... Christians are united with Christ quite independently of their momentary disposition of soul".(1)

He goes on to a discussion of Weber's work on this subject, from the Protestant point of view, and quotes from him: "'Paul's mysticism is the faith which lives in God's presence in Christ. This faith, which experiences the presence of God, looks forward towards the triumph of eternity when God's presence shall become permanent'. In other words, leading one's life in the presence of the living Christ is what is meant by being in Christ. Paul's consciousness is filled with Christ; Christ is the focus of his interest, and the thought of Christ influences him everywhere".(2)

"Weber is more profound and more accurate than others of this

(1) Pauline Mysticism, p.93.
(2) Ibid., p.97.

school. But his idea of fellowship with Christ, when analysed closely, dissolves into something merely subjective ... It is not clear whether (this effect) is due really to the living Christ Triumphant, or if it is Paul's own work, achieved by constant intensive concentration of the powers of his soul upon Christ. As I understand Weber, Paul's statements convey to him merely that Christ is present in man's consciousness, but they do not mean that he is objectively present independently of the subject's awareness".(1)

Now it is impossible to argue that such an idea of fellowship with Christ was not present in Paul's thought; the mistake made all too often in dealing with this subject is to postulate an "either .. or", when a "both .. and" would be much fairer to Paul himself and to the great concept with which he is struggling. But undeniably, the emphasis on the relation of the believer to Christ in faith does tend to obscure the objective reality (if we can use such a phrase of the thinking of one who refused to distinguish subjective and objective as we do) of the relation.

"It is not that the interpretation is necessarily wrong in itself, but that it focuses attention on the nature of the relation connoted by the phrase and disregards the basis on which

(1) Pauline Mysticism, pp.97-98.

the relation, whatever its nature, alone rests. It is what the grace of God in Jesus Christ has done that makes the relation a possible and real thing".[1]

It is interesting that Wikenhauser and Reid, starting from such different places, should both feel the vagueness which an undue emphasis on the relation in itself produces. Recent thought [2] has tended towards more objectivity, and a greater emphasis on the action of God which lies behind the 'in Christ' idea; we shall return to this when we discuss the next question, of entry into the state of being 'in Christ'.

But this concept, and the experience which it expresses, did not cease with the death of St. Paul. And we can turn from what can be the barren and cold atmosphere of academic cloisters to the warmth of personal experience. This is a vital part of our study, for as T.R.Glover has wisely said, "the secrets of personality are only to be made out and known in one way - by identification and surrender".[3]

If we make due alldwances for the excessively flowery language of a past age, we shall find in the experience of Hudson Taylor a very real understanding of what union with Christ means;

(1)J.K.S.Reid, Our Life in Christ, p.30.
(2)E.g., Neugebauer, 'In Christus'.
(3)Paul of Tarsus, p.211.

Taylor faced the question when he was in great difficulties in the early days of the China Inland Mission, and his own letters give a picture of the development of his understanding:

"All the time I felt assured that there was in Christ all I needed, but the practical question was how to get it out ... As gradually the light was dawning on me, I saw that faith was the only pre-requisite, was the hand to lay hold on His fulness and make it my own. But I had not this faith. I strove for it, but it would not come... I prayed for faith, but it came not. What was I to do?" (1)

A letter from a fellow missionary suddenly crystallized the whole problem: "How to get faith strengthened? Not by striving after faith, but by resting on the Faithful One". (2)

"As I read I saw it all! 'If we believe not, He abideth faithful'. I looked to Jesus and saw (and when I saw, oh, how joy flowed!) that He had said, 'I will never leave you'. 'Ah, there is rest!', I thought. 'I have striven in vain to rest in Him. I'll strive no more. For has He not promised to abide with me - never to leave me, never to fail me?" (3)

(1) Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission: the Growth of a Work of God. Dr. and Mrs Howard Taylor, p.175.
(2) Ibid., p.175.
(3) Ibid., p.175.

The Keswick Convention of today is the place where this kind of preaching and teaching is most clearly seen at the present; and from one of the Bible readings given in July 1965 by the Rev. J.R.W. Stott, we can find how truly objective the emphasis on union with Christ is. The basis of the address was Romans 6, where union with Christ is the theme, and what follows is a much condensed version of the reading given.

"An understanding of the meaning and significance of union with Christ in Paul is perhaps best gained by those who have shared something of Paul's 'mystical' experience - though Paul himself would have denied in the most emphatic manner that this experience was not to be shared by all men.

"There are five stages in this understanding of Romans 6, and they are as follows:

First, Christian baptism is baptism into Christ. This we find in Romans 6;3, "baptised into Christ Jesus'. The use of the preposition εἰς signifies that baptism symbolises the new and intimate union into which the Christian has entered - into Christ. Baptism indicates that 'God places us <u>into</u> Christ Jesus', that He 'grafts us <u>into</u> Christ Jesus'. Not that baptism is the means of salvation - after all, the opening chapters of Romans have been

emphasising that it is faith that justifies us; but baptism is the sign of what faith has done.

Second, that baptism into Christ is baptism into His death and resurrection. In this section, Paul is emphasising that union with Christ is a total thing - we are united with a Christ who died and rose again, with a Christ who died to the old life and rose to a new life with God. Thus the believer has shared in the death and resurrection of Christ.

Third, Christ's death was a death to sin, and His resurrection was a resurrection to God. There is no warrant at all for misunderstanding the thought to say that we are now dead to sin in the sense that sin has no longer any attraction for us - which is manifestly untrue in everyday experience. 'We have died to sin in the sense that by union with Christ we have borne its penalty. Consequently our old life is finished, and a new life is begun'.

Fourth, we must reckon it so. As these things are facts resulting from the actions of God Himself, we must reckon, count on them as being true. There is no idea of pretence, but of realisation and grasping the truth.(1)

Fifth, as those who are in fact alive from the dead, we must not let sin reign in our mortal bodies, but yield ourselves to God. This brings us in the logic of Paul's thought to the idea of

(1) For a fuller justification of this definition of the meaning of λογίζεσθαι, see above pp.80-82.

slavery to God - for we now live for Him as we have received life by Him. And this constitutes the complete answer to the question of 'continuing in sin' - it is manifestly impossible for the Christian to argue that, in view of what God has done".(1)

This clear and interesting exegesis of Romans 6 is in line with the conclusions of our earlier word studies (2), and very much in line with the thought of the scholars quoted above. And so we can proceed to a personal summary of the concept of union with Christ as presented by Paul; it appears to divide into eight different stages.

1. God has acted in Christ: this is the basic supposition on which everything else depends. In the Person of Christ the new age hasbroken in on the scene of human life. We find this foundation for Paul's thought in different texts, e.g., "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself", II Cor. 5;19; "Christ whom God put forward as an expiation", Rom. 3;25; and the whole of Ephesians 2;4-10, which puts the emphasis on God's action. Without this, the whole of Paul's theology and interpretation of the person and work of Christ would fall to the ground.

2. Men share in this new age and new life by their relation to Christ: this is the next stage. "He is the source of your life

(1) Cf. reports in "The Life of Faith", 16th and 23rd July 1965.

in Christ Jesus", I Cor. 1;30; "If any one is in Christ, he is a new creation", II Cor. 5;17. This point is so obviously made throughout the Pauline writings that further examples are unnecessary -the underlying theme is clear.

3. This relationship to Christ is called being 'in Christ', and signifies the closest possible relationship. Far from setting Deissmann against Wikenhauser, or arguing for or against Weber's conclusions, we can conclude that the phrase is intended to present an intimate union. This is illustrated in the texts in two ways: first, by the idea of the marriage relationship in Eph. 5;22ff, where it is the reality lying behind the marriage union; and second, by the analogy of the Body, in I Cor. 12 and Eph. 4;15 etc. Again, the correlative, of Christ in us, is used as in Ephesians 3;17 and more explicitly in II Cor. 13;5, "know you not that Jesus Christ is in you?"

4. Our part in this, and the link by which we are joined to Christ, is our faith. This is, in itself, a gift of God (or so we take Eph. 2;8), which despite the difficulty of placing responsibility on man and yet allowing all to be of God, does yet describe the experience of the Christian. Paul goes out of his way to deny that anything we are or can do can in any way merit God's grace, and this includes the operation of faith. In Romans

5;17, our appropriation of Christ is called "receiving", with an emphasis on God's action towards us.

We have already seen that "faith" and "faithfulness" cannot be separated in Paul's thought,(1) and we shall require to discuss this further when we come to deal with the entering into the state of being 'in Christ'.

5. The new relationship into which we have entered is not a mechanical one, but a personal one. The emphasis on union with the death and resurrection of Christ is an unhappy one, as it tends to obscure the fact that in Paul the emphasis is on union with Christ - who died and rose again. A grasp of this paves the way to escape the dilemma of the invitation to abound in sin so as to experience the abounding grace of God.

This in turn is the springboard for Paul's ethical demands. In almost every epistle this turn can be seen - as in Romans 12;1-2 where it is based on the "mercies of God" in the first eleven chapters; and in II Cor. 6;1, Gal. 5;24, Eph. 4 etc. - significantly, towards the end of the epistles.

6. This personal experience - so it was in Paul's case, and normally is - is the entrance into a wide fellowship, the church of the New Testament, pictured as the "Body of Christ". Perhaps

(1) Cf. above, pp.47-60.

this is the best and most widely used analogy in the New Testament; certainly it is clear that while we cannot make Paul's gospel into a social and communal experience only, we must not make the mistake of thinking in purely individual terms. Paul used the analogy of the body to emphasise that the relation to Christ involves relation to others who are also 'in him'. Indeed, when a man is 'in Christ' he discovers himself to be a member of the new Israel of God.(1)

7. This new life which we receive at the time of our "baptism into Christ" is the life of the age to come. The life beyond death is an extension of this life, but a fuller experience of it; the life beyond is consistently described as being "with Christ" (so in Phil. 1;21-23), but the phrase is also used for our present existence (2), emphasising that there is no essential change.

8. The benefits of Christ's death on our behalf are ours automatically on our being 'in him'. God gives us all things in Christ, and "in him we are complete", Col. 2;10. We do not receive pardon, peace, strength and guidance as instalments of our experience, but have them all in Christ. This is the answer to the distortion of Paul's theology called "saving faith", for

(1) Cf. the teaching of Jewish Apocalyptic, as in R.H.Charles, "Between the Old and New Testaments", p.52.
(2) Cf. above, pp. 37-40.

any faith must be saving, as it places us in Christ, the place of God's full and complete provision.

This summary will be helpful when we come to consider how the concept of union with Christ in the Johannine writings compares with that of Paul. But we now proceed to our third question, that of entrance into the state of "being in Christ".

III: How is "in Christ" entered upon?

This is the next stage in a logical development of our theme, and brings us to the logical conclusions of the "in Christ" theme in Paul. There are broadly three main answers to consider - that union with Christ is brought about by baptism, by faith, or by God's action. It is at once obvious that these three possibilities are by no means mutually exclusive, and our answer will almost inevitably contain them all to a greater or lesser degree; but we can study them one at a time.

First, then, the arguments in support of the contention that union with Christ is brought about by baptism. Wikenhauser is an excellent advocate of this theme, to which he is of course largely committed, as defending a set bulwark of his Church. But in his treatment of it, he begins by demolishing much vague and meaningless use of faith as the means of union. He follows the summary of P. Wernle: "Through faith in Christ, Paul finds the justice which observance of the law did not bring. And from this faith there surges forth a mystical fellowship with Christ which is not simply a higher degree of faith, nor in any way opposed to faith. This fellowship is the deeper meaning and value of faith, for it is an interior contact with the object of

of faith, and it transforms the individual into Christ - or the Spirit of Christ - who is grasped in faith".[1] Wikenhauser adds his own comment: "To use a metaphor, faith is the bud, and mysticism is the flower which develops from the bud. In other words, mystical union with Christ is simply fully developed faith in Christ. Such writers take no account of a real objective fellowship of life and being between Christ and Christians".[2] From this promising start, he goes on to say "Paul taught that this objective relationship is established by a sacramental act, namely by Baptism. He says clearly that mystical union with Christ is brought about by this act".[3]

To support his argument, he brings forward certain texts: the main ones are Romans 6;3, "Have you forgotten that when we were baptised into union with Christ Jesus we were baptised into his death?"; I Cor. 12;13, "For indeed we were all brought into one body by baptism, in the one Spirit, whether we are Jews or Greeks ..."; and Gal. 3;26-27, "Through faith you are all sons of God in union with Christ Jesus. Baptized into union with him, you have all put on Christ as a garment". He maintains that Romans 6 "assumes that Baptism creates such an intimate union between man and Christ that the Christian undergoes exactly what Christ underwent in his death and resurrection, namely

(1) Pauline Mysticism, p.110, quoting Wernle.
(2) Pauline Mysticism, p.110.
(3) Ibid., p.111.

death to sin and the attainment of a new life. Indeed, we can only do full justice to Paul's thought by saying that the Christian has gained a share in Christ's own death and resurrection, he has died with Christ and has risen again with him. This can be true only if a real union of life has been established between Christ and the Christian, if they have in some sense 'been planted together' and have become a unity".(1)

We do Paul and our cause no service whatsoever by trying to twist the language to mean what we think it ought to mean; and certainly the texts which are quoted do link union with Christ with baptism; but it is a long way from that admission to saying that baptism is the means by which we are united with Christ, and we have many a difficulty in our way should we attempt to do this. In Romans itself, on which Wikenhauser leans so heavily, the entire teaching of the first five chapters was concerned with the necessity of faith to put us right with God - baptism was not so much as mentioned.(2) And even the reference in Romans 6;3 is more by way of an illustration than a statement of doctrine. We have no mention of baptism in the great passage of Ephesians 2, where the fact of "being saved" is attributed to grace, through faith. But although Wikenhauser says "we may say without qualification that Baptism, and not faith, establishes

(1) Pauline Mysticism, p.116.
(2) Cf. above, p.114-5.

the mystical relationship with Christ",[1] he is not altogether consistent with his own standpoint. For he goes on to discuss the relation of baptism and faith, and ends up not far from what is normally regarded as the reformed position.

He quotes Meinertz with approval: "In the Pauline sense faith is the acceptance of God's entire economy of salvation, and it includes the sacrament of Baptism".[2] Here we are indeed close to common ground, though we might prefer to say that faith includes baptism, and that baptism without faith - to Paul - is meaningless. But he can go on, after an unsuccessful attempt to clear the hurdle of Col. 2;12, "For in baptism you were buried with him, in baptism also you were raised to life through your faith in the active power of God who raised him from the dead", to say that "there is not the slightest reason for thinking that Paul considered faith as the source of fellowship with Christ",[3] we must part company. He has to overlook many parts of the New Testament - particularly Romans 1 - 4 - to reach such an extreme position.

In view of such an extreme statement, what follows is well nigh incomprehensible: "faith does not establish union with Christ, but it is the indispensable condition for the

(1) Pauline Mysticism, p.123.
(2) Ibid., p.122.
(3) Ibid., p.125.

establishment of this union. We can say without qualification that without faith there is no union with Christ. Union with Christ means an extremely close relationship with Christ Triumphant, a real participation with him in his being and life. But this relationship presupposes faith in the resurrection of Christ, in his spiritual existence, and in the possibility of him influencing human life. Only one who has attained this faith can enter upon a mystical relationship with Christ. In other words, faith is the necessary condition for receiving Baptism, which establishes union with Christ".(1)

Here we seem once again to approach common ground; but the next sentence betrays that the definition of faith with which Wikenhauser is working is not the same as that which we reached earlier.(2) "When Paul speaks of faith he means the agreement of the intellect with the content of the Gospel message".(3) But another sentence makes further discussion without point: "when Paul uses the word 'faith' he does not refer to grasping the living Christ, nor to surrendering oneself to him. Faith for Paul was rather the acceptance of the message of salvation which God had wrought through Christ, and therefore profession of the Christian religion".(4)

(1) Pauline Mysticism, p.129.
(2) Cf. above, pp. 54-60.
(3) Pauline Mysticism, p.129.
(4) Ibid., p.132.

Now it is at once quite clear that there is little point in discussing baptism, as Wikenhauser obviously takes baptism to include "grasping the living Christ, or .. surrendering oneself to him", which we take to be included in faith. And so we proceed to discuss the idea that it is by faith that we enter into this relationship of being 'in Christ'.

Our earlier study has shown how far apart our understanding of Pauline "faith" is from that of Wikenhauser.(1) But perhaps he is not so far from our own point of view as he appears to say, as we can see if we look not at his language, but at what his language can be made to mean.

"It might be said ... that Paul's union with Christ certainly began when he was personally seized at Damascus, and not at his Baptism, even though he was baptized shortly after the vision",(2) and although he flatly denies this, he does not answer Deissmann's statement (which he quotes), "At any rate, it was the vision at Damascus, and not Baptism, which was the decisive factor for Paul".(3) He makes no attempt to defend his hypotheses against the argument that Paul is nowhere represented as saying that his baptism meant so much to him, or the argument that in Philippians 3 there is no direct reference to it.

(1) Above, pp.54-60.
(2) Pauline Mysticism, p.144.
(3) Ibid., p.115.

But our earlier study of faith showed us that we cannot separate faith from faith's object, but that the connection between the faith of the believer and the faithfulness of Christ was something absolutely essential to Pauline teaching, as faith brought us into touch with him as the ultimate reality. And so, in a sense, it is not possible to discuss the place of faith alone in the context of union with Christ, but only to discuss faith in connection with what God has done.

This is the theme of J.K.S. Reid: he points out that in his own study, the question of our need "only to accept what has already been made available for us has not been answered; it has been by-passed". And in a sense the entire faith-baptism controversy is beside the point, for it tends to close our eyes to the fact that both schools of thought assume the work of God. Reid quotes Brunner: "The ecstasy of the Christian's relation to Christ is independent of all subjective experiences. It means that one is placed at a point outside the stream of experience, on the further bank, which cannot therefore be touched by the stress of experience any more, because where I stand is not the position I have chosen; it is not my doing, but has been chosen by God, because it is God's act, in an objective fact, because it is the cross of Christ".(1) "The 'in Christ' posits a unique

(1) J.K.S.Reid, Our Life in Christ, p.93;
Brunner, The Mediator, p.526.

relation, one which is prepared for us and into which we have been taken. Then indeed we find our true and authentic self, but we do so as we discover that we have been taken by another and are thus grounded in him".(2)

This is in keeping with the Pauline insight that faith itself is not in any sense a "work" which obtains for us God's salvation in Christ;(3) faith is rather the acceptance of God's work, and of His placing of us in Christ. "... The biblical witness is unmistakable, it is clearly to assert that even faith is the work of God. Certainly the faith in question is yours, or Peter's, or the Corinthians'; but the point made is that wherever faith is it is the work of God in that person. We have seen that the biblical writers seem untroubled by the question how, if faith is God's work, it is also mine or yours or his. They are content to affirm that faith is ours by God's work of the Holy Spirit in us". No wonder Reid concludes: "We must look resolutely at predestination".(4)

This he proceeds to do, realising that an emphasis on the action of God in placing us in Christ is a truly Biblical one, and that it inevitably moves the vital part from faith/baptism to God's action in Christ. He develops a strand in Pauline thought,

(2) Our Life in Christ, p.94.
(3) As in, e.g., Eph. 2;8.
(4) Our Life in Christ, p.117.

to which we shall return, to mean practical universalism, though he himself qualifies this: "if those for whom Christ died are thereby assumed into the status of being in Christ, then unbelievers and atheists have also been thus assumed. Does this, then, shut us up to universalism?"(1) This would appear to be the logical terminus of the finished work of Christ, the work to which no man can add anything. And Reid realises that there are only universalism and full double predestination as live options; for the old Puritan dilemma comes home, though in a different guise: if Christ died for all the sins of all men, then all are saved, including unbelievers; for if unbelief is a sin, Christ died for it; if it is not a sin, then no one will be punished for it.

By shifting the emphasis on to God's action in Christ, the problem is slightly changed: "Properly expressed, the alternatives before us are: either that we be what we are or that we become what we are not. This formulation is quite different from the first (which is, we either lay hold upon Christ and so become what we are not, or fail to lay hold upon him and so remain what we are). The first sinks back again into understanding Christ as offering something which we then have to make our own; the second sees Christ as having conferred a real status upon us

(1) Our Life in Christ, p.138-139.

which we have to work out. The first, when all is said, has not rid itself of thinking of salvation anthropologically; the second sees it through and through as christological - the altogether splendid work of him who 'while we were yet sinners, died for us' (Rom.5;8). We are indeed 'sharing in God's work' (II Cor. 6;1), not in the sense that the work commences when God and we decide to begin it, but in the sense that to the work already wrought for and in us we say Amen, and humbly begin to work with him in the sphere to which he has admitted us".(1)

But when we are faced with the final problem of why X is a Christian and Y is not, why X has faith and Y lacks faith, we seem to face a choice between predestination and free will. And "the temptation is very strong at this point to take the matter out of God's hands and to fall back on the simple answer that it all depends upon our accepting or refusing this grace. Yet Calvin is surely right here when he points out that St. Paul must also have been aware of this simple solution and yet steadfastly repudiates it ... The simple solution is in error because it fails to see that, since faith is the gift of God and not man's contribution to his own salvation, unfaith must equally ... be related to the will of God".

He goes on to sum up his view of Christian predestination

(1) Our Life in Christ, p.139.

(that is, predestination in Christ): "To say No is to repudiate the status which Christ has bestowed upon men, and to say Yes is to acknowledge it with all that this implies".[1] And his final word is: "The possibility is there, and it is individually ours, to set at nought what Jesus Christ has wrought for us already in his person and by his work".[2]

And so we can draw the discussion together by the following crude summaries: if we postulate that baptism is the means to union with Christ, we have a non-biblical estimate of faith and the work of God; if we put faith there, we tend to a kind of Pelagianism unless we link it closely with the faithfulness of God; and if we do that, we end up with the dire prospects of universalism or predestination.

But before we take our choice, perhaps we should return to the voice of Paul on this vital issue: he must surely have realised that the logical outcome of 'in Christ' was universalism - indeed, we have reason to suppose that he drew such conclusions himself. For example, there are two great passages from which we could gather them: Romans 5;18, "It follows, then, that as the issue of one misdeed was condemnation for all men, so the issue of one just act is acquittal and life for all men". Again, in I Cor.

(1) Our Life in Christ, p.143.
(2) Ibid., p.144.

chapter 15, dealing with the resurrection, we have the clear parallel drawn: "As in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be brought to life". Apart altogether from the similar ideas in Ephesians, that all will be brought together in Christ, these verses and the passages from which they are taken, seem very close to universalism, in that they appear to teach that all men are in Christ by God's act.

