

VOLUME 32

THE BIBLE SERIES

**A METAPHYSICAL
AND SYMBOLICAL
INTERPRETATION OF**

The Bible

by

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HOW TO FIND YOUR REAL SELF (textbook)

THIS I BELIEVE

LEARN TO LIVE

THE FAMILY OF ADAM and EVE

THE BIBLE – The Seven Days of Creation

BECOME WHAT YOU BELIEVE

WHAT IS PRAGMATIC MYSTICISM?

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I THESSALONIANS

CHAPTER 1. This chapter is mostly in the form of an introduction, so there is little need to discuss it in detail. Paul once again, and very definitely states his concept that Jesus was God incarnate. The most successful of all the centers he had founded was the Thessalonian who responded most willingly: they put up the least arguments and resistance and embodied everything he taught to the best of their ability. So for once Paul is expressing praise, but we will see how long it continues. As we have noticed before with Paul, he is seeking to impress them with how he and the others live their lives purely for the benefit of the people they were trying to help. This has always interested me, for there is no reason in the world why he should not live it for himself. I am fairly sure he did in many ways, but he continually speaks of all the sacrifices he has made for everyone else, although there is much less bitterness here than we have found in the other letters.

CHAPTER 2. First of all, I think we can safely assume that the last verses beginning with verse 14, have been very much altered. The historical fact that the Jews killed their prophets had been stated so continuously by their prophets and teachers that it had become proverbial. Nevertheless, I do not think we can conceive of Paul, as a Jew, saying that the Jews were solely responsible for the death of Jesus. Even though there were Jewish factions in Thessalonica as well as his other centers which were antagonistic to his teaching and followers his aim was not to antagonize any potential Jewish converts.

I think the reference to Satan in verse 18 was also inserted. Paul was sufficiently acquainted with occultism to know that there was a force of evil, but that he would personalize this force is extremely doubtful. I am inclined to believe that both these statements were inserted by later editors. The reference to the Jews may have been inserted to add a little more fuel to the fire of anti-semitism and strengthen the growing separation between the Judaic religion and the early church. Paul was very proud of being a

Jew, as he has frequently said, and he would never say anything like this.

There is another point which arises here. In all of Paul's letters to his centers he continually refers to *his* teaching, and in verse 13 he speaks of it as the word of God. But what is Paul teaching? That God is going to punish you. That God is to be feared. He teaches the Judaic concept of a wrathful God with the addition of an intermediary in the form of Jesus who came to save us from hell. But in order to be saved from hell you must follow Paul's teaching. Paul says that you must be good to your mother and father, husbands and wives etc., but he says nothing about the inner change in terms of thoughts and motivations.

On the other hand, in verse 10 in the first chapter he says "and to wait for his son from heaven whom he raised from the dead; even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." In his belief that Jesus was God, Paul fluctuates between two ideas: that Jesus so loved us because he symbolized love, and that of a God of wrath, fear and austerity. And so for him it follows that there is to be no joy in life. You are to strip yourself and adhere to his concepts of the law until you are reborn, through death, into a new life in Jesus.

Again, what do you think Paul is teaching? This is not Judaism. Although they had a concept of a God of wrath by whom you were punished for wrong doing, they also believed that you were punished here, primarily, and then you went on from that point. And Judaism believes very much in enjoying life. The idea of living well was considered to be part of their real devotion to God, the Giver of all things. This was the basis for the idea of tithing. The Jew recognized that according to what he had he owed a tenth to God for having so blessed him with this world's goods. Incidentally, in this regard, as we have mentioned before, the woman was the "power behind the throne" in every Jewish family and was accorded every honor. But Paul had no use for women whatsoever: they were not to be honored, but were to be totally subservient to men. I have a definite reason for trying to form a general outline of what Paul is teaching, and this is to see how clearly we can determine just what it is that he is doing to both the teaching of Judaism and of Jesus.

Jesus taught that God is Life, and Life is unceasing fulfillment; as he said "I have come that you might have life and have it more abundantly." Paul says you are not entitled to any abundance:

strip yourself of everything. Jesus taught that when you needed anything you were to "enter into thy closet and pray to thy Father which is in secret, and He shall reward you openly." He said "Whatsoever things ye need, ask, believing, and you shall receive." Paul never mentions any need that should be met from the point of view of healing, or finance or substance. He does insist that people should forgive each other, but that is a basic concept in every religion. Essentially, there is no connection between Paul's teaching and that of Jesus. And although he uses a number of Jewish concepts, his interpretation in many instances is purely his own.

As we read these letters we are watching Paul during the period of his "spiritual debut," in which he certainly had a most dramatic entrance. This is one reason why there is such a great degree of vacillation in his letters, and in each one we get a slightly different idea of what he is talking about. He stresses morality while speaking of following the spirit of the law. And he cannot make up his mind whether Jesus is or is not God. Basically the vacillation is due to the fact that Paul never overcomes the idea that he is the most important man on earth. Because he felt he knew much more than anyone else, he never took the trouble to find out what Jesus actually taught. I think after all these letters we have a picture of a very confused man. If we were to hear that a prominent minister said one thing in New York, something else in Philadelphia, and still another thing in Washington, and then returned to his original idea in Baltimore we would say that he was a bit strange. This is the seventh letter of Paul's which we have covered; we know his background from the book of Acts, and there is no consistent concept. There is no doubt that normal changes occur in people as a result of applying the metaphysical teaching, but you will find that a normal change takes place through steady growth, and there is never a violation of the original concept. There will be an increasing expansion in understanding and application, but the original concept will always remain the core of that change. There is no such concept at the core of Paul's teaching. There are only two unchanging factors; his concept of morality and his concept of Paul's perfection.

CHAPTER 3. In relation to what have just discussed there is an interesting point which comes out in verse 4: "For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass." Paul predicted trouble for himself which eventually took place, as we know, metaphysically

must happen when we expect, or decree, something. He may have felt that he was following Jesus' ideas in relation to Jesus' statements concerning his crucifixion and resurrection, but it is very typical of his own peculiar thoughts of life. Jesus, as we know, predicted the step by step unfoldment of his plan, which is entirely another matter. Jesus certainly never foretold difficulties or suffering for himself or others as a necessary part of life. He saw only the positive outer change resulting from a change in consciousness. But Paul takes great pride in his illnesses, and he feels that suffering is a badge of glory.

Paul's idea of faith is to persist in believing in God no matter how many difficulties you have: it is a matter of pure endurance. He uses the crucifixion of Jesus as corroboration, because he did not realize that this was an essential step in the fulfillment of Jesus' plan. So, as a result, Paul felt that his problems were evidence of God's love — "For whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth" he told the Hebrews — and had nothing to do with faith. Faith for him was a matter of steadfastness of belief in the face of all problems.

Actually, in one sense, there is a certain amount to be said for this concept, not in the case of Paul who should have known better, but for people with no knowledge of metaphysics who are in difficulty. If they have a blind faith, it is certainly better than nothing. It does contribute something to their emotional well-being, even if it does nothing else. I think the great tragedy of orthodox Christianity, as well as Judaism, is that they did not realize that a blind faith is never enough. Faith, to be effective, must be a directed faith. One of the clearest examples of the effects of this misconception is the belief concerning the will of God. As a rule, no one thinks of the will of God until something dire happens which they then attribute to His will. Because they do not realize that God's will for us is perfect good and perfect fulfillment, they decree difficulty for themselves.

There is another interesting connection between the blind faith which persists under difficulties, the concepts of the church, and the directed faith which overcomes problems and the concepts of metaphysics. As we have mentioned before, the power of the church, and also of analysis, lies in confession. For people do momentarily feel better when they have gotten their problem off their chest. But the worst thing in the world you can do to yourself is to repeatedly go over the error. This is why in metaphysics

we have law that you can speak of your problem *once*. If you continue to talk about it you are re-impressing the subconscious mind and making it that much more difficult to overcome. In metaphysics you are taught, “thy faith hath made thee whole.” (Matthew 9:22)

When I originally thought about the subject of confession versus faith, I questioned what this had to do with the healing at shrines such as Lourdes. I will never forget the answer I got. It does not matter whether your faith, from the point of view of achieving a healing is in God, another person, or a relic. If you believe that healing will result from turning to God, or from turning to another person, or by touching a relic — if you *really* believe it — you will be healed. This is also a blind faith, in one sense, but it is directed and so it is effective. If I really consciously and subconsciously believe that by holding a relic in my hand I will be healed, I am going to be healed. This is the way the mind functions, and it has nothing to do with spiritual development.

It also works negatively as well as positively. This is the power if the Law. We demonstrate whatever we believe. The Law must have emotion behind it to function, and faith is an emotion. You cannot instill faith, but you can build your faith and direct it positively. If you follow the Law and train yourself, you begin to see certain things happening apparently without your having done anything more than follow a given path. You will soon see that your belief is changing your life.

It is unchangingly true that you are going to demonstrate what you believe in. That is one reason why Emerson said “What you are shouts so loudly I cannot hear a word you say.” It is not what we say, it is what we do that matters. No matter what we say, we will demonstrate whatever we subconsciously believe. So you find Paul went from one tribulation to another — because he expected it. What is more, he does something that is very unfair to others. He makes sure that everyone knows how difficult it is for him to have anything good in his life, as far as his physical needs are concerned. He has absolutely no hesitation in saying how badly he feels, how difficult it is, how poor he is, and he brings all of this into his teaching. This is not exactly what we call metaphysics. It is not the teaching of Jesus. I have often thought to myself that it would be such a completely different world if the teaching of Jesus rather than that of Paul had been taught.

CHAPTER 4. This chapter is almost entirely a repetition of what we have read so often before, and I do not think it neces-

sary to deal with the specific texts. As always, there is the emphasis on morality and ethics, in addition to his theological conceptions. Again, it is fascinating that Paul's teaching is so diametrically opposed to the real Gnosticism. It comes out quite clearly that Paul had some knowledge of it himself, but he certainly did not teach it. He knew a bit of Gnosticism, but I do not think he incorporated this into his being to any extent. If he had done so, then he would have known better than to strive to end sexual contact between man and woman except for the purpose of procreation. He would also have had some realization that his belief that sex was wrong stemmed from his own frustration. Verses 3 and 4, for example, are completely contrary to the Gnostic concept.

