This is not an unattainable ideal. If we ask it honestly in the name of Christ, we may have the same Holy Spirit who filled him, and our faith, like his, may be made strong and brave.

What are our lives worth, in their poverty and selfishness, that we will not surrender them, to be remodelled after this noble type, divinely possible to us all?

What is Christianity?

By the Rev. BARTON R. V. MILLS, M.A.

III. The Christianity of St. Paul and his Colleagues.

THE second period of the Apostolic age begins with the commencement of St. Paul's public ministry, about A.D. 46, and ends with his death, which probably occurred in A.D. 67. It thus covers a space of some twenty-one years—rather longer than that of the Pentecostal period. The dominant influence during this time was that of the Apostle himself. It is quite untrue to call him, as he has sometimes been called, the real founder of the Christian Church, or to look on him as replacing the Pentecostal Gospel by a new one of his own. It is true that his conversion—which took place several years before the beginning of his public ministry—was a definite breach with the past. Christianity was not to him, as it was to St. Peter, St. James, and St. John, the product of Judaism, but its opposite. To his mind the Law and the Gospel were antagonistic. But it is no less true that his whole training and thought were Jewish. He was a Grecian, not a Palestinian Jew, and this, no doubt, gave him, as did his Roman citizenship, an advantage in dealing with Gentiles. But he thoroughly understood the Jewish mind, and accepted current Hebrew ideas. His object, therefore, was not to obliterate, but to fill in the outline which his predecessors of the Pentecostal Church had drawn. Dr. Knowling has lately shown, in a most

interesting book,[1] that St. Paul knew the facts of Gospel history, as they are recorded by the Evangelists, and that the doctrines he propounded were quite in accordance with their teaching. But though he was neither the author of the Christian faith nor the founder of the Christian religion, St. Paul may fairly be called the first of scientific theologians. His powerful mind first grasped the results to which the simpler teaching of his predecessors must lead, and he therefore gave to the Christian faith the clearness and precision of statement which it has ever since possessed.

In my last paper I called attention to the essential distinction between definition of doctrine and statement of fact, and tried to show that the former admits of restatement in a way in which the latter does not. If this is correct, it follows that doctrine may be progressive, not only in succeeding generations, but in individual minds. A man cannot alter his attitude to a statement of fact without admitting himself to have been in error, and such an admission is hardly consistent with inspiration; but a man may alter his view of doctrine without contradicting himself or lessening the value of his opinion. So it need not surprise us to find that St. Paul only reached his final doctrinal position by a process of intellectual development. To trace the course of this development is one of the most interesting studies in the history of human thought. It can only be done by carefully reading St. Paul's writings in their chronological order. In this task the present writer has derived much assistance from Auguste Sabatier's extremely interesting book, "L'Apôtre S. Paul: Esquisse de sa Pensée," which, though published many years ago, is less often referred to than it deserves to be.

St. Paul's teaching divides itself into three stages, each with its own well-marked characteristics, which are largely due to the influences to which he was subjected in the course of his work. The first of these stages is the purely missionary period, including the Apostle's early preaching before the commence-

[1] "The Testimony of St. Paul to Christ." Boyle Lectures for 1903, 1904, and 1905.

ment of his regular ministry, and extending to the close of the second missionary journey. Records of this have come down to us in Acts xiii. to xviii., and in the two Epistles to the Thessalonians. These documents show that St. Paul's thought was still almost entirely Jewish, and much more concerned with practice than with doctrine. He presents Christ as the Messiah, and exhorts his hearers to expect His early return as their Judge.

The next stage is that in which Christian universalism has taken possession of the Apostle's mind, forced on him by the conflict between Jews and Gentiles and the necessity for finding some good reason for extending the Gospel message to the latter. This leads St. Paul to preach *Christ crucified*, as the *Redeemer of mankind*, and to call on all men to appropriate this redemption by the exercise of faith. The salvation thus offered is universal, but it comes to men as individuals rather than as members of a body. This is the keynote of the third missionary journey, and of the four great Epistles which it produced.

The third stage in St. Paul's doctrinal development is reached when his missionary work is nearly over and he is a prisoner. Christians from the scenes of his former activity turn to him for advice. Error has arisen, and has to be met by a clearer statement of the truth. This naturally leads St. Paul's thoughts on to more definite and dogmatic lines. He presents *Christ incarnate* as the *Head of the Church*, of whose Body all Christians are members, and in whom they have salvation. This is the dominant note of the Epistles of the captivity, and of the pastoral Epistles written after the Apostle's release from his first imprisonment. As in the second stage of his teaching he states the doctrine of the Atonement, in this latest one he is mainly concerned with that of the Incarnation.