But before we conclude this, we must take certain verses from those same passages for our instruction: in Romans, the previous verse (5;17): "For if by the wrongdoing of that one man death established its reign, through a single sinner, much more shall those who receive in far greater measure God's grace ... reign through the one man, Jesus Christ". Here the parallel is not quite so accurate, in that Paul speaks of all as coming under condemnation, but of those who are in Christ as being those who "receive" God's grace. And in I Cor. 15, there appears to be a hint of a division in v.23, " ... afterwards, those who belong to Christ".

After all, our study is not "Union with Christ as logically developed from Paul", but the union with Christ which we find in Paul. The very apt statement of E. de Pressence on Origen (1)

(1) E.de Pressence, The Early Years of Christianity: Heresy and Christian Doctrine, p.356.

bears quotation here: "the weaker, dangerous points of his doctrine were brought into prominence by his disciples in accordance with that law of the history of thought which carries every idea to its logical consequences, and constrains it, in a manner, to reveal all its latent defectiveness and error". We find, in fact, that the three strands we have been studying are woven together in the thought of Paul.

Baptism has its place: in New Testament days, of course, baptism often closely accompanied conversion, and hence there would be no separation of the two; this connection we find in Gal. 3;26-7 (as an example): "For through faith you are all sons of God in union with Christ Jesus. Baptized into union with him, you have all put on Christ as a garment". To try to separate faith from baptism is quite impossible. More difficult is the task of trying to get into perspective Paul's view of man's responsibility of believing and the fact that all is of God: we can only quote a verse in which he happily puts them together: "You must work out your own salvation in fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you, inspiring both the will and the deed, for his chosen purpose" (Phil. 2;12-13).

There is no doubt at all that what Paul presents in his letters is not a finished theological treatment of one of life's

greatest problems; it is the experience of the missionary, aflame with the love of Christ, and conscious that in his own conversion all was of God and yet in some strange way he had his response to make - as Christian people have grasped in their experience down the centuries, yet never fully understood. And the greatest tribute to his thought is that it remains unfathomable, and that through it all the central place of Christ remains the same; whatever the theological explanation may be, the experience of union with Christ, of the transcending value or being in him, is open to every one that believes. And there we have to leave it.

Is Paul's concept typical of the New Testament?

In point of fact, this comes down to the question of the similarity or otherwise of Paul's position to that of John. And certainly, if we return to the summary of 'in Christ' we had earlier,[1] we can see a great deal in common.

1. In Christ God has acted: this is in keeping with the Johannine statement that "God so loved the world that He gave His .. son" (3;16), with the emphasis that the initiative belongs to God. This is quite typical of John.

2. Men share in this new age and life by their relation to Christ: this is amply testified by the verses which speak of eternal life as belonging to those who "believe on Christ".[2] Our Lord's claim to be the only way to God (Jn.14;6) underlies this point.

3. Although we do not find 'in Christ' so frequently in John, yet it is present. We have in addition the phrase "abiding in Christ" which resembles the 'in Christ' idea in many ways.[3]

4. John's use of faith is very close indeed to that of Paul,

(1) Above, pp.116ff.
(2) Above, study on "believing" in John, pp.61ff, esp. pp.68-71.
(3) Above, study on "abiding", pp.93ff.

when we have accepted the different terminology.[1]

5. The relation of the believer and Christ is essentially personal: this breathes through the Johannine writings, and finds expression in the deepest sections, such as chapter 6, on the Bread of Life, and chapter 15, on the Vine and the Branches.

6. The entrance into this life is the entrance into a fellowship. This comes out very clearly in the First Epistle, where the fellowship of Christians is in the forefront of the whole letter.[2] The slant is quite different from that in Paul: in John the great idea is Love, while for Paul it was the outworking of Christ in us. We see this difference in emphasis very clearly in John's choice of the Vine and Paul's choice of the Body to convey truths. For John, the parable consisted entirely of the relation of the believers to Christ; for Paul, there was the second and equal truth of their relation to one another - which John dealt with by a word of the Lord. But the differences must not blind us to the essential unity in that they both stress the personal nature of the relationship of Christ and the Christian.

7. In John, the believer receives "eternal life"; this life is not different in its basic conception from Paul's idea of "newness

(1) For example, a comparison of pp.68-71 above with pp.54-60.
(2) Canon King's devotional work on I John is called, simply, "The Fellowship".

of life", and John puts it succinctly in I John 5;11-12, "this life is found in His Son. He who possesses the Son has life indeed; he who does not possess the Son of God has not that life".

8. For John as for Paul, all that is required is Christ: there is no need for different gifts and graces in addition to him - "of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace". Here, too, we find common ground.

These points then are held in common. But we find a great difference when we come to the question of universalism, which focuses for us the nature of 'in Christ' in Paul. It is possible to argue from Paul that God hasplaced all men in Christ; it is much more difficult to argue this from John without closing one's eyes to many evidences to the contrary.

For John, the world is divided into light and darkness: "this is the condemnation, that men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil", Jn. 3;19. Judgment has its place in John's gospel, and in the epistle, and there is much more of a balance between the believer and the unbeliever than there is in Paul. E.g., "the man who puts his faith in him does not come under judgment; but the unbeliever has already been

judged in that he has not given his allegiance to God's only Son", Jn. 3;18. While we may argue from Paul, as J.K.S. Reid has done, that we are in Christ unless we "opt out" (to condense his argument rather crudely), there is no room for such manoeuvre in John. He makes it crystal clear that unless we receive Christ, believe on him, are born again, then we are not in him.

There is also almost universal agreement that we have much more mysticism in John than in Paul, as we would almost expect from anyone with the mind and heart of the Johannine writer. It is not necessary to develop this, but it makes it evident that we can hardly say that Paul's concept is uniformly followed through the New Testament.

The evidence from the Petrine epistles is too scanty to furnish us with a point for point comparison,(1) but there again we find the same "unity in diversity", for the expression of the reality of union with Christ is different again.

We can say that union with Christ as Paul conceived and developed it - not the developed Paulinism which we take such delight in elucidating (or darkening!) - has much more in common with Johannine thought than it has in distinction from it, with

(1) Cf. above, pp. 28.

regard to the concept of union with Christ.

It is this combination of common ground and difference in development and emphasis which makes the whole study so fascinating; this will be referred to again in our study of the source of the whole idea. For the moment, we leave with the conclusion that union with Christ, differently unfolded in Paul and John, is yet basically the same experience

The Background to this Concept in the New Testament:

We now come to face the problem of the source of the concept of union with Christ which we find in the New Testament. Various answers are possible, and almost inevitably combinations of the different sources will suggest themselves to the student of the New Testament. But the obvious main contenders are two, although they are capable of almost infinite subdivision; they are Judaism, the parent of the early Christian church, and Hellenism, the spirit of the world in which the early church began her missionary work. This is particularly true of Paul, in whom both sides had their part: a man singularly fitted for his age and for the work he had to do. So a study of these two main themes will be necessary.

One word of caution has to be given at the outset. Any look at the number of books written on these subjects - and the length of these books - makes it clear that our own treatment of these great themes will be limited to those aspects of Judaism and Hellenism which promise relevance to our study, and will deal only with those parts which appear to offer material to help in the quest for the source of the concept of union with Christ. We shall begin with Hellenism and its answer, and then turn to Judaism and its answer.

The Hellenistic Background:

It is interesting to notice how the pendulum has swung in the last century or so: under the influence of such scholars as Reitzenstein and Angus there was a great movement towards the explanation of the entire range of New Testament thought in terms of Hellenistic background. Today this trend is being reversed, and owes much to the lonely struggle of Schweitzer years ago.(1) But if we are to understand the setting of our New Testament, and above all if we are to see the background to the concept of union with Christ, it is imperative that we look at the Hellenistic thought and philosophy which is so often reflected in the pages of our New Testament.

It is convenient to divide our study into different parts, but the warning must be given that any such division is not true to the New Testament situation. The statement of Angus (2) that "Greek mystical philosophy, continuing Plato's mystical quests and deeply influenced by Oriental mysticism, granted increasing recognition to the soul's intuitions", demonstrates that it is virtually impossible to single out any one aspect of Hellenistic thought from the broad stream into which flowed the Christian faith. F.C. Grant says: "What has been called the 'conflict of

(1) As in "The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle", and "Paul and his Interpreters".
(2) "Religious Quests of the Graeco-Roman World", p.50.

religions' under the early Roman Empire was not altogether a competitive struggle. Some cults were entirely compatible with others, and one could be inducted or initiated into more than one ... a feature which differentiated Graeco-Roman religion from the Jewish and the Christian".(1) Later he points out that "the hallmark of the Hellenistic world was 'syncretism'".(2)

McGregor and Purdy echo the same thought: "While Greek genius at its height was essentially original, the age with which we are dealing is rather a 'popularizing' age, notable for breadth rather than depth, encyclopaedic rather than creative".(3) Grant adds, speaking this time particularly of Gnosticism: "the sources of the Gnostic world-view and philosophy are various. They include Greek Orphism and Pythagoreanism, Mazdean dualism, Jewish apocalyptic, Egyptian mystery-lore, popular Hellenistic astrology and numerology and the occult pseudo-sciences allied to magic, along with the crass 'spirituality' of mediums, quacks and religious adventurers".(4) Such sweeping statement has its truth: for no matter how we wish to do so, any division we make in the remote ivory towers of scholarship will inevitably blind us to the realities of life in these days, which was as diverse, and drew from as many sources, as our own.

(1) Roman Hellenism and the New Testament, p.17.
(2) Ibid., p.54.
(3) Jew and Greek, Tutors unto Christ, p.214.
(4) Roman Hellenism and the New Testament, p.74.

With this necessary caveat, we shall consider the subject under Greek Theosophy (Angus's term), Gnosticism, and the Mystery Religions.

1. Greek Theosophy:

Under this heading we shall look briefly at two different systems of thought - Stoicism and the Hermetic writings. The latter could easily be regarded as a branch of Gnosticism, as indeed it is frequently regarded, but both made their contribution to the world in which the Christian faith emerged.

Stoicism: "Stoicism was a splendid discipline and preparation of the Empire for Christianity",(1) so Angus begins his description of the philosophy. In another connection, he says, "if Platonism appealed most to the individual, Stoicism was a gospel for the masses".(2) "In Stoicism there is neither Roman knight nor freedman nor slave; 'this mind may belong as well to a Roman Knight, as to a freedman, as to a slave'. All are 'kinsmen, brothers by nature, children of God'. 'Love the human race; follow God'".(3) For "while Stoicism was rigorous in its logic, it learned increasingly to take account of man's emotions and yearnings, and later Stoicism veered more and more toward Platonism, until they

(1) Religious Quests, p.65.
(2) Ibid., p.65.
(3) Ibid., p.66.

practically blend".[1]

While it is popularly regarded as a hard and uncompromising faith, for "the Stoics did not deny suffering, but steeled themselves to hardness against sensibility thereto",[2] it was a gospel for the ordinary man, and had this tremendous advantage over the other systems of the day. McGregor and Purdy, following Zeller, quote: "Stoicism was not only a systemof philosophy, but also a ~~xek~~ system of religion".[3]

It offered man a religion in which his own pride could stand up against God; as Seneca glories in saying: "I do not obey God, but I consent with Him". Although hard, it had a strong social ethic; though, as always in dealing with this period of thought, it is hard to say how much was due to the system, and how much was due to a personal development of the system. Witness Seneca: "You must live for others if you wish to live for yourself".[4] Essentially hard and cold, a wilderness of the soul, Stoicism yet brought religion to the everyman. But it was essentially a preparation for a fuller experience. "The ideals of this (Stoic) school awaken many echoes in the pages of the New Testament. No less than the influence of Platonism on Christian theology has been that of Stoicism on Christian ethics. Yet we must never

(1) Religious Quests, Angus, p.66.
(2) Jew and Greek, p.247.
(3) Jew and Greek, p.247.
(4) quoted, Jew and Greek, p.253.

overlook a fundamental difference between Stoicism and Christianity, both in motive and in their view of the mutual relation ofman to man. Stoicism is essentially self-centred and its aim is self-sufficiency, while the driving force of Christianity is self-sacrifice".(1)

So we can hardly hope to find anything here to help us in our quest for the concept of union with Christ: but in any consideration of New Testament theology, and in particular with regard to ethics, it cannot be ignored.

The Hermetic Writings:

With the Hermetic writings we move into a different world of thought, as the whole religion is based on revelation. "Hermeticism was a religion of revelation; it was revealed rather than natural religion. It was committed to the widespread conception of 'gnosis' with God leading to 'henosis', but that knowledge of God was difficult for man to obtain; it must be vouchsafed from above".(2) "As a corollary to a religion of revelation it follows that Hermeticism was pre-eminently a religion of grace".(3)

For a grasp of the basic facts about it, we turn to C.H.Dodd.

(1) Jew and Greek, p.255.
(2) Religious Quests, p.347.
(3) Ibid., p.349.

"A considerable body of Greek literature once existed, and has come down to us in more or less fragmentary fashion, under the name of Hermes Trismegistus. This Hermes passed for a sage who lived and taught in Egypt in remote antiquity, and after his death was deified. ... Much of the literature under his name dealt with astrology and alchemy and does not concern us".(1) The vital parts for our study are known as the "Corpus Hermeticum", but they were not written to provide a clear theology. Thus we must not take them just as they stand, but try to gather the essential parts of this religion from the general trend of the different writings, paying particular attention to the tractate called "Poimandres". "No fixed dogmatic system can be discovered in the Corpus Hermeticum. No uniform creed or rigid orthodoxy was imposed, and each wrtier, while drawing on the common sources and ideas, could exercise a selective and assimilative freedom and make his own combinations".(2)

Even the dating of the literature presents problems. C.H. Dodd, following Reitzenstein and Scott, starts with the broad limits of the start of the Christian era and the end of the second, or beginning of the third, century. He concludes(3) "the Poimandres is rather more likely to fall before than after this date (130 - 140 A.D.), and there is no evidence which would conflict with a

(1) The Bible and the Greeks, p. xii.
(2) Religious Quests, p. 322.
(3) The Bible and the Greeks, p. 209.

date early in the second century or even late in the first century". It is, therefore, extremely difficult to decide whether this philosophy affected, or was affected by, early Christianity.

The main features of the writings can be summarised as follows:(1)

There is the characteristic dualism common to all Gnostic systems, and even present in the New Testament.(2) The world is the pleroma of evil, God the pleroma of good. The world was not created directly by God, but through an intermediary, sometimes referred to as Nous, less frequently as Logos.

Salvation is through gnosis - it may be of God, the cosmos, man's nature, or the way of ascent out of the evil, material world.

The soul in its ascent homeward passes through the seven spheres, and as it passes through each it casts off the passion or affection it took from that sphere on its downward journey. In the eighth sphere the soul unites with the glory and happiness of the Father.

There is great disagreement on the resemblance or otherwise

(1) Following McGregor and Purdy, Jew and Greek, pp.210ff.
(2) Notably in the Johannine writings.

to normative early Christianity. The use of the Logos as the revealer of divine secrets and the passwords, the gnosis, points immediately to a resemblance. But it must be noticed that the Logos is not at all so prominent as the Nous, and that the concept of Logos is hardly developed.(1) Scott says: "I have failed to find anything in the doctrine that is taught that is of Christian origin - with the possible exception of the doctrine of Rebirth".(2) The concept of regeneration is fully discussed in the dialogue between Hermes and his son, Tat. But while there is - as has been pointed out (3) - a close verbal parallel with New Testament language, there is unquestionably a considerable difference in the meaning behind it, and in the theology which gives rise to such an idea.

We can summarise three essential differences between the religion of the Corpus Hermeticum and the New Testament:

(1) The Hermetic writings have no connection between the agent of revelation, variously called Nous or Logos, and any idea of a Saviour, while in New Testament thought the two are closely connected. We find no soteriology in the writings. "This venerable faith was essentially a religion of salvation, yet without a Saviour. Its salvation is of a high order and

(1) See C.H.Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, on "Logos".
(2) Religious Quests (quotation), p.330.
(3) The Bible and the Greeks, p.183.

comprehensive for the needs of man, but a definite personal Saviour like the Galileean, or the Stoic Wise Man, or the Gnostic Redeemer, or the saviour-gods of the mysteries, does not emerge. Man has within himself the potencies of his own salvation; e.g., he can in obedience to the gospel proclamation baptize himself in the Basin of Mind (Nous); or he is assisted thereto by the grace of God or the divine Nous; or the Logos or the Son of God may mediate the gnosis of salvation".(1)

(2) There is also the complete absence of sacramentalism from Hermetic religion. This stands out in contrast with the Mystery religions and Gnosticism, with no emphasis at all on organised brotherhoods, or on the cult-rituals of the other faiths. Religion is essentially a personal matter, and this lack of ritual is the more noticeable in the light of the great surge forward of the Mystery religions and other forms of Gnosticism at the same time. And although the Christian religion wasnot to be compared with all its rivals of the time, it did contain definite teaching on sacramentalism, and had its central common meal from early days.

(3) The relation of ethics to faith is also in contrast to that of Christianity: it cannot be denied that there was a certain ethical influence in the world of the Hermetics: so C.H.Dodd could

(1) Religious Quests, pp.374-375.

write, "the knowledge of God is the way to immortality, and .. the love of the body and its pleasures is the way to ignorance and death".[1] But as Wikenhauser points out,[2] ethics were important as a means of attaining union with God - not as the outcome of that union. This distinction is of course quite central, as one of the greatest contrasts between the Christian church and the world to which it came was its ethical drive - and this sprang from union with Christ.

2. Gnosticism:

This subject is one of the most important in any study of the thought of the New Testament background.[3] Professor Nock of Harvard has written: "Gnosticism is now the central problem for those who are concerned with the early development of Christianity",[4] a conclusion reached some time ago by European scholars. Bultmann says: "For Christian missions, the Gnostic movement was a competitor of the most serious and dangerous sort because of the far-reaching relatedness between them".[5]

Gnosticism held an important place in Hellenistic thought and

(1) The Bible and the Greeks, p.183.
(2) Pauline Mysticism, pp.234-235.
(3) Cf. The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, pp.97ff.
(4) R.M.Grant, Gnosticism, introduction by Prof. Nock.
(5) Theology of the New Testament, p.165.

religion. It can be regarded as very similar in general outline to the Hermetic Corpus at which we have looked; indeed, in "Jew and Greek" it is included in the treatment of Gnosticism.(1) Angus however separates them, and we follow him. What then is "Gnosticism"?

"In anitquity the adherents of the Gnostic systems did not usually call themselves 'Gnostics', and the church Fathers spoke of them as members of various sects, often named after their founders ... But there is one element which binds all the various systems together. This is the doctrine ... that the world is bad; it is under the control of evil or ignorance or nothingness. It cannot be redeemed; indeed, for some Gnosticism the world is the equivalent of hell. Only the divine spark, which somehow is imprisoned in some men, is capable of salvation. It is saved when, by divine grace, it comes to know itself, its origin, and its destiny".(2)

Gnosticism was characterised by three main features:(3)

(1) Syncretism: this is what makes the definition of any feature so difficult, for the whole religion came from different sources, and so "traditional textbook analyses of 'Hellenism' or 'Judaism'

(1) Jew and Greek, pp.310ff.
(2) Gnosticism, R.M.Grant, p.15.
(3) Following the treatment in Jew and Greek, pp.309ff.

do not provide much help in dealing with Gnostic origins, for it is coming to be realised that in the first and second centuries there was a tremendous amount of cultural cross-fertilisation."[1] "One can easily discover in the Gnostic systems Babylonian mythology Persian dualism, Egyptian mysticism and occultism, the Orphic cosmology of a fall and the restitution of the soul from the weary circle of reincarnations, Jewish theology, Greek philosophy, especially Platonism and Pythagoreanism, astral ideas and mystical conceptions and practices, together with the idea of a First or Heavenly Man or Eastern provenance" - so Angus,[2] and no one could argue with such a conclusion. From the entire ancient world came strands of thought which the various Gnostic teachers interwove to give different patterns, which yet show an underlying unity in their assumptions.

(2) Intellectual and metaphysical interest: the rise in popularity of astrology in the ancient world led to an attempt to bring a scientific side to the popular religion. Angus says: "the metaphysics was to the Gnostic age what the scientific spirit is to us".[3] We may think very little of real worth is to be found in the theorizings of these early thinkers, but we must remember that this is one of the great attempts of religious thought to come to grips with the science of the day. And this passionate

(1) R.M.Grant, Gnosticism, pp.16-17.
(2) Religious Quests, p.380.
(3) Ibid., p.387.

interest comes largely from the third feature of the system.

(3) What we may almost call a "salvation fixation". "The supremely practical interest, the demand of men for a 'way of escape' from the cosmic machinery in which they felt themselves to be entangled".(1) Seneca's yearning for a hand let down to lift men up was a tremendous motive in the Gnostic system. "It is only when one places oneself as far as possible in the situation of the earnest men of the Graeco-Roman age and envisages their hopes and fears, their problems and difficulties, that one can fully understand that Gnosis or salvation-knowledge was a veritable way of life for cultured men ... The Gnostics ... were grimly in earnest in search for a way of life and for a solution of the great problems of human destiny".(2) This they found in the Gnostic systems, which we now examine in outline.

For convenience in dealing with such a variety of material as there is in Gnosticism, we can point to three main features present in every system, though with differing emphases, and sometimes with considerable variety in one or more features:

The fundamental feature of Gnosticism was a thorough dualism. The world is bad,(3) because everything material is evil, created

(1) Jew and Greek, p.311.
(2) Religious Quests, p.381.
(3) Cf. e.g., C.H.Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, p.103.

by an evil power, who is variously named. In some systems he is equated with the Jehovah of the Old Testament. Man himself obviously suffers from this in various ways. First, because he has a material body; the Greek pun, soma-sema, points to this, but fails to do justice to the agony of heart involved. But further, in Greek-speaking Gnosticism, not only was the body in the control of evil, but the pneuma was also regarded as under the power of the evil god or gods of the material world, and thus man was in a double thraldom. He would be entirely evil but for the presence in him - or in some men - of a divine spark given by the 'power above'. "When man had been made, and .. could not stand erect .. the Power above took pity on him because he was made in its likeness, and it sent a spark of life which raised the man and made him upright and made him live. After death this spark of life returns to what is of the same nature as itself, and the other elements of man's composition are dissolved into what they were made from".(1) This quotation from Saturninus is perhaps as clear as we can find.(2)

Following from this, there is a great interest in cosmic and astral thinking and speculation. It is generally held that the divine spark on its way to the earth passed through seven spheres, and that in each it took on some passion or affection. This

(1) R.M. Grant, Gnosticism, p.31.
(2) See, e.g., Angus, The Environments of Early Christianity, p.136.

fitted in well with the theory that the planets guide man's destiny, and provided a contemporary scientific apology for the Gnostics. But once again, our modern amusement at the deep interest which such subjects aroused stems from a failure to understand just how much the thinkers of that day longed for salvation from the evil powers which they understood. And as we look at the involved theories and mick science which so easily gathered round this, and when we have studied the tortuous path of Gnosis, "we shall realize perhaps better with what relief the Hellenistic world turned to the Christian gospel".(1)

Salvation was the burning central question of Gnosticism - how to escape from the material body, how to overcome the "principalities and powers", and how to win one's way through the seven spheres back to the pristine freedom and glory. Here we come across different schools of thought, some so widely different that they appear to be in conflict.