The Gnostic teaching concerning sex is very simply that sex is the lowest form of energy. We all possess energy and we have the ability to use it on any level that we wish. You remember when we discussed this subject earlier, I mentioned that energy functions like an automatic elevator within each of us. It will stop at any level of our being that we choose. When we use it physically it manifests as sex or strength: emotionally it manifests as enthusiasm or depression of it is used negatively; mentally it is inspiration: and spiritually it is illumination. When you realize that it is ours to use at any level that we desire, you begin to understand a bit about the mystery of sex. Actually, sex is a poor word for this function, because it is only one expression of energy. There is no doubt that Paul had some awareness of this. For that reason it is puzzling to see him maintain this fanatic drive against sex even within the marriage relationship. He is right, of course, in adjuring its use outside of marriage. It is possible that he incorporated other ideas in these letters which were deleted, but this we do not definitely know.

The concept of the church regarding the resurrection and heaven definitely originated with Paul and not Jesus. We have discussed the concept of heaven being above, as described in verses 16 and 17 at length before. The concept expressed by the phrase "in the air" has not only been adopted by the church, but also by theosophy, which believes that the ascending orders of masters have their habitations in the etheric plane. We have mentioned before that they believe that Jesus would return from his habitation, Shambala, "in the air" somewhere over the Gobi Desert. It is interesting to see how these ideas have become popularized

in the minds of people to the extent that they designate actual locations as the habitations for their hierarchies. There its another famous spot in Northern California which is supposed to be the abode of great Tibetan masters who are living on the next plane. And, I must say, I would prefer California to Tibet any day in the year.

CHAPTER 5. In closing, Paul again repeats his moral admonitions, and we need not dwell on them. However, we have discussed prophecy, which he speaks of in verse 20, and I would like to discuss it once more from a different approach. It is curious that this verse was left in, since this is one admonition the early church fathers immediately disregarded by ruling out prophetic ability, stating that it had ceased after the book of Revelation. It is really appalling when you think of how much harm they did and how much harm has resulted down through the centuries as a result of their ignorance. This is not to say that everyone has prophetic ability, but there certainly have been, are, and will be people who can to some degree see the trends of things to come.

Many people think that such an ability implies a limitation on possible actions, but it is not limiting if you know what to do about it. In our own lives, for example, if you have the gift of being able to look ahead for yourself and you see something you do not like, you have the power to change it. This is the purpose of having the ability. In other words, if you have gotten to this point of development, and your intuitive ability is not sufficiently developed for you to receive information directly, that information can come in this form to give you the opportunity to do something to change the situation.

The same thing holds true in reverse when people go to psychics. There are a few real psychics, although most of them are quite ignorant and believe that what they say must unalterably come to pass. But actually what most of them do is to read your subconscious mind, and the reason why most predictions do not come to pass is that we change our minds about it. Now, if we do this unconsciously, think how much more powerful and more capable we are in controlling and changing our lives if, with inner guidance, we are prepared for something that is about to happen and we know how to handle it.

My mind goes back, for instance, to something that happened several years ago just before a trip to Europe. The day before my departure I suddenly got a very uncomfortable feeling. I did not

know why, but I was very unhappy about the trip and everything was saying "no, no, no." However, the preparations had been made so I went, knowing that nothing could happen to me. We had one of the most miserable flights you could possibly imagine. To begin with there was something wrong with the plane. They had engine trouble and were late arriving at Idlewild, and late in leaving New York. We were barely in the air when they announced that they were landing in Canada to repair the difficulty. Incidentally, this was supposed to be non-stop to Paris. When we landed in Canada we came down so rapidly that, for the first time in my life, I had trouble with my ear. Until I was able to heal it I literally saw stars. We finally landed in Paris seven hours late. Needless to say, when I got on that plane I saw the plane and everyone in it surrounded by divine protection, and so we landed safely. But I was very glad I was warned and was able to do this before I got on the plane.

This is the purpose of foreknowledge. The form in which the knowledge comes is immaterial. Whether it comes as prophecy or as an intuitive knowing, it will come in that form which is the result of our own particular development. Then, if we are quiet enough and developed enough to pay attention to the things we should, this ability begins to grow in us and we find we know whatever we need to know. There is not one of us who has not started to do something new or a little different from what we have done heretofore, and not had some sort of a definite feeling that it would or would not succeed. Sometimes if it is negative we refuse to listen and push on, and this can be a very costly experience if we do not do the work of changing the negative. These are abilities which we all have, but of which most people are completely unaware.

As I have said time and again and will continue to say, the people who followed the disciples neither had contact with Jesus nor experiences of their own. These were the type of people that Paul contacted. These were not people who were driven by the love of God as much as they were verbally lashed into following Paul. As a result, they had no more knowledge of the real meaning of God than they had knowledge of how humanity and the universes were created. One of the things we must blame on the ignorance of those who followed the disciples is that they set the pattern for most religious thinking from that time until the present. And, during the centuries in between then and now, when people

were so rash as to admit that they could predict or that they could see or hear inwardly, they were put to death. This was heresy because the church leaders of the time did not have this experience. We all know what happened during the Dark Ages. Religious life had been increasingly confined throughout the years until it almost succeeded in extinguishing itself. And since most of their dogma was based on Paul, it is strange to see that in this instance they chose to disregard Paul's admonition to "despise not prophesying."

II THESSALONIANS

CHAPTER 1 and, as a matter of fact, most of II Thessalonians is a repetition of the previous letters and the general Pauline doctrine. Paul commends them for their faith enduring "in persecution and . . . tribulation;" a concept which we discussed in the preceding letter. To him this makes them "worthy of the kingdom of God." I think by now we are sufficiently familiar with the difference between the teaching of Paul and Jesus on this subject to pass on without further discussion.

Then in verses 7-10 Paul reverts to the Old Testament picture of the apocalyptic day of Judgment in which God will judge and punish those who have sinned and reward those who have endured under suffering. I do not think I need say that this is a vivid example of how little Paul knew of Jesus' teaching and of how little he himself had changed.

CHAPTER 2. When we read these chapters we can only wonder again at the fact that he attracted any followers. It is also a source of wonder to realize how many of these converts persisted in following his teaching, for certainly the results were far from what Jesus spoke of as the result of his teaching: life more abundant. And yet the followers of Paul continue to this day, to the extent that he is called, quite rightly, the father of Christianity.

Verse 11 is reminiscent of the statement from Isaiah 6:9 which Jesus quotes in Matthew 13:15. However, Jesus uses it to refer to those people who understand only the outer words and form and have no awareness of an inner reality. He quotes Isaiah to dramatize his own point that "from him (who hath not) shall be taken away even that he hath." In other words, that those who

hear only the words and not the meaning gradually decrease their own capacity for understanding. Here Paul is taking Isaiah's statement quite literally and is saying that God Himself compels those who do not understand to hold misconceptions which inevitably lead to their damnation. In verses 6 and 7 he attributes a similar motivation and power to the forces of evil.

I hope there is not one of us in metaphysics who believes that the evil that occurs in people's lives is due to one Satan or Lucifer putting his finger on a person and saying "Now it is your turn to suffer." I think we have gone beyond that stage. We all know by now, although we may not like the idea, that any unpleasantness and difficulty that we have in our lives is caused by ourselves. It is equally true that if we are terribly negative, or if we ally ourselves on the side of evil by doing things we consciously know to be wrong, we are increasing the force of the power of evil. In the same way, every time you and I make a demonstration we are increasing the power of good to demonstrate. This is the Law and nothing can change that. But this has nothing whatsoever to do with an incarnate or discarnate entity or deity saying: "I have decided it is your turn to suffer. I don't like the way you wear your hair, and I am going to see that you have a lot of trouble in your life." That is absurd. We bring it on ourselves.

I may be a somewhat cynical metaphysician but, being created the way we are, and having formulated our own ideas about what we want, I have long since come to the conclusion that unless we had problems we would never lift a finger to grow. We are so instinctively lazy that we need a problem acting as a goad to made us take a step forward. When it becomes unbearable we then take the steps to change it. When life becomes too comfortable we just sit down and take it for granted. Then, strangely enough, after a period of this we become terribly bored and then we get into mischief, and before we know it we have another problem. But it is up to you to decide what you will have in your life, whether it is a good or an evil activity.

CHAPTER 3. First of all, Jesus told us to mind our own business, and Paul seems to feel quite the opposite. He seems to feel that each person should evaluate his brother. Jesus told us quite definitely not to judge nor to "regard the mote in our brother's eye." In verse 6 Paul tells them to completely shun those who do not do as he says, although he softens this a bit in verse 15. This is completely contrary to what Jesus taught and how he acted. Jesus

ate with publicans, with people who were not considered to be morally, to say nothing of socially, the best, and when he was attacked because of this, his answer was that he was not here to heal the well but to heal the sick. Jesus had a totally different attitude and belief than Paul's.

I think we all believe that we are not to judge or criticize others, and that we certainly do not all have to think alike or act alike. If you find that you are in the company of people with whom you do not agree or whose way of life is opposed to yours, you are to treat them as you would want to be treated, as a child of God. Also, I think one of the most wonderful ways to spread metaphysics is not to talk about it but to *be* it, so that people become intrigued to some degree and ask "What have you got?" But Paul's idea is to erect a barrier with a class distinction between those who followed his ideas and those who did not.

You know, we often find that soon after we start to live metaphysically, our circle of friends begins to change. But you do not say "I am not going to see so-and-so because his ideas are not like mine." You very naturally are attracted to new people and the change occurs gradually. Paul takes the intellectual initiative. He says "I have to make a choice. I have to choose not to associate with these people." On the other hand, if you are practicing metaphysics, then no matter whom you are with, you are supposed to love them— not necessarily like them. You are to give to them of what you have, and not reject what they are. This is an important part of metaphysics—you have no right to judge and, moreover, you are not the one to decide whether others are to believe in their way or your way. This is not up to you or to me. It is completely absurd to take these things upon yourself.