So it is to the writings and recorded speeches of St. Paul that we must mainly look for evidence as to what the Apostles at the time of their greatest activity regarded as the essentials of Christianity. Though the remains of the teaching of the other

Apostles are scanty, they are enough to show that there was no contradiction between their illustrious colleague and themselves. On this point St. Peter's first Epistle is particularly instructive, and we shall more than once have occasion to refer to it in the course of our present inquiry. It will be convenient to conduct that inquiry on the same lines as were followed in the last article, and to consider what St. Paul and his colleagues held to be essential as to *facts*, *doctrine*, *worship*, and *discipline*.

I.

St. Paul's testimony to the fundamental facts is as clear and uncompromising as that of the Pentecostal Church. With him, as with it, the historic Resurrection of Christ is *the* fact which surpasses all others in importance. It occupies a prominent place in his teaching in all its stages, from his early speech at Antioch in Pisidia (Acts xiii. 30) to his last letter, shortly before his death (2 Tim. ii. 8). It is especially conspicuous in that great group of Epistles whose genuineness the most daring critics have never ventured to question. The most remarkable of these passages is 1 Cor. xv. 1-11, where St. Paul refers to the Resurrection as a well-known event which has occurred within living memory, and on which he bases a highly contentious argument. Attempts have lately been made to suggest that the appearances mentioned by St. Paul were merely visions, and do not involve the acceptance by the Apostle of the truth of the Easter "message"; so it is satisfactory to find that Sabatier, who is certainly as "liberal" a writer as one could wish to meet, is decided in his opinion that these appearances were understood by the Apostle as objective and real. The only difference between St. Paul's testimony to the Resurrection and that of the Pentecostal Church is that he began at an early stage in his preaching to lay greater stress on its doctrinal import than his predecessors had done.

St. Paul is no less definite in his testimony to the gift of the Holy Ghost, the other great fact on which the Pentecostal Church had so strongly insisted. It is mentioned in every group

of his Epistles, but, like the Resurrection, is most prominent in those of the third missionary journey. The constant reference to the Holy Spirit in these is very noticeable, especially in the Epistle to the Romans, as is the testimony of the later Epistles to the gift of the Holy Ghost to Christians through sacramental ordinances.[1]

Two other fundamental facts to which St. Paul bears witness are the Death and Ascension of Christ. But these are not with him, as they were with the Pentecostal Church, simply the guarantee or the result of the Resurrection. They are parts of the work of Christ, each of which has its place in the plan of salvation, and becomes the basis of a doctrine of the greatest importance—in one case of that of the Atonement, in the other of that of the abiding Priesthood of Christ. In this, as in other cases, St. Paul endorses the testimony of the Pentecostal Church, but gives to the facts a wider interpretation.

II.

It is in the definition of doctrine that St. Paul really takes a new line. He testifies to the same fundamental facts as did his predecessors, but he sees more clearly than they saw the doctrines which those facts involve. He therefore insists on the doctrines as strongly as on the facts themselves. So it is of the greatest importance that we should arrive at a clear understanding as to the doctrines which he regards as binding on members of the Christian Church.

1. First among these comes the doctrine of the Atonement —*i.e.*, of the reconciliation of man to God through the mediation of Jesus Christ. This appears as early as in the speech at Antioch in Pisidia (Acts xiii. 38, 39), where there is a distinct foreshadowing of the doctrine of justification by faith, though with no direct reference to Christ's death. The earliest allusion to that great event as the means of our redemption is in 1 Thes. v. 10, where, however, the preposition used is ὑπέρ, "in our behalf," not ἀντί, "in our stead." The same doctrine is

[1] See especially 1 Cor. xii. 13; Eph. i. 13; Titus iii. 5; 2 Tim. i. 14.

constantly asserted in the Epistles of the third missionary journey, where the atoning character of Christ's death acquires increasing prominence. The frequency of reference to the crucifixion in this group of Epistles is remarkable, and suggests that that fact was the one to which St. Paul most desired to call the attention of his readers. In the later Epistles the doctrine of propitiation is equally prominent, but in these it is often connected with a statement of our Lord's Divinity as well as with His death.[1] The same doctrine is emphatically laid down by St. Peter in his first Epistle (i. 18, ii. 24, iii. 18), so we may safely say that it is one which the Apostles in the period now under review regarded as an essential article of the faith.