Salvation was through Gnosis, "knowledge". But the very word, in English, is almost inevitably an antithesis to "faith", due to a long theological history. Not so for the early Gnostics: their knowledge was revealed, and had to be taken on trust; it was not something to which men, unaided, could attain. C.H.Dodd,

(1) Jew and Greek, p.328.

speaking of the gospel of Poimandres, which shares this feature, says: "faith is, in fact, hardly distinguishable from the gnosis through which man attains immortality".(1)

When we come to look at the content of such saving, redeeming knowledge, we find it very varied. As in the Hermetic faith, it may be of God, or of the cosmos, of of the way of escape simpliciter.(2)

But the purpose of such knowledge is clear; it is to enable the soul, or, as Bultmann prefers to say, the self, to pass through the spheres and attain to the glory of what we would call heaven. It is salvation through a shedding of the passions and affections gathered on the descent to earth.

So far there is no great difference in general teaching; but now comes the crucial part. For some Gnostics, there is no saviour at all - for he is not needed; all that is necessary is the gnosis. But for others, the saviour is very important; and we must ask whether a saviour is essential to true Gnosticism, or is the concept something taken over from the Christian faith?

There is agreement on the need for salvation: there were, for

(1) The Bible and the Greeks, p.199.
(2) Cf. C.H.Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel,p.101.

the Gnostics, three classes of men. Those who are sp iritual by nature; those who have the capacity for spiritual attainment; and those who lack the divine spark - the reporbate of Gnostic Calvinism!

R.M.Grant puts what is the consensus of opinions "The question of the Gnostic redeemer is remarkably difficult to answer. In pre-Christian Graeco-Roman religion there was no redeemer or saviour of a Gnostic type. There were gods who died and rose again, but they did not give saving knolwedge to their followers ... In Oriental religions redeemers somewhat analogous to the Gnostic ones may have existed, but thus far no one has been able to prove that they were known as such before the rise of Gnostic thought ... The most obvious explanation of the origin of the Gnostic redeemer is that he was modelled after the Christian conception of Jesus. It seems significant that we know no redeemer before Jesus, while we encounter other redeemers ... immediately after his time".(1)

For "true Hellenistic Gnosticism had no need for a Redeemer; the possession of a divinely revealed "knowledge" sufficed to enable the soul to win its way home".(2)

(1) Gnosticism, p.18. See also C.H.Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, p.98.
(2) Jew and Greek, p.315. See also Pfeiffer, The New Testament and Primitive Christianity, pp.131ff.

So we find rather a dependence on Christianity than the other way round; but that tentative conclusion does not really answer the question we wish to put, regarding the source of the 'in Christ' concept; for in the spirit of syncretism of that age, any borrowing might well be in both directions. But it does seem that there is little likelihood of finding any close parallel with the union of the New Testament in the world of contemporary Gnostic religion.

3. <u>The Mystery Religions:</u>

It is essential to look at this remarkable religious activity in New Testament times, for these forms of faith have long been recognised as of basic importance in the study of the New Testament background, and even more so in the development of orthodox Christianity. Reference to them as "the principal factor in the spiritual life of the ancient world", and as "the last word of the pagan religions", are "surely not too strong".(1) Bultmann has already put us on our guard (2) against too rigid a distinction between these religions and the rest of the religious thought of the time; and here too we find the universally present syncretism.

(1) Rahner: Greek Myths and Christian Mystery, p.4 & footnote.
(2) Theology of the New Testament, quoted on p. 150 above.

Within the general term "mystery religions" there abounds a tremendous variety. "Thy Mystery-Religions present immense varieties in detail and emphasis".(1) "A vast quantity of religious sentiment and religious ideas is grouped together under the term 'mystery'. From the pristine ethnological beginnings of the mother-goddess cults that preceded the classical age, to the sublime spirituality to be found in the Hermetic literary mysteries and in Plotinus; from thence to the Islamic and Easter Christian mystery of prayer; from the Cabiri to the Ka'ba; from the morass of Shaktism and the Barbelo-Gnostics - what a panorama it is!" (2)

It is advisable to follow the usual pattern, and deal with the normal distinction drawn between the Greek mysteries and those of Oriental character which abounded in our period, and which "at a later date spread from the East over the whole Hellenistic world".(3)

Their aim and appeal can be summed up as follows: "the Mysteries presented immense variety both in detail and in outlook, but may be brought under a common denominator in their agreement on the view of man as having a divine element from a higher world imprisoned within, which must be released to ascend

(1) Angus: The Mystery Religions and Christianity, p.76.
(2) Rahner: Greek Myths and Christian Mystery, p.3.
(3) Jew and Greek, p.274.

to its heavenly source, on the necessity of solemn initiation for salvation, the need of cathartic rites to wash away sin, the impartation of sacramental grace, the participation in a repetition of the experience of the deity, the uplift of communion or even identification with the deity, the sure promise of immortality to the members of their religious fraternities, contrasted with the sad destiny awaiting those who neglected to avail themselves of their salutary sacraments".(1) "Above all they offered relief to men from all those religious complexes of which the age was peculiarly conscious - escape through emotion and ecstasy from the burden of matter and the evils of dualism, from bondage to demons through union with a god who was Lord of the demons, from the sense of imprisonment through the ascent of the soul along the pathway of the stars, from the dread of death through sacraments guaranteeing rebirth and immortality".(2)

Each of these religions was built around a god, who represented some part of nature, and the yearly cycle of death and resurrection of nature was interpreted in terms of his death and resurrection. "The essence of the mystery-creed is that the promise of rebirth, set forth in nature and symbolised in the drama of the dying god, is applied to the religious experience of the individual worshipper, so that the rising of the god becomes

(1) Jew and Greek, p.275: cf. Angus, Religious Quests, p.76.
(2) Jew and Greek, p.275.
(3) Ibid., p.277.

the guarantee of his own resurrection, provided that through initiation he makes himself one with the god in his dying and rising".(1)

To follow this process in rather more detail, we take the "three stages of a mystery religion" from Angus's "The Mystery Religions and Christianity", for even this brief outline has shown certain common ground in terms of union with a god, and rebirth and resurrection through him.

The first stage is that of Preparation and Probation. Intense secrecy was of the essence of the mystery religions but, rather as with Freemasonry today, a fair amount leaked over the years, allowing us to compose an overall picture, though without the detail which we would like to possess. In the preparation for entrance to the mysteries, there was a certain insistence on ethical qualities: "ascetic preparations of all kinds and degrees of rigours were practised - prolonged fasts, absolute continence, severe bodily mutilation and painful flagellations, uncomfortable pilgrimages to holy places, public confession, contributions to church funds".(2) "Essentially it equates piety with knowledge of God or with the endeavour to attain the vision of God".(3)

The second stage, Initiation and Communion, took several forms.

(1) Jew and Greek, p.277.
(2) Angus, The Mystery Religions and Christianity, p.84.
(3) Ibid., p.85.

The best known is the ceremony of the taurobolium, a form of baptism. In this ceremony the initiate entered a trench, over which was a platform of planks; on this platform a bull was sacrificed, and the blood allowed to drip through upon the initiate. He exposed himself and his garments to the blood, allowing it to flow over lips, ears, eyes and nostrils; he moistened his tongue with it, and then drank it as a sacramental act. From this act he came out, "born again for eternity". This extreme act was accepted as being efficacious for twenty years; it cleansed from the past, and it guaranteed immortality. But it is worth noting that our authority for this scene and description is Prudentius, a Christian poet, who had an obvious apologetic interest.

The significance of this andsimilar ceremonies was that the initiate was now reborn, having died and risen again to a new life, perhaps in union with his god. Communion and identification with the god was very much to the fore, and the communion shades over into identity. In the liturgy of Mithra the communion is so intimate that the candidate says: "I am thou and thou art I". Intense emotion accompanied such a ceremony, the words Ecstasy and Enthusiasm becoming associated with it.

This communion and identification led to deification, which came about in different ways; through mystic identification with the god, "Enter thou into my spirit and my thoughts my whole life long, for thou art I and I am thou". It came, automatically, with the endowment of immortality, which was the essential difference between god and man. Or it came through a divine indwelling, as in the prayer "come to me, Lord Hermes, as babes to women's wombs". We see this in Epictetus, "you are bearing a God with you though you know it not ... it is within yourself that you carry him".(1)

Other illustrations, such as the marriage ceremony, served to emphasise the union and communion now established. This was fostered by religious services which, in later Mithraism, show a considerable resemblance to those of the Christian church, and which included a sacramental meal. In those days, there was little distinction between the symbol and the reality which was assumed to lie behind it, and we cannot be too harsh in judgment on the worshippers for confusing the two.

The whole experience led to the experience of blessedness and salvation, which was free - in the main - from ethical strictures. For the initiate now belonged to a different order

(1) Angus, The Mystery Religions and Christianity, p.111.

from that of merely human relations, and so could be regarded as free to do or not to do what society normally required.

Such, in outline, was the course of the mystery religions. Details varied from one to another, but a brief resume of the cults of Isis and Mithra will serve to illustrate the application of the general outline above to particular cases.

Isis, of Egyptian origin, was the most important of the three gods normally associated with the cult. Apuleius is our chief source for what we know of this cult, and even here there is secrecy surrounding the most intimate parts of the worship and initiation. Lucius, the hero of the book, resides in a temple of the goddess, and there has visions, and is told of the serious need for vocation before entering her service. After preparation he is baptized, and then is taught the secrets which cannot be revealed. The initiation proper follows after, and consists of the welcome of the brotherhood, visions which baffle description, and an enthronement alongside the image of the goddess, symbolising the identification of Lucius with Isis. He then leaves for home, with a deep thanksgiving for all that he had experienced, and a promise "to do all that a poor yet faithful servant may".(1)

(1) Apuleius: The Golden Ass.

The cult of Mithra is generally agreed to have been of little importance during New Testament times, but later grew into a powerful rival, and developed along the same lines as normative Christianity. It appears to be of Persian origin, and is altogether a loftier rival than many of the other mysteries. It stands firmly on the dualism of Zoroastrianism, the Persian religion, and flourished towards the end of the second century of our era.

"The ritual of Mithra it is impossible to reconstruct".(1) Mithra's slaying of the bull, from whose blood life sprang up all over the earth, is central to the cult, as decorations in Mithraic chapels testify. Mithra is the mediator between god and men, and holds the future destiny of the believer in his hands. The descent and ascent of the soul is held to have been prominent in the initiation ceremony, in common with the other mysteries which all had a dramatic enactment of their mythology.

Of particular interest is the growth of places of worship, with their congregations and their sacramental activities which Christians denounced as Satanic parodies, mainly baptism and the meal of bread and wine. The taurobolium is prominent in Mithraism, as is the vow taken upon entry, similar to that of the

(1) Jew and Greek, p.282.

soldier of the empire.

Regarded as a man's religion, it put emphasis on moral effort and ethics, and the need for self-control; in this it stands head and shoulders above those mysteries which it conquered, and bids fair to challenge Christianity in terms of moral effect. It is however rather too late in developing to provide much material for our own quest, as what we see fully devoloped along Christian lines is well over a hundred years after the period which we are examining.

What can we say, then, about the mysteries? They have certain basic features, of which the most obvious are these:

(1) A pantheistic outlook. "The mystic aims at knowing and becoming like God, and becoming one with him; but this god is an impersonal principle, he is not a person ... the mystery divinities are simply personifications of the powers of nature".(1) This of course led to a wide tolerance, under the conviction that other religions worshipped the same god or gods, under different names. "There was a spirit of mutual tolerance and inclusiveness, which appears in the common practice of initiation into several cults ... and in the claim made by each

(1) Wikenhauser, Pauline Mysticism, p.186.

cult that its particular deity was but a special form of the one great God of nature".[1] "There was no inclination to question the validity of other cults, which were rivals rather than enemies".[2]

(2) The Goal of the Mysteries. Called salvation or by any other name, it meant the vision of god: "The vision of God has ~~ixix~~ glorious effects. It gives man salvation, and means for him the ascent to Olympus; it transforms him into something transcendental, and makes him divine".[3] But we must note that this involved a kind of union with the divine which is at variance with that which we found in the New Testament: "their goal was absorption into the Godhead as a drop of water is absorbed in wine".[4] "It had as its goal, not so much life in or with the Godhead, as mystical identity with the Godhead".[5] Their great desire was a thorough and complete ascent and absorption into the Godhead after death".[6] And this effectively effaces, as Bousset indicated, any fundamental distinction between divine andhuman.

(3) Sacramentalism: this was central, whether we think of the initiation ceremony, or of the various ceremonies which followed after it. "In the Mysteries the line between sacrament and magic

(1) Jew and Greek, p.276.
(2) Ibid., p.276.
(3) Wikenhauser: Pauline Mysticism, p210.
(4) Ibid., p.187.
(5) Bousset, Kyrios Christos, p.113.
(6) Wikenhauser, p.187.

was very finely drawn, and it is in this respect that they are most clearly seen as aberrations from the authentic Greek tradition ... Faith if demanded at all, appears merely as credulity in the efficacy of the rite. Yet it is well to remember that ... the line of demarcation between 'sign' and 'thing signified' was never clearly drawn".(1) "The contradiction, which our analytic thought is accustomed to find between the nature of an inner spiritual process and its mediation through an outward sensible act, has for ancient thought in general, and the period of the Mysteries in particular, no existence".(2)

(4) The death and resurrection of the god. This, according to Bousset,(3) was widespread in the religions associated with Osiris, Adonis, Attis and Dionysius, and was generally accepted as fact by other authorities. But a careful examination of the dates of the relevant information causes some considerable doubt about this. The earliest evidence of resurrection connected with Attis comes from the fourth century, and others have even more slender evidence. Wikenhauser quotes Bertram (4) for the suggestion that the first to apply definite ideas of death and resurrection to the Hellenistic mystery gods were the early Fathers of the church - and much of our evidence comes from them.

(1) Jew and Greek, p.285.
(2) Pfeiderer, Primitive Christianity, (iv),p.231. Cf. Jew and Greek, p.285.
(3) Quoted by Wikenhauser, Pauline Mysticism, p.191.
(4) Ibid., p.192.

"It is important to remember that, though in Egypt and the Asiatic provinces they had long flourished, in the Western Mediterranean area it was only after Christianity had obtained a firm foothold that the Mysteries began to have a vogue".(1) "The experts .. tell us .. that the main period of the 'floruit' of the mystery religions was not the first century but the second and third .. that, .. as some of the early church Fathers and apologists held, some of the 'mystery' features and terms were really borrowed from Christianity, not the reverse; that the fascinating formula, 'taurobolio cribilioque in aeternam renatus' is found in only one description, and that from the late fourth century".(2) Thus we must be very careful in our conclusions; for, while we cannot rule out the possibility that such concepts held sway in New Testament times, we have no direct or trustworthy evidence that they did.

(5) Ethics: Wikenhauser's summary is the general opinion of scholars regarding ethics in the Mysteries. "In the eyes of a mystic, union with god in ecstasy is more important than doing good; indeed, they claim that since the mystic is divine he is beyond good and evil". "The physical man of the senses who belongs to the evil lower world, sinks into insignificance; indeed, there is no intrinsic relationship between him and the

(1) Jew and Greek, p.274.
(2) F.C.Grant: Roman Hellenism and the New Testament, p.77.

higher essential self of the man who has become divine or been reborn". "A number of sources report a saying of Diogenes that Pataecion the robber would have a better life after death than Epaminondas, as he had been initiated into the mysteries".(1)

But we cannot simply write the mysteries off as anti-moral. "There have come down to us, even in the official rules of the cults, warnings against belief in the adequacy of magical rites apart from essential purity of heart ... Today the majority opinion of scholars is that on the whole the balance of influence was almost certainly on the side of higher ethical standards".(2) A guarded and cautious conclusion indeed! And we must immediately ask "higher than what?", and agree with the rather more explicit view of Leipoldt, that "it is true only to a very limited extent that the pagan cults deliberately connected religion with morality".(3)

(1) Wikenhauser, Pauline Mysticism, pp. 228-230, and footnote on p.230.
(2) Jew and Greek, p.288.
(3) Quoted by Wikenhauser, p.233.

The Answer from Hellenism:

The concept of union with Christ has been attributed entirely to the contact of the Christian church in general, and Paul in particular, with the Hellenistic world. There are certain arguments to be advanced in support of this view, that the vital and central concept has its origins in the Hellenistic world of the first century. We propose to look at the arguments for and against such a conclusion: can we find a satisfactory source in Hellenism?

There are, to begin with, the close verbal similarities between much of the New Testament and the religious world into which it came. We can instance the Stoic philosophy, with which Paul seems to have much in common. "The contrast between soul and body is pronounced to be 'the clearest instance of his (Paul's) debt to Greek philosophy' .... we find some of the central ideas of Stoicism in what we may call the necessary and unconscious intellectual equipment of Paul".(1)

From the mystery religions examples abound: indeed, almost all of Pauline thought along the line of union with Christ can be found to have a counterpart somewhere in the wide range of the

(1) T.R.Glover, Paul of Tarsus, p.20.

mystery religions. The idea of the Incarnation given in Philippians 2 would be no strange idea to the ordinary devotee of a mystery religion, whose god had descended through the seven spheres to bring redemption. Even the close language of union has its counterpart in the Hermetic sentence, "Thou art I, and I am thou".

We can follow through the Christian equivalents to almost all the features of the mystery religions mentioned above; the death and rising again of the god of the cult, the baptism of the initiate by some means or another and the resultant identification with the God - close to Romans 6;3, "when we were baptized into union with Christ Jesus we were baptized into his death", and Gal. 3;27, "Baptized into union with him, you have all put on Christ as a garment". We can compare "you are bearing a God with you though you know it not" with "Do you not know that Jesus Christ is in you?" (II Cor. 13;5).

There is some resemblance in sacramentalism; for the Eucharist observed by the early church, and given authority by the words in I Cor. 11, had its counterpart in many mystery shrines throughout the ancient world. And not infrequently bread and wine formed the meal which was taken.

The "Pauline mysticism" was no new thing, at least in general outline. "Mysticism" was popular, although open only to a few initiates. The aim of the mysteries was a knowledge of god, becoming one with him, and like him.

Paul speaks often of "knowledge"; while his knowledge was of Christ, the very word spoke to men of the mysterious secret knowledge imparted to the initiate of the mystery religion, the knowledge which enabled the soul to cast off the powers of the elements, and to return to God himself, the knowledge of salvation. Indeed, the similarity is more than merely verbal, as can be seen by a comparison of Paul's use of the word, and that given to it by the religions of his day.(1)

The language in which our New Testament was written was of course largely conditioned by the meanings which the words already possessed. And it can be argued that when the New Testament writers, and Paul in particular, used any of this language, they consciously accepted and used the basic connotations which the words carried, and employed them in the cause of evangelism.(2)

But there are objections to Hellenism as the source of this concept which seem to outweigh the arguments in its favour, and

(1) Compare "knowledge" in Paul (pp.76ff) with Gnostic "knowledge" on pp.151f. above.
(2) Though this cuts both ways: "the Semite who thinks in Greek never quite forgets Jerusalem and the speech of Canaan", T.R.Glover, Paul of Tarsus, p.1.

it is to these that we now turn:

First, the Greek ideas of union with God are not reflected in the New Testament. Paul himself is most careful, and never goes as far as to speak of being "in God", save in the quotation in Acts, "in whom we live and move and have our being". His Christ-mysticism was most definitely not God-mysticism. Wikenhauser maintains that Pauline mysticism contrasts with that of Hellenism in the following ways:(1)

(1) It is essentially concerned with union with Christ. He does not speak of mystical union with God. Further, this union is not a fusion of Christ and the believer - the believer is not swallowed up in Christ, but retains his separate identity: "nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me", Gal. 2;20. This is in strong contrast to the pantheistic tendency of Hellenism, which runs through the mystery religions.

(2) In regard to the myth of the god who dies and rises again, there are the following fundamental differences:

a) the gods are divinities of vegetation or of the stars, not historical persons.

b) they do not die for the sins of men, as Jesus did.

(1) Pauline Mysticism, pp.183ff. These contrasts are in addition to those alreadymentioned on pp. 99-105, above.

c) there is a union which becomes identification; in Paul and the New Testament separate identities are preserved.

d) ethics play no prominent part in the relationship of the mystic and god. The New Testament assumes the very close relationship of experience and ethical righteousness.

d) the salvation offered differs: for the mysterios, it is from the influence of fate and death; for the New Testament, from "sin".

e) there is no comparable idea to that of the body of Christ.

(3) The mystical relationship between Christ and Christians is not final, but only provisional. It is essentially the "guarantee" of what will follow (cf. Eph. 1;14). But for mystician, the full experience of ecstasy and divinisation can be attained here and now. Paul, while accepting the reality of such experiences as II Cor. 12, nowhere says that this is the reality which awaits, which is to be with Christ.

(4) The vision of God is "utterly different ... from that which the Hellenistic mystics held". Nowhere does Paul accept that the vision of God makes the Christian divine; for him, such identification is not in Christian thinking. He puttlittle stress on knowledge, as in I Cor. 13;2, where love is far superior. And

for Paul, the experience of Christ was the supreme motive for a life of ethical value, in contrast to the Hellenistic mysticism. Wikenhauser speaks of the "ethical irresponsibility of the mystic" which is so frequently attacked by the opponents of mysticism, and points out that "Paul was not a mystic in that sense".

No doubt this is a strong case: yet Wikenhauser is in danger of spoiling it by overdoing the comparisons. We may well agree with him that in the New Testament salvation is from sin - but we could equally argue that it is from the power of the Evil One, from the principalities and powers with which the spirit world of the New Testament was peopled - it is too easy to make a rigid comparison, and so lose some of the power of the argument. Again, to stress the difference in the vision of God is no doubt wise, but he overlooks the witness of II Cor. 3;18, where Paul uses language very reminiscent of the mysteries: "we all reflect as in a mirror the splendour of the Lord; thus we are transfigured into his likeness, from splendour to splendour". Anyone can take an isolated text like this; but we do service to our study by taking into account all these similarities, which in a way underline the reality of the difference.