There is another point which runs through this chapter that is utterly different from anything Jesus taught. Paul gives the impression that if you do thus or so God is going to reach down from heaven and touch you and give you some sort of reward. I think my basic objection to Paul's teaching, other than the fact that it is the complete antithesis of what Jesus taught, is that he gives the feeling that you *have* to do this, and if you do it you will be rewarded. This is one of the subtle points in metaphysics.

If you are in metaphysics just to gain your own desire, then you are in the wrong place. But if you are in metaphysics because you have a deep desire to grow, to develop, to become the person you really can be, and to find conscious contact with the Presence of

God in you, then everything will happen for good. Jesus says, so very beautifully, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." That means in one sense, that you bring yourself into alignment with the good which has already been given you. But to Paul, if you are good you will be rewarded, and there is a most decided difference in emphasis. The church teaches the same concept today. And, for the most part, I imagine the majority of people who attend church have somewhere in the back of their minds the idea that they should do good, not because they believe it is their nature to be good, but as an insurance in case there is such a thing as the eternal damnation which Paul foresees for the unrighteous.

I TIMOTHY

We have analyzed Paul at great length, and there is little of his life and personality that we have not touched upon directly or indirectly. In fact, I have a suspicion that we probably know more about Paul at this moment than Paul ever knew about himself. We now come to a relationship which we touched on previously that is connected with the second greatest tragedy in Paul's life: the relationship of Paul to Timothy. Paul really should have married and had a large family because, despite his many negative points he was filled with an unfulfilled love. We would hardly think he had such a loving nature from what we have seen, because he certainly did not show too much of it, especially as far as the female sex is concerned. But we should bear in mind that this man had never known emotional fulfillment, although he had a great capacity for love. I think you have to, for the moment, put yourself in Paul's shoes, and most people find this very difficult to do. You see that there was no outer expression of personal love. He was torn, first of all, by being very sensitive and having a deep inferiority complex which, as in many instances, rebounded as a superiority complex. He always had to be better than anyone else. He was a magnificent orator, but underneath that was a frustrated love nature which had never been expressed. He did not have the capacity for talking with people or teaching people and becoming their friend. He was too insecure within himself to allow people to come too close to him. And so in these letters we always see Paul as the teacher saying "I am telling you what to do." But his one point of vulnerability, and this consciously, was Timothy.

Timothy was a young man, the son of one of his followers, who was evidently very open to Paul's teaching. Timothy was about 19 or 20 when they met. Paul adored Timothy and Timothy adored Paul. Timothy was the son he always wanted to have. For the first time in his experience there was someone on whom he could pour out this pent-up love. The tragedy was that he met

Timothy towards the end of his life and they spent very little time together, but in that brief time there was a close bond of communion. His greatest desire was to impart to Timothy everything he knew so that Timothy could succeed him. However, little is known of Timothy's activities other than the mentions made in a few of the epistles, so we have no way of determining the outcome of his desire and training.

This relationship also brings up a fascinating question relating to another subject, and that is conversion. There is no doubt that Paul after his tremendously dramatic experience with Jesus became a convert. I think there are very few people in the world who would not become converted after that experience. But—and this is mentioned in the book of Acts—although Paul's great love of Timothy as his spiritual son was genuine, and very deep and sincere, before he would allow Timothy to teach, what did Paul do? Timothy had to be circumcized in the Jewish tradition.

Paul is certainly a strange mixture. His association with Timothy is a very beautiful one and yet, in spite of the fact that Paul feels he has emerged from orthodox Jewish customs, he circumcizes Timothy upon his conversion because he still felt emotionally that this was necessary. On the other hand, he argued against having the gentiles circumcized mainly because he knew that if they were told that this was a requirement for conversion the great majority of them would turn away. And so he has a great fight with Peter and the others who believed in circumcision, but he himself reverts to his earlier training when it came to the boy whom he adored as a son.

Peter was not an educated man, and while he was most definitely a sincere convert, he was still caught in some of the ritualistic phases of Judaism. As far as he was concerned, Jesus was born a Jew and as such had been circumcized, and since Jesus did not talk specifically about circumcision, he assumed that this was a requirement for conversion. Paul knew better intellectually, but emotionally it was a different story. In his attachment to this boy and his desire to give him everything he had, circumcision once more assumed its original importance for him. It really presents a fascinating character study of this man who is the father of Christianity.

CHAPTER 1. Throughout the epistles Paul has admonished his followers to "put away all sinners." Here he clarifies his position. He lists many things which he considers to be sins, and then

states that the law applies to those who commit these offenses, but does not apply to the "righteous man." Now we know that Jesus came to save the sinners, as he told the Pharisees but, according to Paul, the law excludes sinners from salvation. And, furthermore, Paul has the authority to discriminate between who should or should not be saved. Alexander and Hymenaeus did not agree with Paul, so they are consigned to Satan with the proviso that if they turn back to Paul's teaching they can be saved. But he doubts that they have the wisdom to do this.

Paul is certainly not very tolerant, nor did he ever learn tolerance in that incarnation. It was either his way or you were damned. There was no change in that attitude following his conversion, it simply applied to the other side. And, holding firmly to his own concepts, Paul attributes to Jesus, in verse 16, a concept of suffering which was far removed from what Jesus taught. Jesus said that our "joy should be made full" and whoever came to him for help was immediately healed and told "thy sins are forgiven thee." There is certainly no element of prolonged suffering or endurance of evil on the part of the person healed. This was completely contrary to the ideas of Jesus. But, as always, Paul is merely transposing his own concept, as well as what he chooses from the Judaic teaching, into what he believed Jesus taught.

In this teaching we find the beginning of the rather diabolical pattern that it is much better to endure suffering here, because then you will not have to go to hell or, at least, not for as long a period. Thank God, some of the Christian sects have finally broken away from this to a certain extent. But their idea of the need of suffering basically came from Paul. The Jews have a more constructive attitude about it. They feel that you are going to pay for wrong doing, which is perfectly true, but they believe in getting it over with as quickly as possible. So they set aside one day of the year, the Day of Atonement, and they are sure that on that day they atone for all of the errors and sins they have committed during the year. They start their year with a brand-new, clean sheet, which is a far healthier attitude.

CHAPTER 2. Paul really believed what he said in verse 5. What do you believe? It is very tragic when you realize how many people, as a result of this, believe you need a mediator between you and the Presence of God within you. You know how often I say, as every other metaphysical teacher says: you need no intermediary between God and you. This is true and this is what Jesus

taught. Paul's understanding of Jesus and what he came to do and to teach us is completely erroneous. This verse is perhaps the clearest example we have had of this misconception, which is also the basis of Catholicism. Through the centuries that have passed since Paul, this teaching has been formulated, endorsed and adhered to by millions of people who were afraid to do otherwise. It is one of the great tragedies of the human race.

You need no intermediary between you and your God, and you are accountable to no one but your God. You know that statement from Augustine I quote so frequently: "Love God, and do as you please:" if you really love God you cannot do anything but right. It is impossible, so it is a very safe admonition. If you love God you are incapable of harming another human being. You are incapable of resentments, of anger, of fear, if you really love God, because you know you are one with Him and you and He form a majority. And you know that your life is yours to make in accordance with the Pattern in the Mount. But Paul never understood this.

Many people have thought that it requires a degree of development before you love God enough for these things to be true, but that is not so. I think that the love of God starts with a feeling of gratitude for what you have, and it is a growing awareness and response. I have not seen anyone as yet with the exception of Jesus who was perfect. I do not know if we ever reach a stage of perfection, although we can build in a tremendous amount of it. But those of us in metaphysics are free from the usual errors that people fall into and we are spared, where we spare ourselves, the wear and tear of worries and fears and disappointments, because we live on another level of awareness. And gradually we begin to understand and to build this consciousness of the Presence of God into ourselves until we begin to express it. This is one of the reasons why meditation is particularly stressed. As you meditate on these things, or reflect upon them, you in turn begin to reflect them: you out-picture them: they show through you. This is the result people see when they comment that a person is very kind or very wonderful. It is because that person has begun to embody the characteristics of the Presence of God to some extent through love. **WHAT YOU THINK UPON GROWS.** Never forget that. And if we think upon love, or upon God, and what we mean to Him and what He means to us, this begins to grow and in turn we reflect it in our lives.

As we have seen, Paul's attitude towards women was a departure from Judaism where women were held in great respect. Such was not the case with Paul. Even here he could not restrain himself in his anger at women. There may have been many reasons why Paul felt the need of including this discourse, but I suspect that he was also concerned that Timothy, who was a young man, might become rather easily influenced. And so Paul tells him, and the men of the center, what is proper for women. She certainly had no right to adorn herself in any way whatsoever, and of course she should be seen but not heard, and the husband had practically the power of life and death over her.

However, we can be fairly sure that the last three verses are not from Paul. Paul knew better. First of all, with even his limited knowledge of occultism he must have been quite familiar with symbolism, and he certainly did not believe in the physical existence of Adam and Eve. I am perfectly sure that he knew it was an allegory and that Adam is the physical body and Eve is the subconscious or soul. This is an interpolation by later editors who had no idea of what the story in Genesis actually meant. And so, as we have found in many instances in the Bible, they brought it into line with their own concepts and made their own connection with what was presented here.

CHAPTER 3. The present day meaning of the terms bishop and deacon did not apply at this time. Paul did organize what you might call deputies, and their offices became known by these titles as the church itself was organized. It is interesting to contrast his instructions regarding the bishop and deacons with the contemporary requirements of the Catholic church. First of all, in those days they were allowed to marry. Interestingly enough, Catholicism is gradually becoming more liberal in their requirements of celibacy for their priests. There are several instances of married men who have been converted to Catholicism and were allowed to become priests while retaining their marital status. Who knows what other changes may develop in the not too distant future?

We can observe other contrasts in Paul's lists, such as his admonition to be sober and abstain from wine. Most of the church leaders of today, particularly among the upper echelons, very much enjoy good food, good wines and liquor, good cigars and pipes. They believe that it is a good way of expressing life. "Filthy lucre" on the other hand, has become a rather touchy subject. I do not think there is a wealthier organization in the world than

the Catholic church. Certainly there are thousands of very sincere parish priests all over the world, some in the jungles, who live under severe hardships and in great poverty. They have not risen far enough in the church to benefit by its wealth. This, in all fairness, was not Paul's idea. As we have seen, Paul did not believe in taking anything for himself, and he continued to work at his trade as he went about teaching. But, as in everything else—times change. And of course, in Paul's time there was not much money available, and there was no organized church. Today, almost every Christian sect, not only the Catholic church, has the idea of financial accumulation to support their work and themselves. When we realize that their teaching and theology is based on Paul, it is even more fascinating to see what they have chosen to accept and what they have rejected or chosen to ignore.

Again Paul paints a picture of what a woman should be like which leaves little or no room for fulfillment. As we have seen before, this stems from his subconscious frustration and his disappointment that no woman was interested in him. Paul has one of the most complex natures we encounter in the Bible. As I have said, as far as dominant personalities are concerned, the only other man with whom we could compare him is Moses, and then in a completely different way for Moses had a totally different nature. In addition to our previous comparison of the two men, something very delightful emerges in this context, and that is Moses' attitude towards women.

Moses, who was a Hebrew and the formulator of Judaism, was quite free in breaking one of the great laws of Judaism, by marrying a woman of another faith: his second wife. Yet the commandments he gave were very explicit in this respect. In one sense the difference in their viewpoints is slightly ironic. Moses, 1400 years or so before Paul, understood and practiced the very things we teach in metaphysics, and Paul, even after the impact of his one encounter with Jesus, was more strictly Judaic than Moses. Incidentally, apropos of the point we raised before of being highly advanced or perfect in order to love God sufficiently, we can gain a greater insight from the examples in the Bible. Moses, for instance, killed a man; First Isaiah felt that everybody was inferior to him; Paul not only helped to make the first martyr of the Christian church, but he as well felt that everyone was inferior to him. Yet look what happened to them, and look at what they did. I would say that there is hope for us!

CHAPTER 4. The first section is quite interesting, and it implies more than it reveals. At that time there were certain cults which practiced black magic. And, as has been the practice through the ages, as it is with certain occult schools today, celibacy and vegetarianism were thought to contribute to the development of power. Magic is magic in the sense that you can produce certain things if you believe in these rituals and ideas and you practice them extensively. However, these are the teachings and practitioners to which Paul specifically refers in verses 1-4.

It seems that some of these magicians were allied with the side of evil and were trying to interfere with Paul's teaching and followers, as well as with those of the other disciples. You realize that, although communication was limited, the news of the acts of Jesus and his resurrection had spread tremendously by word of mouth. And of course it was widely known that the disciples were chosen and trained by him. So these opportunistic magicians took advantage of the enthusiasm that had been engendered and said "We too can do these things. You do not have to believe them and follow their teachings. We can show you short cuts." All of the disciples, including Paul, had to deal with this. In addition to that there were other groups who very sincerely believed in ritualistic devotion and who did not use it for evil, but the use of ritual is completely contrary to Jesus' teaching. Paul is not referring to them as much as to those who were trying to compete with him and take his following away by showing them tricks of magic.

Even in our day this situation exists. New York City, for instance, has many pseudo-occultists who, for so much an hour, will teach you to raise the Kundalini, go into deep trance, or develop clairvoyance. They make a fortune, and they also have wrecked the lives of a number of human beings. In those days as well as today, people were fascinated by the sensational. The teaching Jesus gave, and in which we believe, is completely unsensational except to ourselves. The result of our own inner work, and the only proof of the work you have done, is the change in the outer picture, and there is no one to applaud it. However, these things do go on in our time. They are not well publicized, but they are widely spread. The best way to prove the validity of any teaching is by the standard Jesus gave us: "By their fruits ye shall know them." That is the only way to evaluate these teachers and ideas until you have the knowledge and ability to decide for yourself.

Many people get caught in psychism purely because it is dra-

matic and exciting. But it is like a drug, once you become involved in this phase you can become so fascinated that you do not grow out of it and so you remain in it for a few incarnations and just waste time. If that is the least that happens to you, however, you are fortunate, for this form of experimentation can have most unpleasant results. The effects of development must result from natural growth and should never be forced. If a woman were to unnaturally accelerate pregnancy to five rather than nine months, she would produce a deficient and warped child, and forcing inner development has equally unpleasant results. One is growth on the physical plane, but the same principle applies on the metaphysical plane: "As above, so below; as within, so without." This is why I warn people to stay away from everything they do not understand in these fields, and even if they do understand it, they should not experiment unless they know how to control and protect themselves. This does not mean you should not study it. I am in favor of metaphysical students knowing everything there is to know about the occult, but only to know about it, not to get involved in it. It can be a very dangerous and blind alley. Paul was very aware of this fact, for the practice was quite prevalent in his time, so he was quite right in giving this warning about it.

Basically, however, this chapter is a personal note to Timothy telling him how he should behave and what Paul expects from him when he arrives. Incidentally, verses 3 and 4 are a very lovely way of expressing what we mean when we say God has given us all things to be "used not abused." If they are written by Paul, however, we know that he has a habit of limiting that idea. I wonder, for instance, if he includes women in his general amnesty in verse 4. But this chapter has a certain beauty because he is trying his best to teach and guide Timothy and it has an almost tender tone, which is rare with Paul.

"Neglect not the gift that is in thee" is a very lovely and wise admonition. Evidently Timothy had been quite successful in healing with his hands. Paul did not teach Timothy to heal; this was Timothy's gift. Curiously enough, Paul seems to have felt that he himself had no ability to heal. There is no mention of his healing in his epistles and only one or two incidents in the book of Acts. He certainly did not teach that this was an ability which every human being had, and he seems to have the idea that it is a gift reserved for a chosen few. Of course this is not true.

I would like to see more metaphysical students attempt healings

for themselves, because everybody has the same healing ability. The ability and power to heal does not vary with individuals. Where we do differ is in the amount of faith we each have. And we should all use this ability to develop that faith, not just in the area of physical health, but in any area of life. Wherever we have a problem we need, and should have, a healing. And, as we know, we never have a problem that we do not have the ability to solve.

CHAPTER 5. I do not think there is much in this chapter that requires clarification. In his specifications concerning the treatment of widows he exhibits the same general attitude towards women with which we have become familiar. Paul changes little in this respect. The manner in which he instructs Timothy to distinguish between a widow who is a "widow indeed" and one who is not, implies a rather intensive investigation of "character references." One must be quite sure of the "goodness" of the widow before assisting her and, according to Paul, this is only possible for those who are "threescore years" or older, for there is much uncertainty with the younger widows. It is quite a commentary, and shows that he must have had a rather bitter experience at one time or another.

He goes on to instruct Timothy in specific and personal behavior and purity. One wonders what Timothy's response may have been. We know very little of what happened to Timothy after his initial instruction by Paul, other than a few casual references here and there. It would be interesting to know, if, for example, he married, or how explicitly he followed the instruction given here.

CHAPTER 6. Apropos of Paul's discussion of words, in many ways his choice of words is beautiful, and he has much to say that is instructive, but his instructions deal primarily with physical activity whereas the words of Jesus were essentially concerned with revealing inner activity. This chapter basically deals with what you might call a "non-attachment" to worldly goods. There is one important phrase here which has probably been more misquoted than any other text in the Bible. It is in verse 10. The phrase which we have been accustomed to hear is that "money is the root of all evil," but it actually is the "love of money." Money itself is a perfectly wonderful thing, but it is wrong to make a god of it by giving it power and prominence in your life.

I have known a few people in my time who worshiped money and lived in absolute terror of losing it, and they were quite

wealthy. I have rarely known people with little money to live in that degree of fear, strangely—or perhaps logically—enough. It is very fascinating to observe people's reactions to money, and their understanding of it. A friend of mine who has been a fairly good student of metaphysics, has seen financial ups and downs. She was never in need, but she did not have the resources she once had. About fifteen years ago she told me that she always kept a thousand dollars in the bank for a rainy day. I said, "Why don't you keep it for a sunny day and go out and spend it when you feel in the mood for something unusual?" And she said, "Suppose I get sick?" I told her, of course; "That's a fine idea. That's what I call being a good metaphysician. If you anticipate being sick, you are going to be sick."

For many people money seems to be the one thing they feel they need for security. Yet it is obvious to the point of being proverbial that it cannot buy the essentials for real security. It cannot buy peace of mind, happiness, freedom, health, and a million and one other vitally important things. I have often wondered what happens to people who really made a god of money when they get to the next plane. You know, there is no money there. It must be terrible not to be able to call on an angel and offer him a tip to get you something. If you regard money as a fascinating and wonderful commodity which is to be used and used wisely you will not have trouble with it. But the moment you begin to push for it you begin to have difficulties. And in this regard, Paul's attitude, or at least his expression here, is quite right.

II TIMOTHY

CHAPTER 1. Verse 6 is interesting because Paul implies that he initially endowed Timothy with a certain power by the use of his hands. As we saw earlier when he tried to simulate the Pentecostal experience in his own followers, he did not understand that all growth comes from within and cannot be produced outwardly or by another person. He then advises Timothy once again to stir up the gift of God within him, which means in other terms, to meditate more and develop his enthusiasm. And in this he is quite right, because unless you have enthusiasm you do not make too much progress.