Again, in the New Testament we have a strong emphasis placed

upon ethics, as the only adequate response to all that God has done in Christ. This is so closely related to the experience of grace that in Eph. 2;8-10 they are linked: "It is by his grace you are saved, through trusting him; it is not your own doing. It is God's gift, not a reward for work done. There is nothing for anyone to boast of. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to devote ourselves to the good deeds for which God has designed us". It is not this ethical quality in itself that makes us slow to accept a Hellenistic background to union with Christ; it is rather that this ethical demand is based on the experience of union with Christ: this is not known in the mystery religions, where ethics are of importance only as leading to union. This unique combination of spiritual experience and practical goodness is most unusual in the Hellenistic world of the first century; indeed, in many religions they were almost diametrically opposed.

Also, we notice certain omissions from the normal language of the mystery religions in Paul: for example, the concept of rebirth is of little significance for him, while death and resurrection are much in his mind. Yet it would seem strange for him to borrow other parts of the mystery vocabulary, and leave this.

The similarity between the sacraments of the church and those

of the mysteries is often over-simplified. For the crude complexity of the taurobolium contrasts strangely with the simple rite of "plain water" baptism - and there is a gulf of years between the two.

This is of course the main difficulty in attempting to find the source in Hellenism. For "it is not possible to prove that the mysteries' developed ideas were in circulation at the time of the New Testament writings; the evidence, such as it is, seems rather to indicate borrowing in the other direction. For example, we have seen that in the mysteries union with the god is common, while in Paul union is always with Christ, not with God. If there seems to be any development in this concept, it is surely in the direction of broadening rather than narrowing - that union with god, virtual pantheism, could well be a debased form of Pauline thought; but it is unlikely that from the pantheistic idea the clear concept of union with Christ could emerge.

There is, in Hellenistic religion, nothing to explain the 'in Christ' formula, or the development of the idea of the "body of Christ". These appear in the New Testament without parallel ideas in contemporary religion. And of course they are very much part of the whole idea of union; without the 'in Christ' formula, we would have a greatly reduced concept of our relationship with Christ.

Schweitzer attempts to argue[1] that Paul was not in fact acquainted with the mystery religions. Certainly, as a strictly brought-up Jew, he would have no extensive knowledge of the inner circles of the mysteries but he would almost certainly have picked up some knowledge of them, and perhaps some key phrases from them. Glover's picture of the young Jew running about the port at Tarsus, collecting a wide variety of information on all kinds of subjects [2] is surely more true to life than the almost monastic seclusion assumed by Schweitzer. We can assume that Paul would have borrowed the well-known "renatus in aeternum" idea if he had wished to borrow anything from the mysteries - and if it existed in the contemporary mystery religions. And yet none of his essential gospel appears to have been borrowed from this source.

A very important argument is that what Paul proclaimed, especially regarding union with Christ, met with no rejection from the early Christian church. Anything that had definitely Hellenistic associations would have been rejected, for the church was very much pro-Jewish at the time of Paul's writings. And yet there is nothing to hint at any unease at the kind of theology or Christology he was preaching. "Hellenistic Christians were on the best of terms with Jerusalem [3]. If Paulinism is explained from Hellenistic writings, then the two facts which are in

(1) The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, p.28.
(2) Paul of Tarsus, pp.9ff.
(3) The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, Schweitzer, p.31.

themselves difficult enough to explain - the fact that primitive Christianity did not reject his teaching as foreign to it, and that the immediately following generations could make nothing of it - become wholly inexplicable".(1)

The objection that there may well have been opposition to Paul's teaching, about which we hear nothing, is obviously impossible to disprove. But we have in the letters of the New Testament a clear picture of divisions within the church - but not over the Christology proclaimed. His letters were found to be difficult - or so says II Peter - but there is no great objection to the main doctrine contained therein.

Thus the Hellenistic part of our study has failed to provide a thoroughly satisfactory answer; but it is a long step from that to finding the answer we seek somewhere else, even in the other great landmark of the New Testament background, Judaism itself. But to Judaism we now turn.

(1) The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, Schweitzer, p.31.

The Judaistic Background to Union with Christ:

A study of Judaism is of the very first importance for an understanding of any part of the background of the early church. "The background of the New Testament is a double one, Graeco-Roman and Jewish. Hence the expert student and interpreter of the New Testament must be familiar with both - one alone is not enough ... the early Church which produced the New Testament was in transition from one to the other, from Judaism to Hellenism, from the East to the West".(1) We may feel Grant paints with a broad brush, but he is quite right: "One cannot truly understand the New Testament or the religion it enshrines without a deep and sympathetic understanding of Judaism".(2)

Unfortunately, all too often we study Judaism with one eye closed, as it were - we view it merely as part of the preparation for the Christian gospel, without realising its abiding power and strength. "Too often, Judaism has been treated as merely a foil, with the intention of showing the superiority of Christianity; the result has been that every shadow has been painted black, every bright light dimmed, and only a caricature of that living religion survived in the imagination of most readers".(3) Any Christian scholar must have his convictions, particularly regarding

(1) F.C.Grant, Ancient Judaism and the New Testament, p.17.
(2) Ibid., p.xii.
(3) Ibid., p.xiv.

the central figure of his faith; but he must also attempt to enter into the thought of the Jew of the New Testament period - and this cannot be other than an enrichment of thought and life.

"As a system of piety rather than a system of doctrine, Judaism was characterised by a strong emphasis upon practice, with a minimal stress upon belief".(1) The significant contribution of Judaism to the world of our period has long been acknowledged to be its lofty ethic, which towered like a snow-capped mountain above the torrid plans of heathenism. For the Jew, "religion was a way of living, not just a way of thinking or feeling".(2)

It is easy and tempting to put down ethics as the main characteristic of Judaism; but we must look further, at what it was that produced such a vital and admirable code for life. For to regard Judaism as merely a code of behaviour is to regard that portion of the iceberg which appears above the water as being the entire iceberg - and the results can be hazardous in both cases! For the Jew was concerned with the whole of life, and with the wholeness of life.

This concern with being and doing as against thinking and speculating is as true today as it was then. Köhler's exposition

(1) Ancient Judaism and the New Testament, p.xiv.
(2) Ibid., p.13.

of modern Judaism makes this clear, particularly in connection with the key concept of faith: "Now the word used in Jewish literature for faith is Emunah, from the root Aman, to be firm; this denotes firm reliance upon God, and likewise firm adherence to him, hence both faith and faithfulness. Both Scripture and the Rabbis demanded confiding trust in God, His messengers, and His words, not the formal acceptance of a prescribed belief".(1) "It is a mistake to view ancient Judaism, especially during its rise in the Tannaite period and its development into what later became 'normative' for the following centuries, as a system of belief or of doctrine; instead it was a system of piety".(2) G.F.Moore adds his own testimony: "Both amunah and amanah, like πίστις fides, and the English 'faith' itself, cover fidelity as well as confidence, and as in the famous case of Habakkuk 2;4, 'The righteous man shall live by his faith', the interpreter may be at a loss whether to say 'faith' or 'faithfulness' .... It may not be superfluous to remark that the words for faith in the literature and thought of this age are not used in the concrete sense of creed, beliefs entertained".(3)

Thus we shall look in vain for a theology in Judaism which can be compared, article by article, with the Hellenistic philosophies. Life is one complete whole, and stands or falls together.

(1) Kohler: Jewish Theology, p.19.
(2) F.C.Grant: Ancient Judaism and the New Testament, p.11; cf. also pp.58ff.
(3) Judaism, (ii), pp.237-238.

Kohler speaks of the "Hellenistic or philosophic tendency to consider religion as a purely intellectual system, instead of the great dynamic force for man's moral and spiritual elevation".(1) It was related directly to life as life was lived, not to the vague and unreal realms of pure thought: "Judaism was characterised by a strong emphasis upon practice, with a minimal stress upon belief" - in the Greek sense. For "in Judaism belief - Emunah - never denotes the acceptance of a creed. It is rather the confiding trust by which a frail mortal finds a firm hold on God amidst the uncertainties and anxieties of life, the search for His shelter in distress, the reliance on His ever-ready help when one's own powers fail".(2) It is of interest to note that the contribution of Martin Buber, one of Judaism's leading thinkers, to modern theology is along the lines of personal relationships.(3) For Judaism was and is a way of life, rather than the acceptance of a creed; and its end product was not so much a clearout theology as a character.

We shall commence our study by a brief outline of the life of Judaism in the New Testament period; we shall then ask whether union with Christ is found in the Old Testament in essence, and this will lead us on to a study of the use of the Old Testament by Jews - and Christians - in New Testament days.

(1) Jewish Theology, p.23.
(2) Ibid., p.31. Cf. also C.H.Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, p.179 and footnote: also C.H.Dodd, The Bible and the Greeks, pp.65-67.
(3) Martin Buber: I and Thou.

Judaism:

When we turn to consider Judaism in the time of Christ, there are two institutions that come to mind, namely the temple and the synagogue.

The temple was the focal point of Jewish faith and worship, and the centre of the vast and sometimes terrifying sacrificial system. To it came Jews from the corners of the ancient world; Josephus' figure of 2,700,000 in A.D. 63 may be exaggerated, but even with due allowance, it represents a tremendous number of people by the standards of the time. But the temple was doomed; in an age when the frontiers of civilisation were spreading and travel became easier, the Jews wandered farther and farther from their homeland. And if a Jew could come only once in a lifetime to the temple, the gulf between the temple and the normal life of the Jew became wider and wider. The desctruction of the temple in A.D. 70 did not destroy Judaism: instead, it put the emphasis openly where it had already been in fact - on the synagogue.

The origin of the synagogue is lost in history. But in the time of which we are thinking, it was a fact throughout the empire; where there were ten Jewish men, there was a synagogue. The order

of worship was not unlike that of an assembly of the Christian Brothren today, in that there was no priest or minister in charge, and each member - men only - had to take his part; a visitor was often invited to make his contribution to the reading and exposition of the Law, as happened to our Lord[1] and to the missionaries, themselves Jews, in the early days of the church. The reading of the Torah, the translation into the vernacular, and the exposition of it, formed the main part of the service. But in addition, it was a place of meeting, where those of one faith worshipped together, and in communion with their brethren across the world. One of its main effects was the encouragement and fostering of a personal piety: "It may perhaps surprise some readers to find that the Mishnah opens with a tractate on prayer, and that the spirit of these prayers is that of simple devotion and piety, not far removed from the spirit of an old-fashioned Catholic or evangelical 'Guide to Daily Living'".[2]

Interwoven with the synagogue was the schooling system of Judaism, which was based on the Torah, and aimed to give each Jewish boy a thorough grounding in his Scriptures.[3] That this was effective can be judged by our Lord's easy and familiar use of the Scriptures, and even more by His assumption that those to whom he spoke had an equal familiarity with them.

(1) St. Luke, chapter 4.
(2) F.C.Grant: Ancient Judaism and the New Testament, p.56.
(3) Cf. R.H. Charles: Between the Old and New Testaments, p.103. Pfeiffer, History of New Testament Times, p.49.

Within Judaism itself were different movements, some known to us through the New Testament, and amplified by sources such as Josephus. Three main groups stand out:

(1) The Pharisees: it is hard to be sure of the origin of their name, or of their exact position. This is probably as much the fault of our passion for having things put in the correct compartments as of their occasional appearances in the texts to which we have access today. They appear to be the successors of the 'Hasidim', or Pious, of previous years, and sought to bring the whole of life under the rule of the Law. They were non-politica and, despite their influence, were not numerically strong among the people.(1)

(2) The Sadducees: probably the remnant of the aristocratic land-owning section of the population, they were very much involved in political intrigues and plots. They were largely secular in outlook, and regarded the Pentateuch as the most important, if not the only, authority for religious life and thought. Their adherence to the teaching of the Pentateuch led them to the rejection of life after death, along with other points of doctrine held by the Pharisees.

(1) Cf. Pfeiffer: History of New Testament Times, pp.10-11; also p.55; also F.C.Grant, Ancient Judaism and the New Testament, p.57.

(3) The People of the Land: McGregor and Purdy[1] regarded them as roughly equivalent to the 'unchurched' of our own country. Certainly to regard them as the equivalent of, say, the German Pietists is not historically justified, but we should allow them more religious interest and activity than this. They represented those who followed, sometimes afar off, the way of Judaism, especially as taught and proclaimed by the Pharisees. There is strong support for the contention that our Lord and his disciples were recognised as belonging to this group. And if the disciples, with their upbringing and education along Jewish lines, were at all typical of the People of the Land, we must allow that there was a strong leavening of genuine spiritual interest in this group.

From this scanty survey of Judaism, one thing stands out as the single uniting factor of such diverse groups of people - and that is the Old Testament. This governed the schools and the synagogues; it was authoritative for the Pharisees, to a lesser extent for the Sadducees, and for philosophers such as Philo of Alexandria. And al though we have found an atmosphere in which the idea of union with Christ might develop, we have to look very closely at the Old Testament itself.

(1) Jew and Greek, p.128.

There has been much exegesis of the Old Testament which has shown a very real and wonderful understanding of the nature of union with God in Christ. This has been developed by Christian preachers and scholars, particularly of the evangelical school, over the years. Books such as "Union and Communion" by Hudson Taylor have served to deal with the Song of Solomon in this way, "spiritualising" the message - and the history of this goes back to early days, to the Fathers of the Christian church. Such parts as Hosea and the first three chapters of Jeremiah, with the basic idea of the marriage relationship as a picture of the covenant of Jehovah and his people, have lent themselves to development as pictures of the relationship of Christ and the Christian.

This kind of thought takes much of its inspiration from the Psalter, and certainly we can find here the words and phrases which lend themselves to such usage: for example -

The following words describe God as He is to those who trust in Him: rock - 16 times; refuge - 9 times; hope - twice. And the words used to describe the relationship of the psalmist to Him are: trust in Him - 32 times; waiting on Him - 14 times; dwelling - 5 times; knowing - 4 times; knowing that - 3 times;

hoping - 16 times; resting - once; seeing - 7 times; loving - 9 times. When we come to consider God's attitude towards those who trust in Him, we find two word groups much used: they are אמת, truth, faithfulness - 40 times in all;(1) and חסד loving-kindness, mercy - 11 3 times in all.

So we could conclude that our relation to God is expressed in the following ways in the psalter:

(a) as trust in Him: this is undoubtedly the main thought of the books and comes close to certain New Testament uses of πιστευειν where the emphasis is on God's faithfulness or truth in the experimental - as opposed to the intellectual - sense.(2)

(b) waiting on Him is not altogether different, as the connotation of the word involves the idea of waiting for, being confident in, and trusting.

(c) the interesting term "dwelling" has its normal meaning, and is reminiscent of what we found in John's gospel.(3)

(d) seeing: used mainly of God's law, etc., it is perhaps best understood as describing the awakening understanding of God.

(e) Knowing: not used a great deal, this is the expression which appears to come closest to the idea of a personal relationship in the New Testament sense.

(1) See above, pp.54-60, and pp.65-71.
(2) See above, " " "
(3) See above, on , pp. 95-98.

And so, to do justice to the psalter, there is little justification for seeing in it any clear concept of a personal and individual knowledge of God. But the language of trusting and having faith in God does pointo to a very real sense of personal dependence. The reluctanct to describe this as a vitally personal relationship can be largely ascribed to the overwhelming sense of the transcendence of God which is typical of the Old Testament, together with the tendency not to think in the individualistic terms which are so familiar to us.

But such phrases and texts have long furnished the Christian preacher with material for illustrating and teaching the reality of the relationship of Christ to Christians. A series of quotations follows, in each of which the text is first given, and then a quotation which illustrates this kind of use made of it.(1)

"I have set the Lord always before me", Ps. 16;8. "Like as the gnomon doth ever behold the north star, whether it be closed and shut up in a coffer of gold, silver, or wood, never losing its nature; so a faithful Christian man, whether he abound in wealth or be pinched with poverty, whether he be of high or low degree in this world, ought continually to have his faith and hope surely built and grounded upon Christ".(2) This quotation serves

(1) These quotations are from "The Treasury of David", by C.H. Spurgeon, a massive seven volume anthology, with quotations from the 16th to the 19th century.
(2) Treasury of David, Vol. 1, p.230.

to illustrate the basic assumption of such commentators, that the "Lord" in the Old Testament can be taken to refer to Christ - an assumption justified by a comparison of the LXX and N.T. uses of

"In Thy presence is fulness of joy", Ps. 16;11. "When a man comes to the sea, he doth not complain that he wants his cistern of water: though thou didst suck comfort from thy relations; yet when thou comest to the ocean, and art with Christ, thou shalt never complain that thou hast left thy cistern behind. There will be nothing to breed sorrow in heaven; there shall be joy, and nothing but joy ... the joys that we shall have with Christ are without measure and without mixture".(1)

Such examples could be multiplied; but to help us in our study, the following are from texts on which we also have comments from Rabbis more or less contemporary with our New Testament writers, and certainly representative of the Judaism of New Testament times. In this way we can see how much is being "read back" into the text, and how much was regarded as already there by the Jewish Rabbi. First, a further series of quotations from Christian writers:

"Thou art with me", Ps. 23;4. "It is said, when a bee has

(1) Treasury of David, vol. 1, p.238.

left its sting in any one, it has no more power to hurt. Death has left its sting in the humanity of Christ, and has no more power to harm his child. Christ's victory over the grave is his people's. 'At that moment I am with you', whispers Christ; 'the same arm you have proved strong and faithful all the way up through the wilderness, which has never failed, though you have been often forced to lean on it all your weakness'. 'On this arm', answers the believer, 'I feel at home'".(1)

"I am continually with thee", Ps. 73;23. "He does not say that the Lord is continually with 'his people', and holds, and guides, and receives them; he says, 'He is continually with me; He holds me; He will guide me; He will receive me'. The man saw, and felt, and rejoiced in his own personal interest in God's care and love. And he did this ... in the very midst of affliction, with 'flesh and heart failing'; and in spite too of many wrong, and opposite, and sinful feelings, that hadjust passed away; under a conviction of his own sinfulness and folly, and, as he calls it, even 'brutishness'. Oh! it is a blessed thing, brethren, to have a faith like this".(2)

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee", Ps. 55;22. "Now, true confidence in God, and resting upon God, will

(1) The Treasury of David, Vol.1, p.414.
(2) Ibid., Vol. 3, p.359.

both free thee of thy burden and also bring in the strength of God to sustain and bear thee up from falling. Wouldst thou, therefore, own God as thy strength, and fetch strength from God to thy soul? rest upon God, roll thyself upon him, and that, 1. In time of greatest weakness. 2. In time of greatest service. 3. In times of greatest trials."(1)

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty", Ps. 91;1. "The blessings promised here are not for all believers, but for those who live in close fellowship with God. Every child of God looks towards the inner sanctuary and the mercy-seat, yet all do not dwell in the most holy place; they run to it at times, and enjoy occasional approaches, but they do not habitually reside in the mysterious presence. Those who through rich grace obtain unusual and continuous communion with God, so as to abide in Christ and Christ in them, become possessors of rare and special benefits, which are missed by those who follow afar off, and grieve the Holy Spirit of God. Into the secret place those only come who know the love of God in Christ Jesus, and those only dwell there to whom to live is Christ".(2)

On the same verse: "What intimate and unrestrained communion

(1) The Treasury of David, Vol. 3, p.33.
(2) Ibid., Vol. 4, p.230.

does this describe! - the Christian in everything making known his heart, with its needs and wishes, its thoughts and feelings, its doubts and anxieties, its sorrows and its joys, to God, as to al loving, perfect friend. And all this is not on one side. This Almighty Friend has admitted his chosen one to his 'secret place'. It is almost too wonderful to be true. It is almost too presumptuous a thought for such creatures as we are to entertain. But He Himself permits it, desires it, teaches us to realise that it is communion to which He calls us".(1)

On the same verse: "Under the shadow of the Almighty": "This is an expression which implies great nearness. We must walk very close to a companion, if we would have his shadow fall on us. Can we imagine any expression more perfect in describing the constant presence of God with his chosen ones, than this - they shall abide 'under his shadow'? In Solomon's beautiful allegory, the Church in a time of special communion with Christ, says of him - 'I sat down under his shadow with great delight" - sat down, desiring not to leave it, but to abide there for ever. And it is he who chooses to dwell in the secret place of the most High, who shall 'abide under the shadow of the Almighty'".(2)

"I will be with him in trouble", Ps. 91:15. "Oh, that

(1) Treasury of David, vol. 4, p.238.
(2) Ibid., p.239.

delightful sentence! At other times God will leave them in the hands of angels: ... 'But when they are in trouble, I will say to the angels, "Stand aside, I will take care of them myself". I will be with them in trouble'. So he speaks to his people: 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour'. When languishing in sickness, He will make his bed, and his pillow; when travelling through the valley of the shadow of death, the Lord will be with him, and enable him to sing, 'I will fear no evil; for thou art with me..'; Thus he is with them as their physician and their nurse, in pain and sickness; as their strength in weakness; as their guide in difficulty; their ease in pain; and as their life in death".(1)

We must see something of the wonder of such weldings, coming to us as they do over almost four centuries. But at the same time it is clear that there is much "reading back" into the psalter what was not intended to be there in the first place. Once we grant the use of Κυριος as a description of Jesus Christ, then of course the door is open. But our concern at the moment is not to justify or condemn this, but to discover whether such ideas of

(1) The Treasury of David, Vol. 4, p.250.

union and closeness were present to the minds of Jews of the New Testament period, to whom these scriptures were far more familiar than they are to us today.

It is at once clear that the texts and books in the Old Testament in which we are so ready to find the idea of union did not have that significance at the start of the Christian era. For example, the use made of the Song of Solomon in the Mishnah,(1) is a clear example of the way in which the Jewish rabbi dealt with such scriptures. The summary of E.J. Young is demonstrably fair: "In passages of the Mishnah, Talmud and Targums an allegorical interpretation appears which expounds the Song of Solomon in terms of Israel's history, as representing the love of God for and his dealings with his chosen nation. Thus 1;13 ('a bundle of myrrh is my wellbeloved unto me; he shall lie all night between my breasts') has been interpreted (e.g., by Rashi) as a reference to the Shekinah between the Cherubim".(2)

It will be helpful to deal with certain of the texts which we are familiar with, and to quote from Rabbinical writings as they throw light on the Jewish attitude towards them.

The idea of God dwelling amongst men wasnot uncommon in the Old

(1) Taanith 4;8 and Abodah Zarah 2;5.
(2) E.J. Young: Introduction to the Old Testament, p.324.

Testament: such texts as Ezekiel 43;7, "Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel for ever": Ezekiel 37; 27-28, "My dwelling place shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Then the nations will know that I the Lord sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary is in the midst of them for evermore"; Joel 2;27, "You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel": and Zechariah 2;10-11, "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for lo, I come and I will dwell in the midst of you, saith the Lord. And many nations shall join themselves to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of you, and you shall know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you", are all examples of a fairly common idea in the Old Testament.