The most important statement in the entire chapter is in verse 7: "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." To me that is the greatest statement Paul ever made. How do you interpret a "sound mind?" It is an understanding, healthy mind which is free of fear; one which is disciplined and balanced. Yet, strangely enough, in spite of his brilliance, Paul did not have a balanced mind. Paul was a fanatic. Then, again, verse 8 shows no understanding of what Jesus taught. Jesus never said that we had to suffer. Paul had a very severe guilt complex which caused him to believe in the need of suffering, and this is behind what he says in this section.

CHAPTER 2. It seems that when Paul does come out with a meaningful statement, as he did in the previous chapter, he then goes on to become so involved in his own theological ideas and analysis that he completely distorts or loses the meaning of what he himself has said. You can certainly, for instance, spend aeons talking about the meaning of love, a subject which Paul has discussed most beautifully, but love does not involve a constant repetition of the moral weaknesses of which we are guilty. And poor Timothy has gotten so much advice on what not to do that it is really difficult to imagine that he could keep track of it all.

And then verse 24 is rather ironic, for I doubt if we could find a more "ungentle" person in the world than Paul. Of all the disciples, he was the most impatient, and in addition he was antagonistic. I am sure you remember those sections in the letters which showed his intense sense of jealousy and rivalry with Peter and Apollos. His attitude was, "How dare anybody go to hear them when he was the only one who had the truth: he was the chosen of Jesus." He was really furious and felt that they were doing the works of the devil, and he was the only one who was doing the right thing. And yet here he describes himself as the epitome of meekness and gentleness.

Another point comes out here, which we have seen before, that is interesting in this context. We know that he did not have good health, and made no effort to heal himself. But he glories in the fact that he suffers, and he glories in the fact that he was put in chains. He thinks that this is all for the sake of Jesus and that this is what Jesus wanted him to do. He evidently never heard the text, "I have come that ye might have life more abundantly."

Furthermore, he tells Timothy to adjure them not to argue, but few people argue as frequently or at such length as Paul. He does

not want them to cause strife through discussions, yet we have seen the difficulties he got into by doing just this. I must say I agree with him in what he says, however. When people try to tempt you into metaphysical arguments, when they know nothing about it, I think the kindest thing to say is, "I'll give you some books if you care to read them, then we can discuss the subject."

He has another attitude which is very strange, and that is his belief in hell and the devil. He implies here that if they did not fall into line and follow his teaching, they would be sent to hell. Judaism taught that Sheol was the place where the wicked were punished, but Jesus taught forgiveness and spoke of reincarnation, which is not an orthodox Judaic teaching. So, as we have repeatedly seen, Paul's teaching was primarily Judaic. Actually, almost all of his teaching consists of his own ideas carried over from Judaism, and this is the greatest irony of all in relation to the Catholic church. Because, not only is their doctrine based on Paul's teachings, but much of their ritual comes from the early Jews. The major differences are confession and the change of the sabbath day from Saturday to Sunday. It is really a strange state of affairs.

Incidentally, we have discussed the fact that the two major formulators of the Catholic doctrine were Paul, based on Judaism, and Augustine, based on Paul. We have also discussed the striking similarities between the two men following their conversions. Prior to their conversions you cannot imagine two more different people. Paul was fanatic in his celibacy and extremely sexually frustrated. Augustine, on the other hand, was one of the greatest rakes of his time prior to his conversion. But after his conversion, as you know, he became as fanatic as Paul in this respect, as well as in other areas of belief.

There is an interesting sidelight in relation to this: I have always had a suspicion that Augustine was a reincarnation of Paul. We have discussed the esoteric teaching that each person has a spiritual name which he learns when he reaches a certain stage of development. That name is always a dim echo of your given name in any incarnation. Now, I do not know Paul's spiritual name, nor do I know Augustine's, but it is more than possible that it could be one and the same, and that it contains the letters A and U which are found in both names: *Paul* and *Augustine*. This makes me quite sure that Augustine was an incarnation of Paul.

You might ask, "How can you prove it?" and of course you cannot. But when you do reach the point of knowing your own

spiritual name, you will find that it contains two or three letters of your given name, and in front of them will be the indicator of the particular wave length on which you function spiritually at this time. I was absolutely fascinated when this connection between Paul and Augustine occurred to me, because I had never seen a similarity in their names before, but there are the letters A and U in both names. This is Cabala, of course, and Cabala has a habit of being extremely true. Actually it is quite ironic, because all of the things that Paul subconsciously wanted to do, Augustine did in his early life. And then Augustine reverted back to "Paul" again. It is a fascinating idea.

CHAPTER 3. Verse 1 reflects the Judaic belief in the final judgment as well as the Christian belief in the end of the world based on a misinterpretation of Matthew 24 and 25. There have been and are a number of teachers who believed that the end of the world was imminent. Somehow or other it has not taken place yet, and I do not think it will happen for a few billion years. This is a complete misconception. We have had periods, such as the destruction of Atlantis, where humanity has almost wiped itself out. We have had at least five catastrophic events after which humanity started from the barest beginnings and worked back to civilization again.

These events were in the nature of the destruction we envision if the H bombs were let loose on the world, and if they ever were used, this would be the result. However, as I have repeatedly said, there will never be another world war. We will continue to have the outbursts we have been having, but both sides know that if a bomb were used the other side would also use it and it would result in total destruction. There would be no winner this time. However, we have finally turned the corner in growth and developed a little understanding, so this will not happen. The human race has gotten to the point where it has all of the weapons of destruction in its own hands, and because both sides realize the futility of using them, for the first time we stand a chance of going on.

We approached an even higher evolution in Atlantis than we have today, and it was wiped out by their misuse of power. Paul was expecting the same thing to happen again, but as Thomas Troward says so beautifully, "Principle is not limited by precedent:" because it happened in the past does not mean that it has to continue to happen. I rather doubt that Paul knew of prior civilizations, such as Atlantis, but the idea of the last judgment was part of the

Judaic concept of the messiah, as we saw in the Old Testament. The coming of the messiah would be preceded by catastrophe, and he would choose the good people who would live with him, and the rest would be wiped out in the final cataclysm. This idea was expanded in the New Testament and incorporated with the early Christian's belief in the second coming of Jesus.

At any rate, we will be returning to this little planet for one or two billion years, and we will find that life is increasingly interesting as we go along. When we get to the stage of knowing our past incarnations, we will be quite fascinated to see the changes that have taken place in civilizations, rather than in people. There are very small changes in humanity, but quite startling changes in the way life is lived; in conveniences and the way things are done. People themselves have changed very little. We are the hardest and the slowest to change in any department, because we hate change.

This reminds me of the wonderful story that Emmet Fox used to tell which pertains not only to the individual with his problems, but to humanity at large. A bear was lured from the woods by a wonderful aroma coming from the open window of a cabin, where the people had left some stew cooking on the stove when they went out. The bear climbed through the window and rushed up to the stove and clutched the pot, which was extremely hot, in his arms. He did not have the sense to let go of it, and so he burned himself to death. This sort of thing has happened to the human race time and time again. Incidentally, in regard to verse 7, if Paul did incarnate as Augustine, it is even more of a tragic picture, because he seems to go through the same pattern of learning and yet not getting much nearer to the truth. It gives us some idea of how slowly we learn, and why it takes humanity so long to change.

In verse 12 we see a very simple statement of Paul's basic misconception. As we have repeatedly said, Jesus never said "I have come so that you shall suffer," but "I have come that ye might have life more abundantly." Let us discuss this for a moment. The eighth Beatitude tells us "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." As we have seen, the Beatitudes are instructions concerning the inner growth of the soul and, as Jesus repeatedly states, the kingdom of heaven is within you. This has nothing whatsoever to do with the idea of enduring suffering and persecution in this life in order to attain the kingdom of heaven in the next life. The persecution to which Jesus refers are the enemies of our own household: our

fears and doubts and the negative concepts to which we have given power. It is these which must be overcome in our growth towards contact with the Presence within us.

It is possible that verse 12 did not originate with Paul and was inserted by a later editor. However, we know that Paul did have a tendency towards martyrdom, and that he believed suffering to be a signature of God's love. If, as we can assume, he knew of the Beatitudes, it is very possible that, colored by his personal predilection for suffering and his lack of esoteric training, he interpreted what Jesus said on a purely physical level.

We cannot help but wonder why people have persisted in believing Paul's interpretation rather than accepting what Jesus himself said so simply and directly. Why, when he says the effect of his teaching is fullness of joy and abundant life or, again, "your sorrow shall be turned into joy" and, "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full?" These words were overlooked in the misunderstanding of his death and the focus on the belief that he suffered.

As we have seen, even the disciples who were with Jesus, with the exception of John, believed that in order to gain heaven, they had to die a martyr's death. We cannot imagine what Jesus must have felt when he realized that not even his own disciples understood what he was talking about and that they placed a completely wrong emphasis on what he came to do. He is portrayed as a victim of circumstances and suffering beyond his control. But a person who brought a man back from the dead; who could walk on the water; who could disappear at will because he knew the etheric law; a person who, at the end of his life, when Peter cut off the ear of the priest who came to arrest him, simply spoke the Word and restored the ear—can we possibly think that this man could not have controlled any situation, could not have avoided being crucified, or have controlled any physical pain on the cross? It is absolutely ridiculous to view him as a victim of persecution. This was his plan. He came to prove two things. First of all, that there was no death, and, second, to teach a way of life. But this point has been lost in the conception of suffering which the church has perpetuated.

CHAPTER 4. Paul knew at this time that he was going to be tried and would be sentenced to death. He thinks very well of what he has done, and I have no quarrel with his appraisal of having fought a good fight, other than his reference to a "crown

of righteousness" in verse 8. And we see that he is consistent to the end of his life in condemning those who disagree with him. Here one Alexander falls under his judgment. He is also very annoyed at Demas for having "loved this present world," as he says in verse 10.

Again, this is one of the most striking and decided differences between the figure of Paul and the figure of Jesus. Paul insisted upon a life of austerity. Jesus, on the other hand, aside from the work he came to do and did, deeply loved people. He spent most of his time with people. He enjoyed them and he also enjoyed the good of "this present world." He loved good food, he drank wine, and he was extremely social. He was the antithesis of Paul. Nor did any of the other disciples feel that they had to renounce the world and go into isolation with their followers. Do you know, I almost believe that if Paul had been with the other disciples during their three years with Jesus, that Jesus would have thrown him out, and Paul would have been arguing about it yet.

TITUS

This letter may or may not have been written to the Titus mentioned in Galatians and II Corinthians. It is supposed by many scholars to be a letter of instruction written by one of the heads of the newly formed church to a leader in Crete. Whether or not this is a Pauline epistle, the writer incorporates not only the ideas but the tone and attitude of Paul, and so we will refer our discussion of it directly to Paul as a means of simplification. Furthermore, it is unnecessary to deal with these three chapters at length since it is a repetition of the instructions we have previously covered.

The section following the salutation in CHAPTER 1, for instance, is almost a verbatim transcript of the admonition given in I Timothy. The rather confusingly worded phrase in verse 8, "a lover of hospitality," simply meant that they were to share what they had, and this is one quality which Paul incorporated in himself. Even if in this letter it is an attitude adopted by a writer for the early church, there is one thing true about Paul: he would not brook any argument or interference. His word was law, and he backed it up, consciously or unconsciously, with a defense that most men found difficult to refute at that time: that he was chosen by Jesus and he was speaking the word Jesus had given him. So if you did disagree or if you did have another concept of faith, you were absolutely useless, as far as he was concerned, unless he could convert you to his ideas.

In verse 15 we find a statement which has become proverbial: "Unto the pure all things are pure." It is of course true, and is based on the law "Like attracts like" or, in other words, "what you think upon grows." In Proverbs we are told "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," and Jesus expressed this same truth in innumerable ways.

CHAPTER 2. There is such repetition within this chapter itself and of material previously given that I do not think it requires explanation.

CHAPTER 3. There is an interesting phrase in verse 1 where he

refers to "principalities and powers" as among those things to which they should subject themselves. "Principalities and powers" also relate to esoteric things, and in that sense Paul said in Romans 8:38, "I am persuaded that neither death . . . nor principalities nor powers . . . shall be able to separate us from the love of God." However, he also referred to what we would call the "powers that be" meaning governmental leaders in Romans 13:1-7. It is evident that in the present context he is speaking of it in the exoteric sense, but he could have simply said that they should be good citizens, rather than implying the concept of subjection to outer authority. For as Jesus said, "you cannot serve both God and Mammon" (or man).

In verse 9 and 10 he says, in effect, that it was a waste of time to try to persuade someone if you were unable to do so after a few encounters. Jesus again said it much more clearly and concisely when he said: "cast not your pearls before swine."

PHILEMON

This letter is of major importance for a number of reasons. First of all, this is one of the few letters which is unanimously considered to be Pauline and, since this is so, it is a most important basis for comparison with other questionably authentic epistles. Opinions are divided as to whether it was written from Rome or from Ephesus, but Ephesus is considered to be more likely from certain references in the letter. It is also interesting because, although it is addressed to Philemon, it is as well directed to the entire Colossian center.

This brings up the question of why it was written. You may recall in Paul's letter to Colossians, a man named Onesimus was spoken of as a "faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you." He was a slave who had run away from his owner, supposedly Philemon, and had joined Paul and become a very valuable assistant of whom Paul was deeply fond. Paul evidently felt that Onesimus must return to his owner, as a matter of principle, to be dealt with as he saw fit, but Paul also wanted to bring his own influence to bear upon Philemon, so that Onesimus would receive the proper treatment. And so Paul sent him back with this letter which was to insure his safety and to remind the owner of the principles of the faith. And, as you read this, you are also aware of a very definite purpose underlying

this general intent; that Paul hoped that Philemon would free Onesimus so he could return to Paul.

So this letter has the added importance of not only being the single personal letter we have of his, but one which is expressing a personal request. For this reason alone it would be fascinating, as it would reveal a side of Paul which would not necessarily be evident in his letters of general instruction.

However there is another equally fascinating sidelight in connection with this letter which is brought out in *The Interpreter's Bible*. There is no proof that Onesimus was freed and did return to Paul, but there is an interesting indication that this occurred and with intriguing results. In certain letters written by Ignatius, a head of the church at Antioch in the second century, mention is made of one Onesimus who was the head of the church at Ephesus. Ignatius later writes to Onesimus requesting that a member of his church be allowed to accompany Ignatius on a journey. Not only is the purpose of this letter similar to Paul's purpose here, but there are many phrases which are almost direct quotes from Paul's letter, and the general approach is unmistakably similar. So this would strongly indicate, not only that Ignatius was aware of Paul's letter (that it had become part of the early collection of Pauline material) but that Onesimus, the bishop, and Onesimus, the slave, were one and the same. Ignatius evidently sought to enforce his request by reminding Onesimus of the similarity between his letter and the earlier request made on his behalf.

So, although this letter is extremely brief, and requires little textual discussion, it is one which it would be worthwhile to analyze for your own additional insights into Paul's character. For instance, he does not hesitate to remind Philemon of his obligation to him, nor to state what he considers to be his authority in making the request. He says that if Onesimus had wronged Philemon, Paul would take it to account for, after all, look what Philemon owed Paul. This is a case of "let not thy right hand know what thy left hand doeth." We do not know, apropos of verse 22, whether or not Paul did visit Philemon after this letter was written. If this was written from Rome, however, it was a short time before he was put to death.

HEBREWS — CHAPTERS 1-7

(Part One)

With the Epistle to the Hebrews we come to the end of the Pauline material of the New Testament. As has been the case with so many of the letters, there have been lengthy discussions as to whether or not Paul actually wrote this one. It is generally believed to have been written by an unknown author some time after Paul's death. And, since it is quoted by Clement, the date of its writing is placed around 70-80 A.D. Be that as it may, the tenor of the letters and the ideas given, with a few exceptions, are based on the Pauline-Judaic concepts with which we have become so familiar. Since our main purpose is to distinguish and understand the differences between Paul's teaching and influence and that of Jesus, to simplify matters we will continue to refer directly to Paul as the author of the ideas, if not of the letter itself. Furthermore, there is no necessity by now to go into the various points in detail since we have covered most of his ideas in the other epistles. We will instead discuss the general underlying themes as they arise.

In CHAPTERS 1 and 2 Paul is establishing his belief that Jesus is the unique son of God on the framework of quotations from the Old Testament. For example, in 1:5 he quotes first from Psalm 2:8 and then from II Samuel 7:14. If you look these up I think you will be fascinated to see how they are interpreted to make them conform to prophecies of an only begotten son of God. For instance, he quotes the Psalms, and in Psalm 2 he interprets the references to the anointed of the Lord and to the son as referring to Jesus as the Christ. Yet in Psalm 82:6 it is very clearly stated: "I have said, Ye are gods and *all of you* are children of the Most High." And then, if you will refer to II Samuel you will see that this is Nathan's prophecy concerning David and his kingdom. In chapter 1 he continues by quoting Psalm 45, Isaiah and Genesis for further corroboration, and then in chapter 2 he connects what he has discussed with Psalm 8:4-6 to establish his point.

Now in verse 5 of the first chapter he speaks of the idea of the

Father and Son, a concept which runs through both the Old and New Testaments and which has been interpreted in various ways. One expression of this idea in the New Testament which has caused much confusion is the opening section of the first chapter of the Gospel of John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." That statement has always been interpreted to refer to the person of Jesus. What it actually does mean for all of us is that the Word is incarnate in each human being, and that Word is the Presence of God who lives in each one of us. It is not confined to Jesus. If that were so there would be no sense in our trying to follow Jesus, for you cannot compete with God. We cannot even begin to any degree to emulate that. And yet Jesus himself said: "All of the things I have done ye shall do and even greater."

The Christ is not confined to Jesus. As we have seen, Christ is the Greek word meaning the anointed one and the anointed one is the Presence of God in you and in me: that is the Christ. The Christ, Son of the Divine Mind, or the Father, individualizes Himself in each of us. In the Gospel of John, for instance, Jesus says "whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the son," and, "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." In whose name? The name is the nature of the Presence of God within the individual, the Christ. We ask in the name of the Christ, not Jesus.

There is another general theme which underlies all of Paul's writings that comes up specifically here in 1:3, where he speaks of God (in the form of Jesus) having "purged our sins," and that is his concept of the Law and sin. Since Paul continually bases his arguments on quotations from the Old Testament, let us at this point refer to one of the greatest statements of the Law found there. In Isaiah 45:7 we are told: "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace and create evil: I the Lord (Law) do all these things." If you understand that in the context of God as perfect good, and that God can create nothing but perfect good, then you realize that this is a statement of the Law. The Law is neither good nor evil: we have been given that Law to use, and it will always obey our word—for good or for evil. Paul, as a Hebrew scholar, knew the Law, but how he interpreted it is another story. For the most part when he speaks of the law it is in the sense of the Judaic law, the Torah, rather than in the sense of universal spiritual Law which is meant here.

My great objection to Paul is that he tried to make converts

through fear. Even though he spoke very beautifully of love, he always stressed the necessity of becoming free of sin. To him everybody is a sinner and if we do not free ourselves from this, we are not going to be well received when we die. This is a terrible fear to impose on people. Furthermore, Paul's concept is of a God who is punishing us, who is rewarding us, and if we do not obey—not God, but Paul—we are going to be in great difficulty.

This is not true. If you or I do not use the Law correctly we are going to get into trouble. If we do use it correctly we are going to reap good. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" is another great statement of the Law which was made by Paul himself. But when we see in Galatians that this statement is made after he has given his followers his own personal Torah, lists of things which they should and should not do, and has told them to "crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts," we must wonder how deep his own understanding of the Law could be.