But the Rabbinic comment kills any idea of intimacy: "O Lord thou hast been a dwelling-place to us in all generations" (Ps.90;1), and in Deut. 33;27 it says 'The God of old is a dwelling-place'. R. Isaac said: we should not know whether God were the dwelling-place of the world, or whether the world were His dwelling-place, had not Moses come and said, "The Lord is for us a dwelling-place'. R. Jose b. Halafta said: we should not know if God were an appendage to the world, or if it the world were his appendage, had

not He Himself said, 'Behold, there is a place by me' (Ex. 33;21). He is the place of the world (i.e., He includes the world); the world is not His place. So the world is an appendage to Him; He is not an appendage to the world".(1) This kind of verbal quibble is thoroughly typical of the Rabbinic writings, which nevertheless have passages of genuine insight.

A famous text is Micah 6;8, "He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" The Rabbinical comments range from insight to a type of linguistic argument which seems, to us, pointless. For example: "R. Simlai said: six hundred and thirteen commandments were given to Moses, 365 negative commandments, answering to the number of days of the year, and 248 positive commandments, answering to the number of a man's members. Then David came and reduced them to eleven. Then came Isaiah, and reduced them to six. Then came Micah, and reduced them to three. Then Isaiah came again, and reduced them to two, as it is said, 'Keep ye judgment and do righteousness'. Then came Amoz, and reduced them to one, as it is said, 'Seek ye me and ye shall live'. Or one may say, then came Habakkuk, and reduced them to one, as it is said, 'The righteous shall live by his faith'".(2) "R. Elazar said: To do justly, that is, just judgment; to love

(1) Montefiore and Lowe: A Rabbinic Anthology, p.~~199~~ 20.
(2) Ibid., p.199.

mercy, that is, doing loving deeds; to walk humbly before God, that is, following the dead to the cemetery and accompanying the bride to the canopy. There is here an argument from less to greater: for if about things which are wont to be done openly, the Law says, 'Walk humbly', about things which are usually done unobtrusively, how very much more!" (1)

Or we can take such a text as Jeremiah 31;34, "And no longer shall each man teach his neighbour and each his brother, saying, 'know the Lord', for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more". The use of the word "know" brings to mind the verse in Hosea,(6;3) where we might very well read into it that intimate knowledge (again reflected in marriage) which seems to underly Philippians 3;10. But Rabbinic thought was not thus inclined: "Let not a man say to himself, 'I have learned Torah and Mishnah today, to-morrow I need not learn; I have done good deeds today, to-morrow I need do none; I have given charity today, to-morrow I need not'. Let a man rather reflect and realise that after a while comes death. Let him lift his eyes heavenward, and say, 'Who created all these?' Now heaven and earth, sun and moon, stars and planets, early and late do the will of Him who created them. So, too, do you early and late study words of

(1) A Rabbinic Anthology, p.491.

Torah, and ever do the will of your Creator, as it says, 'Let us continue to know the Lord'." (1)

On the other hand, there are many Rabbinic references which tend to point to a closer intimacy with God. On Psalm 55;22, "Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he will sustain thee", we read: "A man has a protector. He applies to him once or twice, and is received. The third time the protector will not see him, and the fourth time he turns from him altogether. But God is not thus; whenever you worry Him, He receives you". (2) In similar vein is this quotation: "It is written, 'Commit thyself unto the Lord' (Ps. 22;8); so too it says, 'Commit unto the Lord thy way (Ps.37;5); R. Bebai, in the name of Rab, said: the word 'gol' comes either from 'galah', in which case the words mean, reveal, ie, confess, your sins, as it says, 'Whose confesses and forsakes his sins shall obtain mercy', or it comes from 'galgel', in which case it means 'Roll them upon me, and I will carry them', as it is said, 'Cast thy burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain thee'. R. Johanan said: It is like the son of a king, who whom they gave a thick beam to carry. His father saw it and said, 'Lay upon me all that you wish, and I will carry it'. So God says to the Israelites, 'Roll your sins upon me, and I will carry them'." (3) The same

(1) A Rabbinic Anthology, p.499.
(2) Ibid., p.557.
(3) Ibid., p.89.

note of personal relationship comes out in the comment on Jeremiah 3;1, "Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return to me again, says the Lord": it runs as follows; "But God is not so. Even though Israel has deserted Him, and served other gods, He says, 'Return unto me, repent, and I will receive you'. So Jeremiah, too, applies the same contrast, and says, 'though thou hast played the harlot' etc."(1) Again: "It is written 'Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will He instruct sinners in the way'. They asked Wisdom, 'What shall be the punishment of the sinner?' Wisdom answered, 'Evil pursues sinners'. They asked Prophecy. It replied, 'Let him bring a sacrifice'. They asked God, and He replied, 'Let him repent, and obtain his atonement. My children, what do I ask of you? Seek me and live'".(2)

There are also Rabbinic passages where the idea of being with God, and of his being with his people, occur: on Micah 6;8, "God said to Israel, 'My sons have I made you lack aught? What is it that I seek of you? Only that you love each other, honour each other and respect each other: that there be not found among you either sin or theft or anything ugly: that you never become soiled or base.' For, 'He has told thee, O man, what is good ... walk humbly (or secretly) with thy God', that is to say, 'Walk in secret with thy God, and God will be with thee'. (There is a play upon

(1) A Rabbinic Anthology, p. 319.
(2) Ibid., p.318.

the word 'zabua', which can mean 'humble', or 'secret', or 'hidden') So long as you are with Him in secret, He will be with you in secret also".[1] A similar tenderness is shown in the next: "'My dove, my undefiled' (Cant. 5;2). R. Yannai said: Read 'Teummati", my twin, as if God said, 'I am not greater than she, and she is not greater than I'. R. Joshua of Sikhnin said in the name of R. Levi: As with twins, if one has a headache, the other feels it too, so God says of Israel, I am with him in his distress (Ps. 91;15)".[2] This rather daring thought reaches its climax in what Montefiore himself calls "extreme boldness ... strange and exceptional": "'My soul thirsts for the living God' (Ps. 42;2). That is, for the time, Israel says, when thou wilt restore that Godhead (fullness of God) which thou didst make for me at Sinai, when I said, 'Gods are ye' (Ps. 82;6) ... Hasten the time, proclaim the Unity of thy Godhead throughout the world, and let the Lord be king over all the earth".[3]

However, this registers with us simply because we see it against the background of the emphasis on the transcendence of God which we find throughout the Old Testament: and it is to be noted that the intimacy is between God and Israel - not between God and the individual believer; for His very transcendence made it quite impossible for such a relation to be conceived.

(1) A Rabbinic Anthology, p.468.
(2) Ibid., p.62.
(3) Ibid., p.587.

This problem of the transcendence of God, was never fully overcome in Judaism by New Testament times. Various attempts were made, which lie behind some of the quotations given above which appear to draw man and God into some kind of intimacy. It was not man as an individual who was involved, but man as man - and hence a certain distance could be kept; or the intimacy was not with God, but with some mediating creature. The Rabbis thought of three different concepts which mediated between God and men, and we look at these in turn, realising that they take the place in Jewish theology of the Incarnate Word in Christian thought. But are they really similar?

The first idea is that of the Metatron. "Metatron was a Talmudic archangel in the 'wisdom' hierarchy ... It is sometimes held that the function of Metatron was to be a substitute for the Alexandrine Logos which had tended to become too materialised in the opinion of the Palestinian Rabbis. Cicero (Philippics 11;5;12) almost equates the function of the Metatron with that of the Logos. In several instances Metatron is an intermediary designed to prevent too intimate a contact between God and the material world".(1)

A rather more familiar, and much more widely-used, idea was that of the Shechinah (dwelling) of the Lord: a verse like

(1) A Rabbinic Anthology, p.68-9.

Ezekiel 1;28 very well portrays the significance of the transcendence of God: "Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard the voice of one speaking". Montefiore explains: "they were helped in the development of this idea (the omnipresence yet 'limited' manifestations of God) by their creation of the doctrine of the Shechinah, or the Indwelling of God. Most useful were these doctrines of contraction and expansion, and of the Shechinah, in relation to the Temple ... God did 'dwell' in the temple. It was His earthly 'house'".(1)

This was much used by the Rabbis: "It is written, 'And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of meeting, because the glory of the Lord filled the sanctuary'. R. Joshua of Sikhnin said in the name of R. Levi: The matter is like a cave which lies by the sea shore: the tide rises, and the cave becomes full of water, but the sea is no whit less full. So the sanctuary and the tent of meeting were filled with the radiance of the Shechinah, but the world was no less filled with God's glory".(2)

It was possible for men to come into close contact with the Shechinah; "Whenever Israel is enslaved, the Shechinah is enslaved with them, as it says, 'In all their afflictions He was afflicted'.

(1) A Rabbinic Anthology, p.15.
(2) Ibid., p.15.

And if you say this verse shows only that God is afflicted when the community of Israel is afflicted, how do we know that He is afflicted with an individual Israelite...? Because it says, 'I will be with him in distress'".[1]

It becomes clear from our study that no direct parallel to union with Christ can be expected here, on two grounds. First, every care is taken to distinguish between the Metatron or Shechinah, and God; and this distinction is not merely the distinction the New Testament draws between Christ and God the Father, but it is a distinction between God and 'not-God'. And secondly, as they cannot be regarded as truly and fully personal, a personal relationship is not possible.

Dr Abelson argues[2] that the Shechinah was actually personified in the Rabbinic writings, and suggests that the Shechinah was practically identified with God.[3] He quotes from Onkelos: "I have set the Lord before me continually; because His Shechinah dwells upon me, I shall not be moved" (Ps.16;8). This of course is not identification, but precisely that treatment of the transcendence of God which we see in the Rabbinic use of Metatron, Logos and Shechinah. Again: "The finest personification of the Shechinah as the immanent God of Jerusalem and the Temple is to be found in the Introduction to Lamentations Rabba XXV ...

(1) A Rabbinic Anthology, p.63.
(2) J.Abelson: The Immanence of God in Rabbinical Literature.
(3) Ibid., p.80.

'The Shechinah made ten journeys: (1) from cherub to cherub. (2) From cherub to the threshold of the House. (3) From the threshold of the House to the Cherubim. (4) From the Cherubim to the Eastern Gate. (5) From the Eastern Gate to the Court. (6) From the Court to the roof. (7) From the roof to the Altar. (8) From the Altar to the wall. (9) From the wall to the city. (10) From the city to the Mount of Olives'." And he quotes from R. Isaac: "He who sins in secret (against the Lord) acts as though he were pressing against the feet of the Shechinah".(1)

But in all these there is still the fundamental distinction between God and not-God. When we remember that the doctrine of the Shechinah was the Jewish answer to the problem of immanence and transcendence we are less likely to read into it what was not there. There is all the difference between even the highest of the Shechinah ideas and the simplicity of John: "The Logos became flesh and dwelt among us".

This brings us to the third concept where we might find some correspondance with our theme - that of Logos. The Word of God had an importance in the Old Testament, as in the Creation narrative, and in the often-used formula of the prophets, "the Word of the Lord came to me".(2) There was a tendency among Jews

(1) The Immanence of God in Rabbinical Literature, p.112.
(2) E.g., Ezekiel 3;16, 6;1, 7;1 etc.

to think of Logos and Torah as in many respects the same - in this sense, there is obviously no connection with our theme. But in philosophical Judaism, as exampled in Philo of Alexandria, the word as used has a much greater significance. We must look at it in some detail, and ask whether it points to a possible derivation of union with Christ from the Old Testament scriptures, which Philo used.

The large work of H.A. Wolfson (1) is a useful source for any such enquiry, even though we must of necessity take only brief quotations from his book. It is important to realise that the Logos had a philosophical content, rather like the Greek - and the Hermetic - νους . "The Logos ... is the mind of which the intelligible world and the ideas which constitute the intelligible world are the objects of thought. But mind and its object of thought are identical not only in the case of God but, to some degree, also whenever the knowledge of the mind is actual ... It is in this sense that Philo says of the Logos that it is 'the rich and manifold union of myriad ideas'. In one place, he says that God 'stamped the entire world with an image and idea, namely, His own Logos'. Here the term idea, with which the term Logos is synonymous, is evidently used collectively in the sense of the totality of Ideas". (2)

(1) Philo. 2 Volumes.
(2) Ibid., Vol. 1, p.232.

"In Scripture, it is by the word of God that the heavens were made; it is in fulfillment of the word of God that the forces of nature perform their functions; it is the word of God that is communicated to prophets; and it is the word of God that is revealed in the Law. With all this variety of usages of the term Logos in Scripture, it was quite natural for Philo, whose purpose was not only to interpret Scripture in terms of Greek philosophy, but also to interpret philosophy in terms of Scripture, to substitute the term Logos for the term Nous".(1)

This is very far indeed from the personal idea of the Johannine writings. Perhaps we can grasp something of Philo's concept when we see that he could at times identify Logos and Wisdom: "as the Logos is described by Philo as an instrument 'through which' or 'by which' the world was made, so also is Wisdom described by him as that 'through which the world came into existence' or 'was brought to completion'."(2)

"The term instrument applied to the Logos does not mean that the Logos was a 'co-worker' of God in the act of creation ... The sense in which Philo uses the term instrument can be gathered from the main passage in which he applies it to the Logos. In that passage ... he substitutes it for Aristotle's term form ... Now in

(1) Philo, Wolfson; Vol. 1, p.254.
(2) Ibid., p.266.

Aristotle the form is an instrument only in the sense that it is through the form that subsists in the mind of the artist as a pattern that the clay is molded into a statue ... Instrument, therefore, merely means pattern".(1)

We are heremoving in the world of abstract philosophy, much closer to the Hermetic writings which we studied than to Pauline or Johannine thought; for "the Logos, which in Philo is never personal, except in a fluctuating series of metaphors, is in the gospel fully personal, standing in personal relations both with God and with men, and having a place in history. As a result, those elements of personal piety, faith and love, which are present in Philo's religion but not fully integrated into his philosophy, come to their own in the gospel. The Logos of Philo is not the object of faith and love".(2)

It is not the purpose of our quest to compare the Logos of John with the Logos of Philo. But it is obvious from the brief mention we have made that the Philonic Logos could never enter into any meaningful, two-way personal relationship with a believer. And hence we must look elsewhere for the source of the concept of union with Christ.

(1) Philo, Wolfson, Vol. 1, p.270.
(2) C.H.Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, p.73.

As well as looking at the Rabbinic understanding of the Old Testament, we must pay some attention to the Apocrypha as evidence of the way the Jewish faith was tending to develop in the crucial years before the Christian era, and particularly to discover if there is any development from the Old Testament which might bring a close personal union with the Divine nearer to the devout Jews who studied these works.

Textual evidence as such is scanty; there are several passages where we have something quite close to parts of the New Testament. "Then said I unto the angel, What young person is it that crowneth them, and giveth them palms in their hands? So he answered and said unto me, It is the Son of God, whom they have confessed in the world."(1) Despite similarities, however, the idea has much more in common with Daniel than with the New Testament. Some idea of union might be implied in our next quotation: "For my son Jesus shall be revealed with those that be with him, and they that remain shall rejoice within four hundred years",(2) but the phrase "those that be with him" does not carry the implications of the Synoptic gospels' use, as we can see from v.21 of the same chapter, where the emphasis is on obedience to God's law, and not on union with any individual.

(1) II Esdras 2;46ff.
(2) II Esdras 7;28.

Indeed, this basic emphasis on the place of obedience to the revealed Law of God is essential to our understanding of the religion of the Apocrypha. There are places where there appears to be a more intimate understanding of the nature of the union of the believer and God, such as: "for to know thee is perfect righteousness: yea, to know thy power is the root of immortality"[1] but this is not the knowledge we find in Philippians 3;10. Pfeiffer points out that "immortality can be attained only by knowing God and doing His will ... our author's understanding of righteousness and knowledge of God was colored by Hellenistic notions".[2] Earlier he said: "the author of Wisdom, influenced by Hellenistic missionaries, is apparently the first Jew to regard a life of righteousness as the condition for eternal salvation".[3] Thus two things stand out: first, that knowledge is to be understood rather in the Hellenistic sense, as we saw during our study of the Hellenistic background,[4] and second, that the concept of a life of ethical quality as the precondition for salvation is right in line with the ideas we find in the Mystery Religions and the Hermetica. What we find here is rather like the Rabbinic comment on "Letus follow on to know the Lord", quoted earlier.[5]

The transcendence of God is as much in evidence in the

(1) Wisdom of Solomon, 15;3.
(2) Pfeiffer: History of New Testament Times, p.342.
(3) Ibid., p.337.
(4) Above, p.155; cf. also pp. 86ff above.
(5) Above, p.200.

Apocrypha as in the Old Testament. Such passages as Ecclesiasticus 16;16-19 emphasize it, and this is not a singular instance. "God's transcendent majesty and dominion are emphasized in Tobit not only by the avoidence of anthropomorphisms (except in standard poetic expression, as in 13;6), but also by a doctrine about angels more elaborate than in any earlier or contemporary writing, comparable indeed to that of later books".(1)

Man's relation to God is basically the result of God's own action. This comes out most clearly in Ecclus. 44;1 - 50;29. We see this in the case of Moses (45;1ff), Caleb (46;9), and David (47;5), who called upon God. We find that men are accepted or rejected by God on the grounds of righteousness or the lack of it - so with Noah (44;17) and Abraham (44;20). We are told that "Josias directed his heart unto the Lord" (49;3), but first that he "behaved himself uprightly in the conversion of the people, and took away the abominations of iniquity" (49;2). The summary of the bookstresses the same theme: "Blessed is he that shall be exercised in these things; and he that layeth them up in heart shall become wise. For if he do them, he shall be strong to all things" (50;28-29). The door seems to be opened to a more intimate knowledge of God by the phrase "the seed of him that loveth God" (47;22), but even there we must be cautious: "Personal

(1) Pfeiffer: History of New Testament Times, p.282.

piety ... is thus characterized by a strong feeling of trust and obedience in God, by love for God (cf. Tobit 14;7). This is the greatest of all treasures: the pious Jew who fears God, avoids sin, and does what is pleasing to God ... is the owner of good possessions".(1) This is merely what we have already seen - that the Jew did not really differentiate between belief and action, and because of this tended to think in ways that seem, to us, to be confused.

However, the whole trend of thought in the Apocrypha is towards Hellenism, and that the Hellenism which stressed the ethical in religion. "Judaism .. in Tobit (as in Ecclesiasticus) is far more a personal than a national religion. Its basic principle, addressed to the individual, is 'My son, be mindful of the Lord our God all thy days, and let not thy will be set to sin, or to transgress his commandments: do uprightly all thy life long, and follow not in the ways of unrighteousness' (Tobit 4;5)." (2) In the Book of Judith we find such teaching that we can say: "obedience to God's laws (11;22) is the supreme test of piety".(3)

We do find a much more definite place given to the religion of the individual than we found in the Old Testament: "After the Exile, through the influence of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Judaism

(1) Pfeiffer: History of New Testament Times, p.283.
(2) Ibid., p.281.
(3) Ibid., p.302.

became also a way of salvation for the individual: 'The older ideas of national solidarity were supplemented and to some extent superseded by personal responsibility'.[1] Both aspects were stressed by Sirach and remained basic in later centuries".[2]

But always, in these books, we find that the life of righteousness is the precondition for salvation: we do not find the essential N.T. feature that an ethical life proceeds from the dynamic of faith - though to draw such a clear distinction is not quite fair to the Jewish way of thought, especially regarding religion. But it appears perfectly plain that we are here in an atmosphere which by no means could produce the concept of union with Christ - what we have here is the lofty transcendence of the Divine majesty, the responsibility of man to live in accordance with His revealed Law, and the rewards and happiness that come to man as a direct result of such conformity. We shall have to look elsewhere for the source of union with Christ.

The Old Testament and Pauline Writings:

One of the most significant points in assessing the relation of the concept of union with Christ to the Judaism of the New Testament is the witness of the New Testament itself. Paul was

(1) G.F.Moore, Judaism, Vol. 1, p.224f.
(2) Pfeiffer: History of New Testament Times, p.373.

trained in Rabbinic thought, and was himself the expositor, if not the originator, of the idea of union with Christ as expressed in the 'in Christ' formula. Thus, although the evidence of the Rabbinic writings is important, his own testimony must be regarded even more highly.

If there were any use of the Old Testament to support 'mysticism', we might well expect Paul to know of it, and to use it in his turn. But when we turn to the Pauline writings,(1) we find this is singularly lacking. We have already seen many texts in the Old Testament which would lend themselves to quotation in support of intimate relation with Christ,(2) but none of these is quoted. What do we in fact find?

First, that there are about 240 allusions to the Old Testament in the Pauline writings we are considering. Many of these are only possible, and by no means certain. But in the letters before us there are altogether 85 quotations from the Old Testament, in both LXX and Hebrew versions. We shall study briefly the use made of these quotations, and the light this can shed on our problem; the quotations, and the passages in which they are quoted, are listed separately.(3)

(1) For our present purpose: Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I and II Thessalonians. The Pastorals have little on the theme.
(2) Above, pp.191ff.
(3) See Appendix II.

We shall try first to give some examples of quotations in close connection with the verses listed earlier [1] which deal with union with Christ. Such a passage is I Cor. 6: the O.T. quotation is from Genesis 2;24, "The two shall become one flesh", and it is quoted in connection with the relation of Christ and the Christian discussed in verses 15-21. However, the point is not so much a comparison as a contrast: for the union of believer and prostitute is a physical one - that of the believer and his Lord is spiritual.

Again, the same O.T. verse is quoted, rather more fully, in Ephesians 5;31, where the analogy is drawn between Christ and the Christian, and the husband and the wife. We cannot miss the significance that Paul reads this verse as referring to Christ and the believer - this is its true and real significance, though it does also refer to the marriage bond. This is the only case where he quotes the Old Testament quite unambiguously as referring to the relation of Christ and the Christian - though to be quite accurate, the relation is of Christ and his church, not the individual Christian.

Romans 8;36 has the quotation from Ps. 44;22, but here again we see nothing to refer to a spiritual intimacy; it is rather a

(1) Above, pp. 19ff.

typical piece of Rabbinic quotation. I Cor. 1;31 could be made to speak of our life in Christ, but that is not the point of the quotation; the same applies to I Cor. 3;19, 20.

There are other texts that might have some 'mystical' significance. Romans 1;17, the first quotation of Habakkuk 2;4, "He who through faith is righteous shall live";(1) the quotation of various texts (2) in II Cor. 6;16, to make "I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people", which Paul takes to support his argument that "we are the temple of the living God". Here an O.T. text is made to give evidence of the Divine indwelling - nothing new to the Rabbis.