It is certainly true that if you plant a rose seed you are not going to raise a cabbage. On the other hand, the Law is not always as obvious as that in its working. How many times have you seen a person who seems to reap all good; they are successful in their work and make a fortune, and yet they are almost inhuman to their fellowman? Where is the Law? What often happens, unfortunately, is that the Law may bring them back in another life with a total breakdown of health. The Law may put them in a position which they would give anything to get out of and there is not enough money in the world for them to buy their way out. This is where the Law returns the effects of their misuse. As I have said so often, everything that God has created is good, but there is neither good nor evil in the Law. The same Law, the same power, that is used to heal can be used to kill, and we should never forget it.

You know, after reading Paul you are almost left with the feeling of being sorry for God. I mean, my heavens, what He has to put up with in all of us according to Paul's description of our sins. Again, as I have said so often, the only sin we can commit is a very conscious one and, I suspect, from time to time we have all been guilty of it, and this is the sin of spiritual pride. Everything else which is wrong we do as a result of fear or ignorance.

But you might ask yourself a couple of questions. Do you believe that God has been grieved, horrified, dismayed and from time to time so disgusted that He practically wiped out civilizations? Do you believe this? We have certain statements in metaphysics that

we very definitely believe. One of them is "God is perfect good and the author only of perfect good." Do you believe that? Do you believe that God, if He has created perfect good, has created in man a factor which would cause him to sin? He gave us free will, but He did not give us sin. Paul seems very definitely to be under the impression that God has not only done that, but he has decreed who would suffer from it and who would not. This is not true.

God is never affected by anything. The Presence of God in you and in me is never touched by anything negative that happens to us. He is perfectly aware of it, but He will do nothing about it because it has already been done. It is up to us to accept it. The concept that God is purging us of sin, or that the death of Jesus would effect this is erroneous. We do our own purging.

Let us put this into our own terms. When a person first gets into metaphysics it is usually because of a problem which they want to overcome. Aside from this problem there are many things we want to change in our lives, and there are many negative qualities, which we all have to some degree, that we wish to overcome, and we proceed to do so. In the first flush of our enthusiasm we demonstrate and find these things changing. Then suddenly something happens and we seem to be right back from where we started, and our first reaction is "What have I done?" But as we become a little wiser metaphysically, we realize that our own subconscious has caused this situation to test us and to see just how much we consciously believe what we are learning. God never sends us any tests. God never punishes us. We do all of these things to ourselves. We create our own evil, just as we create our own good.

Before we leave this section, I would like to briefly mention Paul's reference to angels in chapter 1. Through his early training he became familiar with the Cabala which teaches that there are seven cosmic rays, and seven angels who rule them, and this may be what he is referring to here. The angels are great discarnate entities who have never incarnated on this earth, and whose work is cosmic.

I think that after reading CHAPTERS 3 and 4 you will be struck by the total dissimilarity, not only of the content, but of the approach between the teaching of Jesus and that of Paul. Granted that this section is theological theorizing with the purpose of erecting a firm foundation for the sonship of Jesus, and that it is directed to the Jews, it nevertheless shows a complete lack of understanding of what Jesus taught. Here we are told that we are to "exhort one another daily . . . lest any of you be hardened through the deceitful-

ness of sin" and further, that we should fear lest we come short of the promise. Jesus said that we should forget whatever has happened in the past: "Go, and sin no more." He said that what you do from this point on is the important thing, and that he had come so that we might have more abundant lives. But Paul says that we should constantly remind ourselves that we are sinners, and our fear of "falling short" should compel us to lead a life of austerity to prove that we believe.

We have discussed this time and again, but the point I am making in this context is that Jesus taught a *new way*. He said, first of all, that each person was responsible for himself, and that the kingdom of God is within you. He said, secondly, "Whenever you pray, enter into your closet and pray to your Father in secret and He shall reward you openly." And he taught that we should go forward, not backward by dwelling on past mistakes or on the past itself. Paul, who had not had the benefit of knowing Jesus, did not accept this, or he did not know this, we do not know which is true. So what he did do, because he was a great scholar and student — certainly one of the great minds of Israel — was to merely take certain parts of the Judaic teaching and convert them into Christian terms, as we see very clearly here. Consciously or unconsciously, he took the concepts of Judaism and transferred them to Christianity.

There is an interesting similarity between him and a man who is familiar to all metaphysicians: Thomas Troward. Thomas Troward did something similar with Hinduism. He was a High Episcopalian judge who was sent to India where he became very interested in Hinduism. He felt that it taught the right path, but that it was not geared for the Western mind, and so he translated it into Western terms which resulted, in his case, in the exceptionally fine books he wrote. But with Paul, Judaism was not greatly altered in the process of transition, and the real teaching of Jesus is not given.

Hebrews, for example, is extremely beautiful in many ways, but Paul's same ideas are brought forth with a few variations, and basically we are again told what we must do in order to repent. You will remember that to repent actually means to lean back, to return to an original concept. And the original concept is that there is but one Presence and one Power: God. But repentance with Paul was narrowed down to the idea that we must undo something we have done, and this is wrong. He feels that we have all committed some sort of error or sin for which we must atone by doing penance and living a very restricted life. Let me again draw your attention to the

fact that atonement, contrary to usage, should mean the act of becoming at one with the Presence of God within you. But Paul does not teach that, he teaches atonement, not at-one-ment. Paul's whole attitude is that we must undo.

It is really quite amazing to see this consistent attitude of his. He did have a certain fellowship with the apostles, after they realized that he was not going to do an about face and return to his attacks on them. He had enough communication with them to learn something of what Jesus taught, but his ego prevented him from paying any attention to what they said. Can you imagine, for instance, how Peter must have felt when he betrayed Jesus out of fear, as he had been told he would? This man who quite literally worshiped Jesus and would have given his life for him said that he did not know him at all in a moment of panic. Can you imagine his remorse? But he also had learned enough from Jesus to know that the only way he could go from that point on was, not backwards by beating his breast, but forward by doing the work. Even Peter, who was not an educated man, never forgot this. Peter was a simple fisherman, but Peter understood. John understood. Even Thomas, who doubted everything, understood. But Paul knew better.

There is another interesting facet to this attitude of looking backwards which we see with Paul, and quite clearly in chapter 3. He does the thing which all of the prophets, major and minor, have always done. Whenever they are exhorting people to return to their original concept of God and the teachings they have been given, they go through a recital from the time of Abraham to their own time of what God has done for them. There is only one figure in the Bible who did not do that, and that was Moses. I suspect, first of all, he was far too brilliant and had too great an understanding to do it. And, secondly, from the human point of view, I am not too sure he had the time to do it.

When you read the books of Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy you do not find this sort of review or historical corroboration. Moses had, as did Paul, a magnificently trained mind, but in addition to that he had a deep religious understanding, and was a master occultist. He is the most marvelous figure in the Old Testament, and he never instructed his people to remember the past. He certainly had terrific problems with these people whom he so often called the "stiff-necked people." But Moses, at the very end of his life, expressed the real concept he had taught them in a very simple statement.

He took a people who were half primitive and instilled them with the concept of one God. And, because they were too spiritually immature to understand a concept of love, he realized that the only way they could be controlled was through fear which would teach them to respect the teaching. So he presented a God of power and wrath, Jahveh, the warrior God who would fight for His people. But at the very end, in view of the Promised Land, he tells them that, after all he has said and taught them, "This day I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore *choose* life, that both thou and thy seed may live: that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days." He is making the individual realize that the choice is his, and is not something which God is going to impose upon them: blessing them for this and cursing them for that.

This is one of the reasons why, contrary to Paul's comparison here, I feel that the greatest figure in the Bible next to Jesus is Moses, because he too knew and understood. Incidentally, a friend of mine who started his life as a Hassidic rabbi, used to say that Moses was the greatest figure in the Bible because no one had done what he had done: "First of all, he got a concept; then he got himself a people and then he got them a country to live in." In one sense this is quite true. But the thing that is fascinating for us in relation to Paul is that although Paul speaks of Moses and quotes him frequently, he understood what he taught as little as he understood what Jesus taught.

And then, in chapter 4, after Paul has clothed the figure of Jesus in the prophecies of Judaism, he portrays him as the son of God who is our high priest, our intermediary with God. According to Paul, Jesus is first of all to cleanse us from our sins, and then effect our salvation with God. Certainly nothing is more simple or more clear than Jesus' teaching in this respect. He told us time and again that there was no power in ritual, and nothing is more direct than the prayer he gave us, nor his direction to "go into your closet in secret" and pray to your father. You do not need churches or temples. You do not need intermediaries between you and your God. Jesus taught an inner cleansing which you effected by your own self-discipline. He said in the Sermon on the Mount that it is not only what you do that is important, but also what you think. We have to re-form our thinking and retrain our minds to overcome the negative qualities we all have. As the book of Proverbs says, 'As a

man thinketh in his heart, so is he," and we know that the heart is the term for the subconscious mind. So it is what you think within yourself, what you actually believe in which effects everything you do. And until you change that, there will not be any significant outer change. If you really study the Sermon on the Mount you will see that the stress is always on the inner attitude: When he says, for instance, that if a man feels lust in his heart he has already committed adultery. These are the means of effecting the choice which Moses expressed, and it is a teaching that has never really been absorbed, not alone by Paul, but by Judaism and Christianity alike.

CHAPTER 5 is a continuation of the priestly theme. Paul seems to feel that the human race is incapable of finding its way to God. He gives the impression that God had no use for humanity unless there was some intermediary who conformed to Paul's ideas of holiness. This was a great misconception. He felt that people had to be taught and that they had to follow *his* ideas, and this has led to innumerable difficulties.

You know, today there is a beginning of a movement in certain branches of orthodox creeds to accept the metaphysical concept. When it will become established or widespread, I do not know, but if they adopt it in their own frame of reference it will be a marvelous thing. If certain people, and this is true even of metaphysicians, find that ritual is helpful in raising their consciousness: if they find it is easier to achieve a deep meditation in that way, there is no reason why they should not use it. I happen to be the type of person to whom church ritual does not appeal. Furthermore, while I think the rituals of the church are very beautiful for the most part, I always have a feeling of sadness because practically no one who attends these services really knows what the ritual symbolizes, and that is a great tragedy.

It is also a great tragedy that people in the various creeds are taught to plead for their needs, or to pray to an intermediary. We are never supposed to plead for anything. We are not supposed to pray to God and say "Please grant me this," This attitude always surprises me because it seems to hope that if God is in a good mood He may feel like granting the prayer. It is tragic when you realize how many prayers are made that are not answered, and you see all the gifts of various forms which are made in order to coax Him to grant the request.

We are not supposed to plead with God. We are His children. We are His children who are His sons in the making. Very few peo-

ple have arrived at the maturity of the soul where they are a son of God, but this does not change the relationship. When you asked your parents for something you needed, you did not get down on your hands and knees and say, "Oh, please grant me this: I will make any sacrifice." You undoubtedly said, "I would like such-and-such, may I have it, please?" And the answer almost always was yes, and you said thank you. You expected that response. And if we expect it from our parents, why do we think we should not expect it from God?

These are things we do not realize. Religion has been wrapped in moth balls, and for some reason or other, people never take the trouble to think about it. They accept it in the same way that some people accept the idea that they must vote for a particular political party because their families always have done so. We do not think about religion. We do not think of it in terms of a personal responsibility, possibly because we often do not want that responsibility. As you know by now, I firmly believe that it is about time we stopped using God as a crutch. God will never do anything for us. He has already given us everything that we could need, and if we do not use it we have no one to blame but ourselves. We are told this in the Old Testament. We are told this in the New Testament. We are told in the first chapter of Genesis that man is made in the image and likeness of God and has been given dominion over the works of His hands. And again in the 8th Psalm: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels . . . thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." Do you believe it? Paul did not. To Paul this could apply only to one man, Jesus.

CHAPTERS 6 and 7. There is little in chapter 6 that we have not discussed before, however we might mention verse 2 briefly. It is ironic because healing, whether by the laying on of hands or not, was certainly one of the main "doctrines" of Jesus, and yet Paul placed no emphasis on it and did not even attempt to heal himself. All of the other disciples were wonderful healers and they taught this to others. Actually, healing was quite prevalent in those days, as we have seen before. Yet the only three instances we find of Paul healing are, in the book of Acts: when he healed the crippled man while Barnabas was with him; the healing of the man who fell from the window (about which there is some doubt); and when he healed the man on the island on which he was shipwrecked. I am not sure in the first instance that he would have done it if he had not been

at sword's point with the other disciples and wanted to show them that he could do this too, with Barnabas as a witness.

There are two other instances of his use of power: in the case of the sorcerer whom he blinded, and the exorcism of the young girl. It is interesting that in the latter case he exorcised her not so much for her own benefit — and not at her own request — as because she was annoying him by the statements she made. Other than that we have no record of other healings nor does he give it as part of his teaching in the epistles. This, too, is one of the reasons why healing died out of the church. If they had followed the teaching of Jesus, healing would have been paramount, but they followed Paul so it was unimportant.

However, as I have mentioned before, it is interesting to see that healing is slowly being reinstated in some churches. The laying on of hands is nevertheless not permitted by law as yet. It is one of the ancient forms of healing which is based on a fairly well known occult principle: the transmission of energy. Since it is the transmission not only of physical energy, but of mental energy, it fell in disrepute because it was believed that this was a form of influencing people.

In 6:20 and 7:1 we are told that Jesus was "made an high priest after the order of Melchisedec." There is nothing known of Melchisedec other than the reference to him in Genesis 14:18 where we are told that he was a king of Salem: a god-king to whom Abraham gave tithes. Paul is comparing him with his conception of Jesus as the son of God and intermediary for man. Now, aside from whatever we know of Jesus and his teaching, on the one point of the Law alone, do you think what he says is possible? Do you really think if God has created the Law that God would ever violate that Law?

In 7:19, for example, Paul says: "For the law made nothing perfect." He is speaking of his own interpretation of the law. Metaphysically, we know that the Law does not make anything perfect or imperfect. The Law is always at work fulfilling whatever we have decreed. It is impossible to violate the Law. But, according to Paul, the Law was changed for Melchisedec and for Jesus. This would be as impossible as if, at this moment, Divine Mind decided It was tired of the law of gravity, and It was going to act without it in a particular instance. First of all, it is impossible to even conceive of this happening in terms of the law of a plane being, or universal Law. And, secondly, if it should happen in a particular instance it would mean it could happen in all instances, and the order which is governed by that Law would be reduced to chaos.

It is fascinating to watch this man's mind at work, and to speculate on the reasons for the direction he takes. Paul was certainly a great student of the Bible and must have understood the quotations he has used in their original context, but he uses them here to prove, to impress his followers with his belief, one about which he himself constantly vacillated, that Jesus was God. And now he brings in the Law and uses it in the same manner. It is true that the Law "made nothing perfect" but that Law is perfect. In the 19th Psalm we are told: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." I only wish that each and every one of us could use it perfectly. There is nothing wrong with the Law, nor does it fall short of perfection in any way. The trouble lies not in the Law, but in our use of it.

Paul's concept that the Law was changed to create a divine intermediary in the form of a man for man is the concept propagated by the church, which is behind all the ministers and countless saints to intercede for us. The basic reason behind it is that they believe that man is not pure enough to approach God. And Paul uses every conceivable means to build and uphold this theological edifice.

From what we know of Paul, there are many reasons why he might do this. In the first place, there was his emotional need to explain his own experience in terms of divine action: that Jesus was God. Then, with his academically trained mind, there was the necessity of logically relating this belief to the concepts he had already accepted from Judaism. Then there was his tremendous desire to convert large groups of people. He was going to impress them with his belief, no matter what. And sometimes he really lost control of the situation and went a bit far afield, to put it mildly. We should never forget that we are dealing with one of the most brilliant minds of the Bible and, as we have seen, in his travels he would "tailor" his ideas to fit the need of the particular situation or environment. And, of course, the point which is consistent throughout is that Paul felt that you could earn salvation only by following what he taught — and that was not what Jesus taught, even though he may have thought it was. There, and other reasons, are all part of a man who was a fascinating complexity of good and bad, greatness and unbelievable pettiness, impelled by a highly traumatic experience which he was never really able to digest.

He was what we would call a neurotic. And the question is — which will always remain a question — did he alter the teaching and his own ideas consciously, deliberately, or did he do it in his enthusiasm and need to convert? This question brings to mind a very

amusing story that Emmet Fox used to tell. Certainly Dr. Fox was a truth teacher, and certainly he did not lie. On a trip to the west, he visited the Grand Canyon and was standing on one of the observation points. He was not too fond of heights, and looking down into the Canyon, he instinctively stepped back. A woman next to him clutched his arm and said, "I get so dizzy looking down, don't you?" And he said, "Never." Then he asked himself, "Why did I lie?" — for he had. He realized that he had felt her distress, and it had just come out in that way from an almost automatic desire to be of help, and I am perfectly sure this was the case. In a larger frame of reference, Paul might have been doing the same thing. We do not know, and it can only be a matter of conjecture.

I do not think that Paul deliberately wished to distort the teaching. There is, however, one aspect of his personality which we mentioned before that might account for part of it. He was an intellectual snob. This, plus his own sense of rivalry, and the realization that the disciples did not particularly care for him, may have greatly influenced and affected him. Luke, as the only other educated man, was the only person Paul wished to speak to and Luke had learned everything through hearsay. Paul did have conversations with the disciples, but his opinion of them was not very high. He might well have thought that they had not really understood what had happened or what they had been taught, or he might have felt that they were adding things in their imaginations. Whatever, the reasons, we do know that *Paul's teaching and approach is completely contrary to that given by Jesus.*

In this chapter, for example, Paul is consciously or unconsciously building a framework for the organized church and its priesthood. Certainly Paul was authoritarian himself and he was a great organizer, but Jesus said that you need nothing and no one other than your own desire to contact your God. Jesus told the disciples to go out and teach. Paul not only went out and taught but he left small, well-organized, and explicitly instructed groups wherever he went.

In this chapter Paul touches on the subject of tithing in a very off-hand way. And we know that, while Jesus taught the disciples that "the servant is worthy of his hire," Paul would never take any money for his support. Here again Paul speaks of us as sinners — separated from holiness — as he does in practically every chapter we have of his. On this subject he is obsessively repetitious. There is a very amusing story about the "silent" Calvin Coolidge which shows the antithesis of Paul's approach. Mr. Coolidge returned from

church one Sunday, and his wife asked him how the sermon was. He said, "Good." She asked, "What did the minister talk about?" He said, "Sin." "What did he say about it?" "Agin' it."

As an authoritarian organizer, Paul may have realized that fear was a powerful agent by which one could control people. He may well have stressed the idea of sin to hold his followers in line in the way that the concept of a God of wrath was used to hold the early Israelites in line. However, people had evolved somewhat by his time, and Jesus certainly felt that they were ready to understand that love was the important motive power in all life. There is no mention of sin in the Beatitudes. And what mention is made of it in the Sermon on the Mount is not in the form of sin as Paul conceives it, but in the form of the things that we do to ourselves. It is practically a mental ritual for keeping yourself in a healthy mental, emotional, physical and spiritual condition.

What is a sacrifice? Paul refers quite frequently to the difficulties involved in living his life purely for the benefit of others, and the sacrifice demanded of him.

However, this was not true. Paul did exactly what he wanted to do and did it exactly in the way he wanted to do it. His work was his love and life, and without it, he would have been completely lost.

I do believe there were times when he momentarily felt he was not sufficiently appreciated (as all teachers do at times!) but this was a very good way to let his followers know what he was doing for them - in case they should forget.

A sacrifice is giving up something you love for something you feel duty-bound to do, and usually do not want to do. But this was not true of Paul. He loved what he did, which is why he was successful. And when you and I do the thing we love, we are successful, too.

M. M.

Thank you, and God bless
you.

Mildred Haun

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