On the other hand, there are several places where Paul uses a process all too familiar to the Rabbinic scholar. Such passages are in I Cor. 9;9, where a text about cattle is referred to men (the familiar argument from lesser to greater); again the answer to the question of meat sold in the market is dealt with by a slick quotation (I Cor. 10;26). The same kind of thought is in I Cor. 15;27ff., where the subject of the resurrection is supported by quotations from the Psalms - not very convincing to the modern ear, but in line with general Rabbinic treatment. The best examples of this process are in Galatians 3;15ff and 4;22ff., where Paul deals

(1) R.S.V. translation.
(2) Exodus 25;8, Leviticus 26;12, Ezek. 37;27, Jer. 31;1.

with the promise to Abraham's seed, and the birth of Ishmael, respectively.

Paul's quotation of the psalter, with all its wonderful imagery of trust in God, is in agreement with his use of the rest of the Old Testament. As has been pointed out,[1] it is not for any support for his 'in Christ' ideas, but simply normal Rabbinic quotation.

What can we conclude from this? There is other evidence, such as the entire absence of the Old Testament in Philippians, where union with Christ is very much present, and the paucity of such references in other classic treatments of this subject. With the solitary exception of Genesis 2;24, Paul makes no use of the Old Testament to support his concept ofunion with Christ. The texts could easily be made to carry such a treatment, as was shown by later Christian preachers and apologists. But Paul did not make this use of them, despite his heavy reliance on the Old Testament, both directly and indirectly. The inference is clear; union with Christ is something so new and revolutionary that the Old Testament could hardly be expected to deal with it in any direct way: and this is one of the most powerful arguments against finding a source within Judaism itself.

(1) International Critical Commentary, Psalms, Vol. 1, p.cii.

The Answer from Judaism:

A reasonable case can be made out in support of the contention that union with Christ has its roots in the Old Testament, and in the Judaism which was so closely identified with the Old Testament. We could arrange the arguments as follows:

The foremost protagonist of the concept of union with Christ is Paul; and his background is interesting, as providing practical proof of the dominance of Judaism (as against Hellenism) at least in his conscious mind and work. As he asserted so vigorously in Philippians 3, he was a Jew, a Pharisee, and prouddof it, though he had given it up for Christ. This was one of his lines of defence in Jerusalem (Acts 22;3), and was a common meeting point with many of those whom he reached with the gospel. Not only way he a Pharisee, but "he had indeed the very considerable advantage of studying religion and theology in Jerusalem under Gamaliel, who represented Pharisaism at its best".(1)

That Paul took over into his Christianity much of what he had learned in Judaism is self-evident. The great Jewish theme of one God, and the revelation of that God in Scripture, were with him all his days. A devoted Christian, he yet does not confuse Christ with

(1) T.R.Glover, Paul of Tarsus, cf. index, p.254.

God, but always regards him as the agent of God's purpose, the one through whom we have the express image of His Person - but never identifies the two. His quotation of the LXX as authoritative is another inheritance from his Jewish upbringing, brought into his Christian faith and thought.(1)

Another reason in favour of a Jewish source is the very vagueness - indefiniteness, though clumsy, is perhaps a better word - of the concept of union with Christ. It is not clear; it lends itself to different interpretations, now the idea of putting on a garment,(2) now the idea of a new creation,(3) and it is very hard to pin it down and say "there is Paul's concept". In this it has a character very like much of the Jewish theology. As we have seen, the Jew was concerned about the whole of life, and not only with that part called "theology".(4) He was not very particular about the finer points of creed, but about the broader reaches of religious experience.

Tying in with this is the fact that the faith of which Paul speaks, and which is interwoven with the whole concept, is far more like the faith of the Jew and of the Old Testament than it resembles the faith of the Greek.(5) Indeed, the double meaning of "faith" and "faithfulness" is essential to an understanding of

(1) For a fuller treatment of this, cf. T.R.Glover's delightful book, Paul of Tarsus, pp.24-46.
(2) Gal. 3;27.
(3) II Cor. 5;17.
(4) See above, pp.182ff. (5) Above, pp.54-60.

such texts as Gal. 2;20. This could only have come from a heart to which such an idea of faith had become intensely real through personal experience, and it is the faith of a Jew, a member of the Israel of God.[1]

Again, the acceptance of the early church of so much of Paul's teaching is silent testimony to the Jewish content of his contribution.[2] For the early church, the Old Testament was the one text-book, and nothing would have been tolerated which was in contradiction to what was written there; and Paul's teaching, however hard it might be,[3] was in accordance with the teaching of the LXX. Such a conclusion, even though it is from silence, is of importance.

It could well be that Paul was regarded as having "Christianised" the experiences of the Old Testament. The relation with God had been close to personal, but His transcendence had been the great stumbling-block; we have seen how the Rabbis sought to deal with that.[4] But now that God was in Christ, now that Christ had opened the way to God, men could enter that personal relationship. This could well be regarded as fulfilment of the Sacred Scriptures.

(1) Cf. C.H.Dodd, The Bible and the Greeks, p.199. Also Deissmann, The Religion of Jesus and the Faith of Paul, p.205.
(2) But Schweitzer, The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, p.31, thinks it a very important argument.
(3) II Peter 3;16.
(4) Above, pp.204ff.

There is also the important theme of ethics running through Paul's teaching, and the whole of the New Testament. This, too, had its closest parallel in Judaism, which made its appeal to the Graeco-Roman world largely because of its lofty ethic, in such marked contrast to the religions with which it had to be compared. But back of its ethic lay its faith, and the two could not be separated. Just as for the Old Testament the wise men was the good man,[1] so for the New Testament the believer was a person whose life took on the beauty of Christ. And just as we must not caricature the Judaism of Paul's day by saying that it was merely an ethical movement, so we must not do disservice to Christianity by trying to separate Christology from ethics. They belonged together; and in so belonging, were a further fulfilment of the Old Testament, and a further proof of the oneness of God's revelation.

There are of course many parallels with Hellenistic thought in Paul. That need not surprise us when we consider his near contemporary, Philo, who worked and thought from inside Judaism itself. He too, and not alone, had felt the beat of the mystery religions, the attraction of the cold, clear philosophy of Greece; and he too felt the need to claim this region of thought for God. He went by a very different road from that which took Paul from

(1) Cf. C.H.Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, p.181.

Damascus to Rome; but he went his way with a very similar concern, and from a very similar beginning, as a Jew in the Hellenistic world.

On the other hand, there are certain arguments against our finding the source of our concept in Judaism: we can list them in their turn as follows:

A strong objection, which we tend to overlook, is simply the great Jewish concept of monotheism. The power of this idea is seen in the story of our Lord's trial, and in the trial and death of Stephen, early in Acts. How, it is asked, could anyone who held on to his Jewish heritage possible ascribe to Christ such divine characteristics and attributes as Paul, John, and other New Testament writers do? As we have seen, Paul successfully brought over into Christianity his trust in, and reliance upon, the Old Testament. This he could not have done if he had not thought of Christ as the Son of God; and the blazing light of the Damascus road had shown this to him with blinding conviction.

The language of Paul and the others is typically Greek. Although we can use Jewish concepts in understanding many of their references, it is argued that the Greek background can be just as

informative, and indeed opens the door to a fuller meaning of the text. However, this argument is clearly inconclusive - and our earlier study of faith and knowledge in Paul tends towards the acceptance of a Jewish background for them.

The presence of sacramentalism in Christianity is a difficulty if we hold to a Jewish origin. The Eucharist is a new thing for the Jews who became Christians, for it is not very like the Passover which they themselves had celebrated; and even baptism was not practised among the Jews themselves, but was reserved for proselytes from other faiths. It is argued that baptism was a reflection of the mystery religions (the classic example being the taurobolium), and that the Eucharist was a reflection of the meal of the Mystery Religions. It is very hard to deny the similarity; it is equally hard to prove that the Mysteries came first, for the developed and clarified forms, as we have seen,(1) all appear much later than the New Testament period.

There is, finally, one tremendous argument against a Jewish origin: and that is the use of the Old Testament in Christian circles. It is not only that the contemporary Rabbis did not see any such idea in the Old Testament - significant enough in itself - but that Paul does not use the scriptures to illustrate or even to

(1) Above, p.178.

support his concept. This seems quite clearly to indicate that he regarded the concept as something new - though whether he regarded it as his own contribution, something revealed to him in private, or part of the message of the early Church, we shall have to examine.

At the end of our survey of the Hellenistic and Jewish background to the New Testament, we have different possibilities for a source for the idea of union with Christ. But none of them has that clarity which we would expect; bearing in mind that any other solution must spring from one - or both - of these worlds, we proceed to examine the possibilities that remain.

Was Paul the originator of the 'in Christ' idea?

From our study of the Greek and Jewish backgrounds to the New Testament, we have discovered several points which resemble the New Testament concept of union with Christ, but nothing to which we can legitimately point as the source of that concept. There are, of course, other possibilities: some would point to a combined Jewish-Hellenistic view (e.g., Deissmann), while others would find the source within the mind and heart of Paul himself. Did the concept originate with him, in the never-to-be-forgotten encounter in the blazing brightness of midday, on route for Damascus? We must examine the possibility.

In its favour, the failure to find a satisfying answer in Judaism or Hellenism must point us towards Paul: for in his person the two worlds met. And if we come by that means to consider him, then we must almost certainly point to the Damascus road experience as the real origin of the idea.

That experience was of the greatest importance. Whatever happened, it was for Paul the beginning of a life's pilgrimage, of an obedience that ended in his death for the Lord who met him on that day. Deissmann, quoted with approval by Schweitzer, ascribed the whole of Paul's mysticism to that occasion:

"everything which can be called Christ-Mysticism in Paul comes from his reaction to this initiatory experience".[1] Schweitzer continues: "in the Damascus experience Paul attained to the conviction not only that Jesus was the expected Messiah but also to the 'in Christ' and 'Christ in me'. His Christ-Mysticism is only the radiation of the energy which thenceforth was concentrated in his soul. To the further development of this mysticism Jewish-Hellenistic and Hellenistic-Mystical ideas contributed their part, so far as he was acquainted with them". J.S.Stewart says: "this conversion experience was far and away the most vital and formative influence of Paul's life. Compared with this, everything else - his Jewish ancestry, his Rabbinic training, his Hellenistic contacts, every factor of heredity and environment - was completely secondary".[2]

No one can possibly argue that his conversion experience was NOT of the utmost significance for Paul; but in a sense that is beside the point. For our quest is whether the great concept of union with Christ - and in particular the 'in Christ' concept - originated with Paul himself; is it the product of a mind suddenly illumined by the splendour of the risen Christ - or is it something which Paul encounrteed when he entered the fold of the early Christian church?

(1) The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, p.35.
(2) A Man in Christ, p.82.

We could adduce his own testimony to show that the idea originated with him. In Galatians, seeking to maintain his independence, he states that he received the gospel which he preached "by the revelation of Jesus Christ",(1) and emphasises that it did not come from a human source. This was when "it pleased God to reveal His Son in me" - why not "to me"? Why "in me"? Perhaps because here was the seed of it all? Now, if Paul did in fact receive his gospel from Christ immediately, what was the content of it? Did it include 'in Christ' as the most important category in Christian faith? To such questions we can only suggest answers.

It seems at least possible that Paul did in fact receive his basic instruction in the faith indirectly; this is surely part of the significance of his post-conversion experience in Acts 9;19. It is almost certain, arguing from one's own experience, that the disciples among whom Paul stayed were able to interpret for him the meaning and importance of what had happened in his conversion. His phrase in I Cor. 11; "I received of the Lord", which refers to the authority for the Lord's Supper, has been taken to mean that the tradition was passed down to him.(2) Now we cannot sufficiently emphasise that this in no way contradicts his own statements in Galatians 1; his gospel was received immediately,

(1) Galatians 1;12.
(2) Cullmann, Scottish Journal of Theology, June 1950.

in the literal sense that Christ Himself met him. But the question we face is, was that experience translated into terms already familiar to the Christian church?

Schweitzer maintains that Paul was the originator of the 'in Christ' and of the mysticism which belongs to that idea. But it is only fair to point out that his assessment is based on a totally inadequate reference to Paul himself; he cites only twelve passages as "utterances of Pauline mysticism".(1) He traces this back to the eschatology which Paul inherited, and which he had to understand anew with the delay of the parousia. But before we can follow him thus far, we must look at the arguments against this concept arising in Paul.

They can be fairly briefly stated: the first is that the concept was regarded by Paul as universally applicable. It is not the experience of a select few - on the contrary, "we warn every man and teach every man, so that we may present every man perfect in Christ".(2) And in this it is in the greatest contrast to his view of his conversion. His whole insistence is that on the road to Damascus Christ appeared to him as to "one born out of due time", and on the unique nature of this he bases his claim to be an apostle.(3) Now if the 'in Christ' theme was so closely linked

(1) The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, p.3-4.
(2) Col. 1;28.
(3) ~~XXI~~.I Cor. 15;8.

to his conversion, it isunlikely that his view of the two would be so very different.

More impressive is the argument from what we actually find in Paul. Had the concept originated with him, we might expect to find some development. A brief look at some of his own statements will be helpful.

We take the following points for granted: first, that Galatians represents Pauline thought at an early stage. While this may not have been the earliest of his letters, it is the first to contain explicit reference to union with Christ. Second, that in the Corinthian letters and the Romans we have a middle point in our time chart; for although conditions governing them were very different, and the Corinthian letters pose their own problems, they do follow some time after Galatians. Third, we take Ephesians/Colossians as the culmination of Pauline Christology. The vexed question of authorship will not detain us, for it is clear that they contain authentic Pauline thought, and some of the most developed Christology of the New Testament.

When we look at these, the following facts stand out:

1. The 'individual' application of the concept, i.e., what being 'in Christ' means for me, is found in Galatians 2;20, which is a

very early concentrated summary of his thought. Here is the death of the believer with Christ, and the experience of His life in his own personality - the 'I yet not I' working out in the life the believer lives in the world. This is the same idea as we find in II Cor. 5;17, but here it is clothed in much more objective language; and nowhere in later letters do we find anything which greatly develops this theme.

2. The 'social' reference of the concept may appear to have developed considerably, e.g. in Ephesians/Colossians. And yet here again there is nothing intrinsically new, for we find in II Cor. 13;7 the reference to Christ being "among you"; and the great passage of I Cor. 12 on the Body of Christ takes up the same thought. These passages in their turn only unfold the thought implicitly in Gal. 3;28, the theme of being "one person in Christ".

3. We do find a development on the subject of the "cosmic Christ" in Ephesians/Colossians, especially in the lyrical passage at the end of the first chapter of Ephesians. But we remember the white heat of Galatians, and realise it can hardly be compared with the lofty majesty of Ephesians. But in Romans, and particularly in I Cor. 15, we have 'in Christ' used in a similar kind of way, with reference to the "solidarity" of the faithful.

So we do see a development of the concept, even in these few sample texts. But it is invariably development to meet a particular situation or doctrinal point, rather than a basic alteration of the concept, or a radically new angle to it.

Is there a conclusion we can draw from this? Surely that we can discern, in the texts before us in a number of others, a certain development from a fixed point. We do not find the concept starting here or there; in the earliest letter we find a clear and unambiguous statement, containing in embryo what is later developed in different situations. The most straightforward conclusion is that Paul at least took over this concept, and then adapted and applied it to his various writings. We find, in other words, a "given" which does not appear to originate with Paul: so we must ask, where did it originate?

Another argument against developing this concept from Paul himself is that it occurs in other New Testament writings. This is most noticeable in John, which may well be later than Paul, and thus influenced by him.(1) But it is also in I Peter, which we may date about A.D. 66-67, admittedly not developed to anything like the extent we find in Paul. The very diversity of these expressions seems to point to some common source outside of any one of them.

(1) But see C.H.Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, p.193. Also J.K.S.Reid, Our Life in Christ, p.15.

Again, Paul's teaching on the concept was universally accepted by the church, even where his authority was being questioned. This is one of the strong arguments against Pauline origin - as indeed it is against Hellenistic origin. It appears unlikely that any new concept would be welcome from such a source as Paul, although we must remember that before Galatians was written, he had been accepted as an apostle. It seems more likely that the idea was in circulation, and thus Paul's teaching was more acceptable to the early church.

However, a possible solution to our problem could be given by dividing the form and the content of the 'in Christ' formula. The form we have signally failed to find anywhere before Paul; the content - that we must look for now.

One other source has not as yet been studied - the Synoptic gospels. For Paul worked and lived against the background of the life and teaching of Christ himself, and we must see if there is any hint of such "mysticism", or of the 'in Christ' idea, in the story the evangelists tell. We are often told that the 'in Christ' of the epistles is simply a logical development and conclusion from the 'with Christ' of the Synoptics.(1) We turn now to examine whether there be truth in this or not.

(1) E.g., C.A.A.Scott, Christianity according to St. Paul, p.152, J.K.S.Reid, Our Life in Christ, p.14, et al.

"Union with Christ" in the Synoptic Gospels:

We note, first of all, that in the Synoptics being 'with Christ' is the normal description of becoming a Christian, just as it is the obvious result of following Christ. This is illustrated by the call of the disciples: "Jesus said to them, 'Come with me, and I will make you fishers of men. They left their nets at once and followed him"(Matt. 4;18-20, Mk.6;31). It is the description of the conversion of Matthew: "Jesus saw a man named Matthew at his seat in the custom-house; and he said to him, 'Follow me'. And Matthew rose and followed him". (Matt. 9;9f).

More than that, it becomes the normal description of the state of being in fellowship with Christ, as when Jesus points out that his disciples must "take up the cross and follow me" (Matt. 10;37-39, 16;24ff etc.). The extent to which this description was applied is shown in the story of Peter's denials of his Lord, where the charge is quite explicit (Matt. 26; 69,71,73): "You were with Jesus; This fellow was with Jesus; Surely you are another of them?" In each case the mark of being "with Christ" was the distinctive mark of the disciple. And after all, this is only what we should expect, and what we still see in any group of men with a leader. For "to walk with a person .. is a

characteristic Semitic expression for sharing the company of another, and can be used in both a literal and metaphorical sense".(1)

We must ask if this is the only use of the phrase, and is it adequate for the description of Christ and the believer: do we find that 'with Christ' is used for the future post-resurrection time, or do we find a move towards some other expression?

At first sight, 'with Christ' appears to have a future reference as well. Matt. 28;20: "I am with you always", seems clear enough. In addition we have the admittedly disputed verse in Mark 16;20, of which we can only say that the language is in keeping with the thought of the Synoptics, "The Lord worked with them".

But that is on the surface. It was not enough just to be with Jesus: more was needed. We find this behind the story in Luke 13;26, "we have eaten and drunk in your presence, and you have taught in our streets". The insistence on something more leads to the incident where the Lord said that those who do the will of God are mother and sister and brother to him (Matt. 12;50 and parallels). Thus to be 'with him' is not sufficient - and so

(1) Lightfoot: St. John's Gospel, p.170.

it can hardly be an adequate description of close and intimate fellowship with Christ.

In addition, we have several passages where a more 'mystical' note appears. The promise of Matt. 28;20 is qualified when we remember the statement in Matt. 26;11, "You have the poor among you always; but you will not always have me". Again, in Matt.18;20 we have the statement: "where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them". Arndt and Gingrich give the meaning "close personal relationship, in communion with you",(1) and Edersheim says "in the smallest gathering in the name of Christ, his Presence would be",(2) echoing in English the comment of the Rabbis, "Two that sit together and are occupied in the words of the Law have the Shechinah (i.e., the Divine Presence) among them".(3) The prepositions are interesting: εἰς describes a close and growing intimacy, and ἐν is the familiar one of the epistles and the later New Testament. Again, in Luke 10;16, "whoever listens to you listens to me; whoever rejects you rejects me", we have a close identification of Christ and his disciples, all the more interesting as he was about to send them out in physical separation from him.

(1) N.T. Lexicon, pp.508-509.
(2) Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, II, 124.
(3) Quoted in I.C.C. ad loc., p. 199.

The next idea which we shall explore is our Lord's reference to the "bridegroom". We quote Matthew's version (9;14-15), though it is also found in Mark, Luke - and John: "Then John's disciples came to him with the question: 'Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not?' Jesus replied, 'Can you expect the bridegroom's friends to go mourning while the bridegroom is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; that will be the time for them to fast". What does this mean for our study?

"Here Jesus indirectly applies to himself the great figure by which O.T. prophecy (e.g. Hos. 2;19f, Isa.54;1-10) sets forth Jehovah's covenant relation to Israel".(1) This is in keeping with a great deal in both Old and New Testaments, as Westcott points out: "The image is commonly used in the prophetical books of the Old Testament from first to last to describe the relation between Jehovah and His people, Hos.2;19, Ezek.16, Mal.2;11. In the New Testament it is applied to Christ and the church as here, Rev. 19;7, 21;2,9, 22;17 (Comp. Eph. 5;22ff); and also to the connection of Christ with any particular body of Christians, II Cor. 11;2. Similar imagery is used in the Synoptic gospels; Matt. 22;1ff (the marriage feast), 25;1ff (the ten virgins). Comp.

(1) Salmond: Century Bible Commentary, revised, p.136.

Matt. 9;15." (1)

It seems fair to conclude that in the Synoptic Gospels there is sufficient evidence that our Lord regarded the union between his disciples and himself as something not sufficiently described as merely being "with him"; and that he himself used the Old Testament tradition of the bride and the bridegroom to illustrate the relationship. Indeed, the fact that he refers to them as 'friends of the bridegroom' seems to indicate that the bride/bridegroom relationship was not to be theirs alone, but to have a wider, later significance.

There is one other set of passages where union with Christ is specifically dealt with - those describing the Lord's Supper. They are the following:

Matthew: "During supper Jesus took bread, and having said the blessing he broke it and gave it to the disciples with the words: 'Take this and eat; this is my body'. Then he took a cup, and having offered thanks to God he gave it to them with the words: 'Drink from it, all of you. For this is my blood, the blood of

(1) St. John, p.59. Cf. Hoskyns and Davey, The Fourth Gospel, p.229.
Cf. also H.B.Swete, The Gospel according to St. Mark, p.42: "So the Lord identifies himself with the Bridegroom of O.T. prophecy .. i.e., God in His covenant relation to Israel, a metaphor in the N.T. applied to Christ".

the covenant, shed for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, never again shall I drink from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in the kingdom of my Father".

Mark: "During supper he took bread, and having said the blessing he broke it and gave it to them, with the words: 'Take this; this is my body'. Then he took a cup, and having offered thanks to God he gave it to them; and they all drank from it. And he said: 'This is my blood of the covenant, shed for many. I tell you this; never again shall I drink from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God".

Luke: "When the time came he took his place at table, and the apostles with him; and he said to them, 'How I have longed to eat this Passover with you before my death. For I tell you, never again shall I eat it until the time when it finds its fulfilment in the kingdom of God'.

Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said: "Take this and share it among yourselves; for I tell you, from this moment I shall drink from the fruit of the vine no more until the time when the kingdom of God comes'. And he took bread, gave thanks, and broke it; and he gave it to them, with the words: 'This is my body'.(1)

(1) Matt. 26;26-29; Mark 14;22-25; Luke22;14-20.

We should bear in mind that this section of the synoptic narrative has no direct equivalent in John; but again we find that Paul's version of the Lord's Supper [1] has much in common with the three quoted above. And John takes the idea of the bread of life into the sixth chapter of the gospel, and treats it - and the blood of Christ - in quite his own way. [2] So once again we could argue that from a word of the Lord came the different traditions, and the different interpretations of the writers; but the argument for the genuineness of that original word is strong.

What do the Synoptic gospels convey in the Lord's Supper narrative? Blunt [3] puts his finger on it: "The words expressed a very peculiar intimacy of union; the disciples were to become one with him in the closest of all ways, by assimilation in some sort of his self". And again: "The Church had its Eucharist before Paul was converted, [4] and in that Eucharist it was conscious of a spiritual experience, before Paul came to help the Church to understand that experience ... The mystery, in fact, lay in the Person of Jesus Christ, and in the fact of his abiding life in the society of his followers. Paul helped the Church to realize the greatness of the mystery, he did not give to the Church a mystery which was not already there".

(1) I Cor. 11.
(2) Cf., e.g., Hoskyns & Davey, The Fourth Gospel, pp.292ff., and C.H.Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, pp.333 and 338.
(3) The Clarendon Bible Commentary on Mark, p.251.
(4) Cf. H.B.Swete, The Gospel According to St. Mark, p.316, and Branscomb, The Gospel of Mark, pp.262-264.

So we have, from our study of the Synoptics, support for the contention of Blunt that the "mystery was already there"; we have examined the 'with Christ' concept; the 'bridegroom' analogy, with its background; and the narratives of the Lord's Supper. To what conclusions can we now come regarding the concept of union with Christ?

There are the following problems to be reconciled: the acceptance by the church of Paul's 'in Christ' concept; the appearance in John - and to a lesser extent in Peter - of the idea of union with Christ, sharing much of Paul's content; the lack of significant development through Paul's writings of the basic understanding of the meaning of union with Christ; the essentially Jewish nature of the meaning of such words as 'faith' and 'knowledge' in our New Testament; Paul's insistence that he did not receive his gospel from any human source; and the tremendous importance of the Damascus road experience.

It was hardly to be expected that any one of our possible sources would provide the complete answer; our answer inevitably has to be a combination of the different sources we have studied, and the following four points appear to be amply justified by all that we have said before:

(1) The ultimate origin must be Jewish in its essential character; this we conclude from the previous careful studies of the words used in connection with the concept of union with Christ and,[1] to some extent, to the acceptance by the Christian church of the idea itself.

(2) We must trace the idea of union with Christ back to a word of the Lord himself, or to parts of his teaching. This would explain the acceptance of the concept by the church, and would also help to explain the way in which the concept is differently treated and developed by individual writers: e.g., John's picture of the Vine and Paul's picture of the Body could easily be traced back to some 'seed' idea from which the two were developed; although they drew different conclusions from the pictures they employ, there is a fascinating resemblance between them - for example, in the Vine, of which the wine is the "blood of Grapes" (Gen. 49;11), and the placing of the Vine and Branches close to the Last Supper setting, and so on.

(3) If the 'seed' of the concept was there, it had to be developed: and here the Damascus road experience of Paul comes in, with all the power it showed in his mind and life. The content of the 'in Christ' formula was not unknown, and even the form of

(1) Cf. word studies above, pp. 45-98.

it may not have been entirely new to the church - we have hints of it here and there, as in Acts 4;12 - which would help to explain its acceptance by the church.

The problem of the lack of development - significant development - from Galatians to Ephesians/Colossians could be understood by remembering the gap ofyears (some fifteen or so) between the Damascous road experience and the writing of Galatians, in which time the concept must have been cryztallised in the mind of Paul, although such a living relationship could never be regarded as fully and finally developed.

(4) The form it took - "in Christ" - was dictated by the world to which the early church went out in missionary zeal. The essential content was Jewish, but in the course of time that phrase was understood in the light of Hellenistic connotations of the preposition, and it gradually took on the philosophical significance of the Hellenistic world. We see this, at a further stage of development that in Paul, in the Johannine writings, with a greater degree of "mysticism".

We conclude by the following parable: the soil from which it came was the soil of Palestine, deeply influenced by the Old Testament and the strong faith of Judaism. The seed which was

at the root of it was a word of the Lord, or perhaps just the general implications of his teaching (it is hard to overlook the Last Supper narratives and John 15). The warmth of the earth which produced the first growth was the fellowship of the early Christian church. The heat which produced a dramatic and glorious flowering was the heat of Midday on the road to Damascus, focused by the mind and heart of Paul. And the outward appearance of the plant, by which it made its presence known in the world at large, was the clothing of Hellenistic language and expression.

The Relevance of this Concept to Contemporary Theology:

The concept was certainly relevant in the days when Paul proclaimed it throughout the ancient world. For he spoke in a religious world, where the demons and spirits were real, and where religions abounded which claimed to give victory over these powers. For the vast majority of men, the existence of these powers was beyond any doubt, and the vital question was how to get deliverance from them. This was supplied by Gnosticism; by the Mystery Religions; and by the young Christian church. We see a vast process of syncretism at work, but in all this the Christian faith stood out; for it claimed to be historically founded, and it showed to the ancient world a striking example of religion and ethics, faith and works; and we have seen that the Christian ethic is inspiredby union with Christ.

Today we live in a world which is totally different; the spirit-filled world of the first century is gone for ever, and there is an ever-decreasing area of life where man feels the need of a "hand let down to lift him up". In morality today a debate has been raging round the connection of religion and ethics (to use the word 'religion' in a rather ambiguous sense), and there is a strong body of opinion which maintains it is quite possible to have a 'Christian' ethic without any Christian faith; and, sadly, there

is evidence that is appears to be possible today to say "Lord, Lord", without any ethical concern being involved.

Yet at this present time, in certain circles the concept of union with Christ is still relevant. We see this in the preaching called "evangelical", where the language of the New Testament is still regarded as the proper and meaningful means of communication. The testimony of the Keswick Convention, which gathers several thousands each year for the study of what is basically the concept of union with Christ, cannot be ignored. And on the theological side, the revival of biblical theology follows the same course. But it is argued by the critics that such preaching and teaching fails at two vital points: it is unrelated to life as it is lived today - in factory and home - and it is essentially a gospel for the "insider" who still thinks in terms of the New Testament, and of established religion.

Those who criticise in this way do so from sound enough motives. For they are concerned to reach out to the world which Paul sought to win for Christ, the world of ordinary men, ordinary relationships, ordinary life as distinct from 'religious' life. And we have to ask, is the concept relevant in such a situation? Or is it linked with "the three-decker universe"? The 'secularist' group maintain that "the fashionable biblical theology is no real

solution. It does indeed represent an earnest attempt to understand the New Testament in its own terms, but it is unable to communicate its understanding satisfactorily to men who think in terms radically different."[1] It is in this sense that man has "come of age"; "Man is ... 'coming of age'; by that he (Bonhoeffer) does not mean that he is getting better (a prisoner of the Gestapo had few illusions about human nature), but that for good or ill he is putting the 'religious' world-view behind him as childish and pre-scientific".[2] And so the "secularist" seeks to re-interpret the essential Christian faith in terms which are intelligible to twentieth century man.

The saddest feature of this movement is the mutual enmity of teh two main contenders. For while the "evangelical" defends his methods, and maintains that it is by the Holy Spirit that men come to understand "spiritual things" (and he has good support for this in I Cor. 2 - and in experience), he is hostile towards those who feel the pull of the spirit of the age. This can be seen in the attacks made on Dr Robinson's "Honest to God", which very often stem from ignorance or a failure to understand the passionate concern which lies at the heart of such writings.

And of course this attack is carried on from the other side:

(1) J.N.Sanders, "The Meaning of the New Testament", in "Soundings", p.130.
(2) J.A.T.Robinson, "The Honest to God Debate", p.270.

"man is discovering for most purposes he manages quite happily by himself. The religious presupposition, that one cannot get by without invoking the gods, has yielded to the secular. He finds no necessity to bring God into his science, his morals, his political speeches. Only in the private world of the individual's psychological need and insecurity - in that last corner of the 'sardine-tin of life' - is room apparently left for the God who has been elbowed out of every other sphere. And so the religious evangelist works on men to coerce them at their weakest point into feeling that they cannot get on without the tutelage of God".(1) It is this last sentence which demonstrates the lack of mutual tolerance and understanding which is our concern at the moment; for like so very much of the descriptive writing in the modern theological debate, it is rather a caricature than a portrait; and both sides are guilty.

Undeniably, there is a gulf between the church and her teaching and the world in which men live today. We need to go no further than the top of a bus in the evening rush hour to realise this: for through the haze of smoke the main theme of the conversation will vary from the football pools to horse racing to overtime and the "telly"; we could say: "God is not in all their thoughts", for we have a Pharisaic streak in us. A

(1) J.A.T.Robinson, "The Honest to God Debate", p.271.

clergyman has observed: "In Jung's words, 'they have heard enough about guilt and sin ... and want to learn to reconcile themselves with their own nature and to love the enemy in their own hearts'. They want to say 'yes' to life as a whole. They question all religious and moral absolutes, not in the name of a laissez-faire relativity, but in the name of the freedom of the human spirit. They accept the essential mystery of human existence, but most of the symbols in which the churches clothe this mystery have no longer any meaning of power for them ... How on earth are such people to meet God?"(1)

How indeed? And if it is difficult to make it relevant to those described above, what about the folk on the bus? Obviously part of the mission of the church is to try to make her message relevant to such people. But we must beware of thinking that all we have to do is to "speak their own language". Dr. Macquarrie has a wise word of warning to give: "(Bultmann) overestimates the intellectual stumbling-block which myth is supposed to put in the way of accepting the Christian faith. The real stumbling-block is, of course, the surrender of self-sufficiency and the acceptance of the cross".(2)

So in the name of Christian apologetics attempts are made to

(1) The Honest to God Debate, p.42.
(2) An Existentialist Theology, p.246.

bridge the gulf. This is nothing new, and even the "Honest to God" debate has been linked to historical orthodox Christian doctrine, as found in Augustine.(1) Our concern is not to justify or condemn, but to try to evaluate this movement in the light of the New Testament concept of union with Christ.

It is impossible to deal with the entire frontier of Christian apologetics; but we can look at contemporary theology as it is focused in the "Honest to God" literature and debate.

The whole attempt starts from an attack on "religion" rather than Christianity, though where the two are inseparable it must attack both. Again, here is nothing new; F.D. Maurice wrote: "the one thought which possesses me most at this time and, I may say, has always possessed me, is that we have been dosing our people with religion when what they want is .. the living God".(2) A.R. Vidler brings this up to date, asking "whether Christians are not constantly inclined to substitute for the Gospel of the universal love of God and the unity it creates their own narrowing and partial ~~rep~~ misrepresentations of it".(3) And such an attack is welcome; for it can with a measure of truth be said that the contemporary swing to "religionless Christianity" is a right and proper reaction to the "Christless religion" which has turned so

(1) Cf. The Honest to God Debate, p.140.
(2) Life of F.D.Maurice, Vol. 1, p.369.
(3) A.R.Vidler, Religion and the National Church, in Soundings, p.243.

many away from the Christ whom the church must proclaim.

The "Honest to God" approach has historical backgrounds in existentialist philosophy, and "was inspired by three German theologians who have been passionately concerned to put themselves inside our age. These are Rudolf Bultmann, with his programme for 'demythologizing' the Gospel; Dietrich Bonhoeffer, with his vision of the possibility of a 'religionless' Christianity; and Paul Tillich, with his philosophy based on faith as 'ultimate concern' with the 'ground of our being'".(1)

A cruel, but characteristically acute, criticism of the movement came from C.S.Lewis, who summarised the ideas as follows: "The image of the Earth-Mother gets in something which that of the Sky-Father leaves out. Religions of the Earth-Mother have hitherto been spiritually inferior to those of the Sky-Father, but, perhaps, it is now time to readmit some of their elements".(2) This is indeed a savage summary; and it brings us to the real point at issue, which is that there is a widening gulf within the church, apart from that between the church and the "world". It is our purpose to ask whether the two groups are in fact in such basic opposition, and to examine if the concept of union with Christ may have sufficient for both groups to act as a kind of bridge

(1) D.L.Edwards, A New Stirring in English Christianity, The Honest to God Debate, pp.34-35.
(2) C.S.Lewis, in The Observer. Quoted, The Honest to God Debate, p.92.

between them. But it will first be necessary to consider a digest of "Honest to God" as representing the "New Theology".

The thought of the book begins with a discussion of "the reluctant revolution". After the Copernican revolution in astronomy the idea of a God "up there" was largely replaced by the idea of a God "out there", which conserved the transcendence of God in language acceptable to the time. Now that man has 'come of age' that kind of concept is no longer tenable, because it is no longer intelligible.

In its place is put forward the concept of God as "the ground of all being". "If you know that God means depth, you know much about him ... He who knows about depth knows about God".(1) This rises from a concern that unless we can re-interpret the meaning of the concept "God" we are left with an ever-decreasing sphere in which God can be meaningful, and that we restrict Christian faith to those who "still have this sense of insufficiency, this 'God-shaped blank'".(2) "The entire conception of a supernatural order which invades and 'perforates' this one must be abandoned".(3)

The next key thought is: God is ultimate reality, and about this one cannot argue, for we cannot argue whether ultimate reality

(1) Tillich, The Shaking of the Foundations, p.63f.
(2) Honest to God, p.23.
(3) Ibid., p.24.

exists, but only about its nature, what it is like. Is it to be defined and thought of in personal or impersonal categories?

When we ask this question, we face the question of being. The popular traditional view (admittedly caricatured) is that God is separate from the world, that he is a Being, but not being-itself. To say that God is being-itself is to go a certain distance with Naturalism, which identifies God with what gives meaning and direction to nature. And Naturalism therefore attacks the supranaturalist God as unnecessary. The question now becomes, how far is Christianity identifal with, or committed to, the idea of God as supranatural.

The next question is, must Christianity be mythological? After explaining the meaning of 'myth', we ask whether Christianity can be detached from the primitive philosophy of its world view as successfully as once it was detached from its primitive scientific view. "God is teaching us that we must live as men who can get along very well without him".(1)

To speak of God as the "ground of all being", "is not just the old system in reverse, with a God 'down under' for a God 'up there'. When Tillich speaks of God in 'depth', he is not speaking

(1) Bonhoeffer, Letters and Papers from Prison, p.164.

of another being at all. He is speaking of the 'infinite and inexhaustible depth and ground of all being', of our ultimate concern, of what we take seriously without reservation".(1) The question of whether we think of God as personal or transcendent is answered in terms of love: "Theological statements are not a description of the 'highest Being' but an analysis of the depths of personal relationships - or, rather, an analysis of all experience 'interpreted by love'".(2) "To assert that 'God is love' is to believe that in love one comes into touch with the most fundamental reality in the universe, that Being itself ultimately has this character. It is to say, with Buber, that 'every particular Thou is a glimpse through to the eternal Thou', that it is 'between man and man' that we meet God, not, with Feuerbach, that 'man with man - the unity of I and Thou - is God'. Nevertheless, as Bonhoeffer insists, 'God is the "beyond" in the midst'; 'The transcendent is not infinitely remote but close at hand'. For the eternal Thou is met only in, with and under the finite Thou, whether in the encounter with other persons or in the response to the natural order".(3) This brings Robinson very close to pantheism, and to a complete denial of meeting God in himself. But he attempts to safeguard himself:

"Yet the eternal Thou is not to be equated with the finite

(1) Honest to God, p.46.
(2) Ibid., p.49.
(3) Ibid., p.53.

Thou, not God with man or nature. That is the position of naturalism, whether pantheistic or humanistic".(1) "The man who acknowledges the transcendence of God is the man who in the conditioned relationships of life recognises the unconditional and responds to it in unconditional personal relationship".(2) This, despite his protest, leads very close to pantheism: "encounter with the Son of Man is spelt out in terms of an entirely secular concern for food, water supplies, housing, hospitals and prisons, just as Jeremiah had earlier defined the knowledge of God in terms of doing justice to the poor and needy. Indeed, in Macmurray's words, 'the great contribution of the Hebrew to religion was that he did away with it'. A right relationship to God depended on nothing religious; in fact religion could be the greatest barrier to it."(3)

At this point we have to remind ourselves that 'religion' for Robinson is a loaded word, and stands for 'organised religion' as against the personal faith, trust and response of the heart.

We come to the question of Christology. Robinson makes much of the statement of John 14;9, "he who has seen me has seen the Father". He continues by saying that it was as Christ emptied himself that he became the revealer of the Father's glory, "for it is in making himself nothing, in his utter self-surrender to

(1) Honest to God, p.54.
(2) Ibid., p.61.
(3) Ibid., p.61.

others in love, that he discloses and lays bare the Ground of man's being as Love".(1)

The Atonement comes next: he begins by giving the usual 'mythological' explanation: "The relationship between God and man has been broken by original sin. Man could not pull himself up by his own shoe-strings, and thus the only hope of restoration was from God's side. Yet it was from our side that things had to be put right. It appeared hopeless. But God found the answer. For in Christ he himself became man, and as man reconciled us to himself. This construction no doubt gives expression or projection to genuine and deep-seated realities in the existential situation - and as myth should not be thrown out. But as an objective transaction supposed to have been accomplished outside us in space and time, it speaks today to remarkably few - to fewer indeed than the Christmas myth".(2) How does he re-interpret it?

"The union-in-love with the Ground of our being, such as we see in Jesus Christ, that is the meaning of heaven. And it is the offer of that life, in all its divine depth, to overcome the estrangement and alienation of existence as we know it that the New Testament speaks of as the 'new creation'. This new reality is transcendent, it is 'beyond' us, in the sense that it is not ours to command. Yet we experience it, like the Prodigal, as we 'come

(1) Honest to God, p.75.
(2) Ibid., p.78.

to ourselves'. For it is a coming home, or rather a being received home, to everything we are created to be. It is what the New Testament can only call grace".(1)

He goes on to quote Tillich in a way reminiscent of Pauline thought: "do not seek for anything; do not perform anything; do not intend anything. Simply accept the fact that you are accepted! If that happens to us, we experience grace. After such an experience we may not be better than before, and we may not believe more than before. But everything is transformed. In that moment, grace conquers sin, and reconciliation bridges the gulf of estrangement. And nothing is demanded of this experience, no religious or moral or intellectual presuppositions, nothing but acceptance".(2) Robinson adds: "In all this we can recognise what St Paul is saying of the new creation or the new man 'in Christ Jesus'. It is nothing particularly religious - it is 'neither circumcision nor uncircumcision'. It is the life of 'themen for others', the love whereby we are brought completely into one with the Ground of our being, manifesting itself in the unreconciled relationships of our existence".(3)

The question of holiness is also to be explained along the lines of depth: "For Christianity .. the holy is the 'depth' of

(1) Honest to God, p.80.
(2) Ibid., p. 81.
(3) Quoted in Honest to God, p.82.

the common, just as the 'secular' is not a section of life but the world (God's world, for which Christ died) cut off and alienated from its true depth. The purpose of worship is not to retire from the secular into the department of the religious, let alone to escape from 'this world' into 'the other world', but to open oneself to the meeting of the Christ in the common, to that which has the power to penetrate its superficiality and redeem it from its alienation".(1) Again: "The beyond is seen not as that which takes one out and away from the earthly and the common, but as the vertical of the unconditioned cutting into and across the limitations of the merely human fellowship, claiming it for and transforming it into the Body of the living Christ".(3) So we must see God in the whole of life: "this means seeing the diary in depth, preparing in the telephone to meet our God".(4)

So we come, finally, to ethics: they take their spring from the concept of Love, and Robinson quotes Fletcher: "Christian ethics is not a scheme of codified conduct. It is a purposive effort to relate love to a world of relativities through a casuistry obedient to love".(5) And he concludes: "This 'new morality' is, of course, none other than the old morality, just as the new commandment is the old, yet ever fresh, commandment of love. It is what St Augustine dared to say with his 'diligo et quod vis

(1) Honest to God, p. 87.
(2) Ibid., p. 89 - dealing, of course, with the Communion service.
(3) Ibid., p.101.
(4) Ibid., p.116.

fac', which, as Fletcher rightly insists, should be translated ... 'love and then what you will, do".[1]

This lengthy excursion into the thought of "Honest to God" now provides us with material for our comparison of this movement with the concept of union with Christ in Pauline thought; and certain factors are seen to be common.

First, there is the conviction that this contains the essence of the gospel. It is hardly necessary to demonstrate that in the New Testament our relation to Christ is all-important - such verses as II Cor. 5;17 ("if any man is in Christ, there is a new creation") and I John 5;12 ("he that has the Son has life") are examples. Dr Robinson sees the whole ferment as a "currency crisis", and writes: "A currency crisis, if it forces us back on our real assets, can be a salutary shock. But the second task is that of finding a new currency, that will be convertible in the modern world".[2] We find something of the "real assets" in another quotation: "I have not the least desire to weaken or deny the distinctive affirmations of the Christian faith. Among these I should certainly wish to assert: (1) the centrality of the confession 'Jesus is Lord', in the full New Testament sense that 'in him all things cohere' and 'in him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily'; and (2) the

(1) Honest to God, p.119.
(2) The Honest to God Debate, p.248.

centrality of the utterly personal relationship of communion with God summed up in Jesus' address, 'Abba, Father'".[1] This is an interesting reflection of J.S. Stewart's comment on Paul: "he was interested in speculation, not at all for its own sake, but only for its help in making explicit the meaning of Jesus'Lordship".[2] And we are surely on common ground with the New Testament when we find this statement: "all credal statements, all doctrines, are explications, defintiions in the intellectual field, of the commitment contained in the words, 'I believe in'. They describe not truths in themselves out of the context of any personal response, but a relationship-in-trust to the various aspects of the truth as it is in Jesus".[3]

There is further a great difficulty in tying both subjects down to dogmatic statements and logical deductions. We have seen this already in Paul's treatment of 'in Christ' in such places as I Corinthians 15, where in dealing with the resurrection he is clearly struggling with a concept which defies the limitations of the human understanding. Such a vagueness is characteristic of the "new theology". "The gulf must probably grow wider before it is bridged between those who start from the end of revitalizing the traditional formulations and those who know that the attempt must also be made to begin again from a different and altogether ..

(1) The New Reformation? p.13.
(2) A Man in Christ, p.23.
(3) The Honest to God Debate, p.244.

We shall have to live with theological explorations that do not come to rest neatly in the classic formulations. And many of them will be tentative and inadequate. But I am equally sure that recastings of the traditional formulae, however dogmatically orthodox, will also be inadequate - simply because they come from this end".(1) What we are seeing here has been described by Montefiore: "They (Christologists) have been charged with the sense of importance and significance in some spiritual and intellectual experience, and the excitement of this has driven them on to attempt to give intelligible form to other vague reaches of experience with reference to this basic insight".(2) Two pages earlier he points out that "a Christology which is expressed in terms of functional and personal relationship rather than in ontological categories means a return to the biblical perspective"(3) Werner Pelz adds: "the very fact that the church has a dogma which claims to be more than a tentative formulation, has encouraged us to put concepts in the place of living experience".(4)

We must also point out that the concern of the New Testament was to make its message relevant, and in this it shares with the present movement. But one great difference is that the new theology comes very close - perhaps inevitably - to an unfortunate characteristic: "nothing is more nauseating than that kind of

(1) The New Reformation? pp.80-81.
(2) Towards a Christology for Today, in Soundings, p.161.
(3) Ibid., p.159.
(4) God is No Word, p.40.

apologetic which presumes to tell the other fellow what he 'really means', however strenuously he may deny it. Unfortunately, it is a theological ploy often used".(1) But we have to ask whether it can be avoided in the present context, and to make allowances for the tremendous nature of the task facing such apologists today.

We come now to consider the actual resemblances in the concept of union with Christ and the 'depth' theology, a consideration of what common ground they share, and the question of how far the new theology is judged or commended by the New Testament concept.

To be 'in Christ' means to be in touch with ultimate reality. This was true for Paul, and certainly for John, with his use of "truth", which is best translated, "reality". "The fundamental affirmation which the Christian is making when he says that God is personal is that at its deepest level the reality in which his life is rooted cannot be described exhaustively in terms of impersonal, mathematical regularities but only in the last resort in terms of an utterly gracious and unconditional love, which he can trust as implicitly as at another level he can trust the regularities which science describes".(2)

From this obviously common point we move on to say that ultimate reality can be described as personal: for John, in the

(1) R.N.Smart, Christianity and Other Religions, Soundings, p.112.

Incarnation, for "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us"; for Paul, in the Christ in whom all creation holds together, and who is capable of being known in a personal relationship (Phil. 3:10). But when we use the term "personal", we unleash a tremendous amount of controversy; it is alleged that the new theology completely abolishes a "personal" God. But before we prejudge it, it is well to let it speak: "Everyone .. must agree with Tillich that (1) the God of the Bible does not exist as you and I exist, but is greater; (2) the God of the Bible is not a person as you and I are people, but is greater; (3) the God of the Bible is not cut off from the world - which is fortunate since it means that you and I, who know only this world, can begin to know him.

"Tillich says that 'the symbol "personal" God is absolutely fundamental', but it does not mean that God is a person. 'It means that God is the ground of everything personal and that he carries within himself the ontological power of personality. He is not a person, but he is not less than personal'. God is not a person, Tillich explains, because God transcends individuality by participating in the life of all individuals. On the other hand, God can be known and addressed in prayer, and in Tillich's words 'an existential relation is a person-to-person relation'; therefore Tillich, like every other Christian, uses the word 'personal' about God and speaks of God as 'thou' and 'he'".(1) This should go a

(1) D.L.Edwards, A New Stirring in English Christianity, in Soundings, p.38.

long way towards overcoming the unfortunate reactions to the attack on institutionalised religion. H.W. Montefiore adds: "this is not to say that God himself is a person, at any rate in the sense in which we speak of human personality; for the very concept of personality involves limitation. If we are to speak of the nature of God, it would be preferable to adopt C.C.J.Webb's suggestion that there is personality in God. But we cannot go as far even as that. We must content ourselves with saying that God works in a personal way".(1) Taken together, these quotations shed some light on apparently contradictory statements in Robinson, and show that while he is concerned to abolish one concept of God as personal, he holds on with great tenacity to another.

The next point of comparison is the close connection between Christology and ethics in Paul: we have already seen that this is one of the great contributions of Christianity to the world of the early Church, not in its emphasis on ethics, but in its insistence that our relation with Christ must issue in ethics.

Here we appear to come on to disputed ground. For the New Testament is quite clear that it is our relation to Christ which

(1) H.W.Montefiore, Towards a Christology for Today, in Soundings, p.166.

inspires our ethics, while some of the new theology tends to overlook that primary relation. For example, Pels says: "the words of Jesus do not try to entice us into a mystical relationship with himself, but into the acceptance of the kind of relationship which was epitomized by what happened between him and his disciples. In other words: they ask us to follow our neighbour as hopefully as Peter, John etc. once followed him, and to become the sort of neighbour whom others can follow hopefully".(1) This seems to set Christ aside - but we must remember that the initial motive was the word of Christ. Dr. Robinson tends in the same direction when, starting with biblical texts, he says: "this generation goes on to ask the further and equally biblical question: 'But, Lord, when did we see you?' And the answer to that question is given, in the classic 'parable' of the Sheep and the Goats, in terms of the Son of Man 'incognito' - in other words, in terms of the 'gracious neighbour'".(2) We can see this as historically conditioned by the unforgivable neglect of the social outworking of the Gospel in times of "revival", and as justified today by the vast amounts of money spent on purely "spiritual" efforts.

Dr Robinson and the others would argue that such an ethic comes from our realisation of, and relation to, the Ground of our being.

(1) God is No More, p.41.
(2) The New Reformation? p.35.

And the New Testament makes it quite clear that the connection of our relation to Christ and our relation to our neighbour can only be broken by ignoring the New Testament concept of faith. Our Lord's own teaching on loving God and one's neighbour is very much in line with the rest of New Testament teaching, as we can see in Paul's refusal to accept faith which does not "work by love". The fact that the church has at times put asunder what God has joined is no justification for our neglect of a basic principle of the New Testament - and of Christianity - that concern for our neighbour, true "gracious neighbourliness" springs from a living contact with God in Christ. If we dispense with this, then we are on the verge of simple pantheism, and we lose the essential Christian faith. But equally, we must insist, in line with the concept of union which we have been studying, such a concern must be the outcome of any experience of Christ. Here then is one point where the concept of union with Christ must caution us in our estimate of the new theology. For while that concept deals with the Body of Christ, and our response in living for God and for others, it never allows us to forget the primacy of our relation to God himself.

The other question is one to which we have already referred.(1) To quote J.K.S. Reid again, the issue before us can be summarised

(1) Above, pp.128ff.

in a choice of the alternatives: either, we lay hold upon Christ and so become what we are not, or fail to lay hold upon him and so remain what we are: or, we are what we are (what God has made us in Christ), or become what we are not. It seems clear from our study that the first is nearer the mind of Paul, although he might prefer to say "Christ lays hold upon us", as in Philippians 3. The only argument Reid can put forward with any power is the negative one, that if we do not accept the second choice, then we are faced with predestination. But we can hardly refuse to face a problem if the truth leads us to it! But in any event, we are faced with the need for a decision.

The new theology has remarkably little to say about this; for although Heidegger has a place in his philosophy for authentic and inauthentic existence, the debate in theology has not yet centred upon our entrance in the state of authentic being. So we find little in Robinson and the others dealing with this, except that in so far as we become the "gracious neighbour" we are coming into authentic existence, and in so far as we refuse to become the gracious neighbour we remain in inauthentic existence, no matter how much we profess our Christian faith, and no matter how "religious" we may be. And this is surely only a twentieth century version of the old controversy about faith and works -

which the New Testament writers resolutely refuse to consider in isolation from each other.

Butlmann is rather clearer on the need for decisions "To say that anything is significant for my existence means that it presents me with a possibility - and that is precisely what the divine grace does, as we have seen. It presents to man the possibility of attaining his true being".(1) So it appears that the contemporary theology has not in fact dispensed with the necessity for a response on the part of the individual, in line with the mainstream of New Testament thought that we have to be brought 'into Christ', and are not 'in him' simply by virtue of our existence.

What can we condlude? For it is clear that the "evangelical" camp is set against the "secularist" camp; but we see that for both the concept of union with Christ is a viable concept for today. The evangelical finds here a reminder - which is always needed - that "faith alone" is never enough, and that social concern, and "gracious neighbourliness", are essentially part of the Christian life. For the secularist, it can remind of the rock from whence he is hewn, and that the mainspring of a life of service for others must issue from our union with Christ. This concept offers to

the new theologians the "real assets" in the currency crisis, what is left when "religion" is stripped away from our contemporary Christianity. And to both sides it offers a valuable corrective, a useful "plumb-line" with which to measure and estimate how far their respective thought and practice is in accordance with the New Testament's basic understanding of union with Christ, for it gathers the essentials of what God has done in Christ, and of the only adequate response which we can make, "till Christ be formed in us".

Appendix I - the 'in Christ' formula in Pauline writings:

Using Schmoller's Concordance to the Greek New Testament, we shall first list all the occurrences with Christ, Lord, etc. in the New English Bible translation: they are classified in the text of the thesis.

Romans:

3;24 .. through God's act of liberation in the person of Christ Jesus.

6;11 .. dead to sin and alive to God, in union with Christ Jesus.

6;23 .. eternal life, in union with Christ Jesus our Lord.

8;1 There is no condemnation for those who are united with Christ Jesus.

8;2 In Christ Jesus .. the law of the Spirit has set you free.

8;39 Nothing .. can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

9;1 I am speaking the truth as a Christian.

12;5 All of us, united with Christ, form one body.

14;14 I am absolutely convinced, as a Christian ...

15;17 Thus in the fellowship of Christ Jesus I have ground for pride in the service of God.

16;2 Give her, in the fellowship of Christ, a welcome..

16;3 Prisca and Aquila, my fellow-workers in Christ.

16;7 .. and they were Christians before I was.

16;8 .. Ampliatus, my dear friend in the fellowship of the Lord.

16;9 .. Urban my comrade in Christ.

16;10 My greetings to Apelles, well proved in Christ's service.

16;11 Those ... who are in the Lord's fellowship.

16;12 ... who toil in the Lord's service, and dear Persis who has toiled in his service so long.

16;13 Rufus, an outstanding follower of the Lord.

16;22 (I Tertius ... add my Christian greetings).

<u>I Corinthians:</u>

1;2 Dedicated to God in Christ Jesus.

1;4 I thank God for his grace given to you in Christ Jesus.

1;5 I thank him for all the enrichment that has come to you in Christ.

1;30 You are in Christ Jesus by God's act, for God has made him our wisdom .. in him we are consecrated and set free.

3;1 I had to deal with you on the merely natural plane, as infants in Christ.

4;10 ... you are such sensible Christians.

4;15 You may have ten thousand tutors in Christ, but you have only one father. For in Christ Jesus you are my offspring, and mine alone.

4;17 Timothy .. a dear son to me and a most trustworthy Christian. He will remind you of the way of life in Christ which I follow.

7;22 The man who as a slave received the call to be a Christian is the Lord's freedman.

7;39 She is free to marry .. provided the marriage in within the Lord's fellowship.

9;1 Are not you my own handiwork, in the Lord?

9;2 You are the very seal of my apostolate, in the Lord.

11;11 In Christ's fellowship, woman is as essential to man as man to woman.

14;25 He will fall down and worship God, crying 'God is certainly among you'.

15;18 It follows also that those who have died within Christ's fellowship are utterly lost.

15;22 As in Adam all men die, so in Christ all will be brought to life.

15;31 In Christ Jesus our Lord I am proud of you.

15;58 .. you know that in the Lord your labour cannot be lost.

16;19 Many greetings in the Lord from Aquila and Prisca ..

16;24 My love to you all in Christ Jesus.

<u>II Corinthians:</u>

1;19 With him it was, and is, Yes.

1;20 ... it is through Christ Jesus that we say 'amen'.

2;12 Troas .. where an opening awaited me for the Lord's work.

2;14 Thanks be to God, who continually leads us about, captives in Christ's triumphal procession.

2;17 When we declare the word we do it sincerely .. as members of Christ.

3;14 (The veil) is never lifted, because only in Christ is the Old covenant abrogated.

5;17 When anyone is united to Christ, there is a new world.

5;19 God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.

5;21 God made him one with the sinfulness of men, so that in him we might be made one with the goodness of God himself.

11;10 As surely as the truth of Christ is in me ..

12;2 I know a Christian man ...

12;9 The power of Christ will come and rest upon me (not the proposition under discussion, but closely linked with the subject).

12;19 We are speaking in God's sight, and as Christian men.

13;3 Then you will have the proof you seek of the Christ who speaks through me, the Christ who, far from being weak with you, makes his power felt among you.

13;4 We who share his weakness shall by the power of God live with him in your service.

13;5 Surely you recognise that Jesus Christ is among you?

Galatians:

1;16 God .. chose to reveal his Son to me and through me.

1;22 I remained unknown by sight to Christ's congregations in Judaea.

1;24 They praised God for me.

2;4 Who had stolen in to spy upon the liberty we enjoy in the fellowship of Christ Jesus.

2;17 ... in seeking to be justified in Christ..

2;20 The life I now live is not my life, but the life which Christ lives in me.

3;14 The purpose of it all was that the blessing of Abraham should in Jesus Christ be extended to the Gentiles ..

3;26 For through faith you are all sons of God in union with Christ Jesus.

3;28 For you are all one person in Christ Jesus.

4;19 For my children you are, and I am in travail with you over again until you take the shape of Christ.

5;6 If we are in union with Christ Jesus circumcision makes no difference at all.

5;10 United with you in the Lord, I am confident that you will not take the wrong view.

Ephesians:

1;1 God's people ... believers incorporate in Christ Jesus.

For other occurrences in verses 3-14, see pp.14-15 of text of thesis:

1;15 I have heard of the faith you have in the Lord Jesus.

1;20 .. the might which God exerted in Christ when he raised him..

2;6 And in union with Christ Jesus he raised us up and enthroned us with him .. that he might display .. how great is his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

2;10 We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to devote ourselves to the good deeds for which God has designed us.

2;13 Now in union with Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near ..

2;15 To create out of the two a single new humanity in himself, thereby making peace .. to reconcile the two in a single body to God.

2;20-22 In him the whole building is bonded together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you too are being built with all the rest into a spiritual dwelling for God.

3;6 (Jews and Gentiles are) sharers together in the promise made in Christ Jesus.

3;11 This is in accord with his age-long purpose, which he achieved in Christ Jesus our Lord.

3;12 In him we have access to God with freedom.

3;20-21 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or conceive, by the power which is at work among

us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus from generation to generation.

4;1 I - a prisoner for the Lord's sake.

4;17 .. I urge it upon you in the Lord's name.

4;21 For were you not told of him, were you not as Christians taught the truth as it is in Jesus?

4;32 Forgiving one another as God in Christ forgave you.

5;8 For though you were once all darkness, now as Christians you are light.

6;1 Children, obey your parents (in the Lord - disputed reading).

6;10 Find your strength in the Lord, in his mighty power.

6;21 He is our dear brother and trustworthy helper in the Lord's work.

Philippians:

1;1 God's people, incorporate in Christ Jesus.

1;13 My imprisonment in Christ's cause has become common knowledge.

1;14 It has given confidence to most of our fellow-Christians.

1;26 .. your pride in me may be unbounded in Christ Jesus.

2;1 If then our common life in Christ yields anything to stir the heart.

2;5 Let your bearing towards one another arise out of your life in Christ Jesus.

2;19 I hope (under the Lord Jesus) to send Timothy to you soon.

2;24 I am confident, under the Lord, that I shall myself be coming.

2;29 Welcome him then in the fellowship of the Lord with whole-hearted delight.

3;1 I wish you joy in the Lord.

3;3 We ... whose pride is in Christ Jesus.

3;9 For the sake of gaining Christ and finding myself incorporate in him.

3;14 I press towards the goal to win the prize which is God's call to the life above, in Christ Jesus.

4;1 Stand thus firm in the Lord, my beloved.

4;2 I beg Euodia and .. Syntyche, to agree together in the Lord's fellowship.

4;4 I wish you all joy in the Lord.

4;7 Then the peace of God .. will keep guard over your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus.

4;10 It is a great joy to me, in the Lord, that your care has blossomed.

4;13 I have strength for anything through him who gives me power.

4;19 My God will supply all your wants out of the magnificence of his riches in Christ Jesus.

Colossians:

1;2 God's people at Colossae ... incorporate in Christ.

1;4 We have heard of the faith you hold in Christ Jesus.

1;16 In him everything in heaven and on earth was created.

1;17 All things are held together in him.

1;19 In him the complete being of God .. came to dwell.

1;27 The secret is this: Christ in you, the hope of a glory to come.

1;28 .. so as to present each one of you as a mature member of Christ's body.

2;3 In him lie hidden all God's treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

2;6 ... live your lives in union with him.

2;7 Be rooted in him; be built in him.

2;9 It is in Christ that the complete being of the Godhead dwells embodied and in him you have been brought to completion.

2;11 In him also you were circumcised.

2;12 In baptism you were buried with him, in baptism also you were raised to life with him.

3;3 Now your life lies hidden with Christ in God.

3;18 Wives, be subject to your husbands; that is your Christian duty.

3;20 Children, obey your parents .. for that is the Christian way.

4;17 Attend to the duty entrusted to you in the Lord's service, and discharge it to the full.

I Thessalonians:

1;1 The congregation of Thessalonians who belong to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2;2 We declared the gospel of God to you by the help of our God.

2;14 You have fared like the congregations in Judaea, God's people in Christ Jesus.

3;8 It is the breath of life to us that you stand firm in the Lord.

4;1 We beg of you, by our fellowship with the Lord Jesus.

4;16 First the Christian dead will rise.

5;12 Acknowledge those who in the Lord's fellowship are your leaders.

5;18 For this is what God in Christ wills for you.

II Thessalonians:

1;1 The congregation of Thessalonians who belong to God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1;12 So that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him.

3;4 We feel perfect confidence about you, in the Lord.

3;22 We appeal to them in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Pastorals: I Timothy:

1;14 With the faith and love which are ours in Christ Jesus.

3;13 To speak openly on matters of the Christian faith.

II Timothy:

1;1 God, whose promise of life is fulfilled in Christ Jesus.

1;9 His own grace, which was granted to us in Christ Jesus from all eternity.

1;13 Living by the faith and love which are ours in Christ Jesus.

2;1 Take strength from the grace of God which is ours in Christ Jesus.

2;10 That they too may attain the glorious and eternal salvation which is in Christ Jesus.

3;12 Persecutions will come to all who want to live a godly life as Christians.

3;16 The scriptures which have power .. to lead you to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Philemon:

6 My prayer is that your fellowship with us in our common faith may deepen the understanding of all the blessings that our union with Christ brings us.

8: Although in Christ Jesus I might make bold to point out your duty.

16: a dear brother, very dear indeed to me and how much dearer to you, both as a man and as a Christian.

20: Now, brother, as a Christian, be generous with me .. we are both in Christ!

23: Epaphras, Christ's captive like myself.

Appendix II - Old Testament quotations in Paul:

Romans:

1;17 Habbakuk 2;4.

3;4 Psalm 51;4.

3;10-18 Ps. 14;1-2, 53;1-2, 5;9, 140;3, 10;7, Isa. 59;7-8, Ps. 36;1.

4;3 Genesis 15;6.

4;7-8 Ps. 32;1-2.

4;17-18 Genesis 15;5, 17;4-6, 22;17-18.

7;7 Deut. 5;21.

8;36 Ps. 44;22.

9;7 Genesis 21;12.

9;9 Genesis 18;10.

9;13 Malachi 1;2-3.

9;15 Exod. 33;19.

9;17 Exod. 9;16.

9;25 Hosea 2;23.

9;27 Hosea 1;10, Isaiah 10;22-3, Gen. 22;17, Hosea 1;10.

9;29 Isaiah 1;9.

9;33 Isaiah 26;18.

10;5 Lev. 18;5, Neh. 9;29, Ezek. 20;11.

10;11 Isaiah 28;16.

10;13 Joel 2;32.

10;15 Isaiah 52;7.

10;16 Isaiah 53;1.

10;18 Psalm 19;4.

10;21 Isaiah 65;1-2.

11;4 I Kings 19;18.

11;8 Isaiah 29;10, Deut. 29;4.

11;9 Psalm 69; 22-23.

11;26 Isaiah 59; 20-21.

11;27 Jer. 31;33, Isaiah 27;9.

11;34 Isaiah 40;13-14.

11;35 Job 35;7, 41;11.

12;19 Lev. 19;18, Deut. 32;35.

13;9 Exod. 20;13-14, Deut. 5;17-18, Lev. 19;18.

15;9 Ps. 18;49, II Samuel 22;50.

15;10 Deut. 32;43.

15;11 Ps. 117;1.

15;12 Isaiah 11;10.

15;21 Isaiah 52;15.

<u>I Corinthians:</u>

1;31 Jer. 9;24.

2;9 Isaiah 64;4, 65;17.

2;16 Isaiah 40;13.

3;20 Ps. 94;11.

6;16 Gen. 2;24.

8;4 Deut. 6;4.

9;9 Deut. 25;4.

10;7 Exod. 32;4,6.

10;26 Ps. 24;1, 50;12.

14;21 Isaiah 28; 11-12.

15;25 Ps. 110;1.

15;27 Ps. 8;6.

15;32 Isaiah 22;13.

15;45 Gen. 2;7.

15;54 Isaiah 25;8.

15;55 Hosea 13;14.

<u>II Corinthians:</u>

4;6 Gen. 1;3.

4;13 Ps. 116;10.

6;2 Isaiah 49;8.

6;16 Exod. 25;8, 29;45, Lev. 26;12, Ezek.37;27, Jer. 31;1.

6;17 Isaiah 52;11.

6;18 Hosea 1;10, Isaiah 43;6.

8;15 Exod. 16;18.

9;9 Ps. 112;9.

10;17 Jer. 9;24.

Galatians:

3;6	Gen. 15;6.
3;8	Gen. 12;3, 18;18.
3;10	Deut. 27;26.
3;11	Habbakuk 2;4.
3;12	Lev. 18;5.
3;13	Deut. 21;23.
3;16	Gen. 12;7.
4;27	Isaiah 54;1.
4;30	Gen. 21; 10-12.
5;14	Lev. 19;18.

Ephesians:

4;8	Ps. 68;18.
5;31	Gen. 2;24.
6;2	Exod. 20;12.
6;3	Deut. 5;16.

Appendix III - Bibliography:

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