2. The other great doctrine on which St. Paul insists is that of the Incarnation and Divinity of Christ. It is suggested in his earliest preaching, immediately after his conversion, when he proclaimed that "Christ is the Son of God" (Acts ix. 20). It appears in the Epistles to the Thessalonians, where the thought is of Christ's Divine rather than of His human nature (1 Thess. i. 10, 2 Thess. ii. 16). In the Epistles of the third missionary journey both sides of this great truth are plainly asserted, often in connexion with our Lord's redemptive work.[2] But it is in the later Epistles that the doctrine of the Incarnation is formulated with something like the precision of the Nicene Creed. In them we have a definite statement of the pre-existence of Christ, of His eternal Godhead, and His true humanity. The three great passages which will at once occur to everyone are Phil. ii. 6-8; Col. ii. 9; and 1 Tim. iii. 16. There is a striking anticipation of the first of these in 2 Cor. viii. 9, and the doctrinal force of the third is not really lessened if we read, as we almost certainly ought to do, ὅς, "He who," for Θεός, "God"; for, as Dr. Vaughan pointed out, the gender of the pronoun shows that the "mystery" must be a Person. No one can read these passages—to which many

[1] See especially Eph. i. 7; Phil ii. 8; 1 Tim. ii. 6; and *cf.* Acts xx. 28.

[2] *Cf.*, *e.g.*, Rom. viii. 30, and ix. 5; 1 Cor. viii. 6, and 2 Cor. viii. 9; Gal. i. 16 and ii. 20; Acts xx. 28.

others might be added—and doubt that St. Paul held the doctrine of the Incarnation to be no less essential to Christianity than that of the Atonement.

III.

The next point that calls for our attention is the opinion of St. Paul and his colleagues as to the essentials of Christian worship. Here, again, we find the same agreement with the Pentecostal Church as we have found in matters of belief. St. Paul, like his predecessors, continued to observe the Mosaic Law to the end of his life, though he vehemently denied its obligation on Gentiles. But he adopted the same ordinances that they used, while he extended and deepened their meaning.

1. Thus we find him, at all stages of his ministry, insisting on Baptism as a condition of admission to the Christian Church, and assuming that Christians had, as a matter of course, been baptized.[1] But he soon treats it as more than this—as a distinct means of grace and of cleansing from sin. This view seems to grow on him, as it is seen most clearly in his later Epistles. At first the idea of union with Christ predominates—that of a new federal relation rather than of a new nature;[2] later the thought of a change of heart in the person thus united to Christ becomes prominent;[3] and still later Baptism is referred to as the means of new birth.[4] And St. Peter endorses the opinion of his brother Apostle by the use of language quite as strong as to the spiritual efficacy of Baptism (1 Pet. iii. 21).

2. Another ordinance of the Pentecostal Church—the laying on of hands—is insisted on by St. Paul. He uses it as a means of conveying the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts xix. 6). And in his latest Epistles it assumes a position of great prominence. St. Paul reminds Timothy of the gift he had received in this way (1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6), and tells him to be careful in

[1] Acts xvi. 33, xix. 4; 1 Cor. vi. 11, etc.
[2] Gal. iii. 27; 1 Cor. vi. 11; Rom. vi. 3. [3] Eph. v. 26; Col. ii. 12.
[4] Titus iii. 6 (note use of λουτρόν here and in Ephesians *loc. cit.*

the transmission of it to others (1 Tim. v. 22). This last reference shows that it was not a personal privilege of the Apostles, but was intended to be a permanent ordinance in the Church.

3. St. Paul's testimony to the other great Christian rite is still more remarkable. We saw in our review of the Pentecostal Church that the "breaking of bread" can only mean the Holy Communion. So when we find St. Paul celebrating this rite at Troas on "the first day of the week" (Acts xx. 7), we must give it the same interpretation, and conclude that Sunday Communion had already become an established practice. And it is clear that at an even earlier date the Apostle regarded the Holy Communion as the chief act of Christian worship. For he gives a detailed account of its institution and instructions for its reverent celebration in the first Epistle to the Corinthians. From this we see that he looks upon it as a means of union with Christ (1 Cor. x. 16), and as a commemoration of His Death (xi. 26). Its sacramental character is thus recognised, and the mysterious words used by our Lord at the institution are repeated without any attempt at their explanation. The evidence warrants us in saying that St. Paul regards the Holy Communion as essential to Christianity, but of the doctrine of the Eucharist as it was formulated later and generally received in the Church there is hardly a trace in his writings. This is more significant, owing to the contrast which it presents to his full exposition of the doctrine of Baptism.

IV.

In our last article we saw how the early Apostles insisted on membership of the visible Church as essential to Christianity. This is even more strongly pressed by St. Paul. It comes out clearly in all the four Epistles of the third missionary journey. In writing to the Galatians he classes "divisions" and "heresies" with the most deadly sins (Gal. v. 20, R.V.). To the Corinthians and Romans he sternly forbids the formation of denominations

or separation from the Church.[1] And in the latest of these great Epistles (Rom. xii. 5) he declares the unity of the Body of Christ in language that anticipates the teaching of his later years. In the next group of Epistles this doctrine is more fully developed (Eph. v. 23, 29; Col. i. 18, 24), and the existence of an organized *ecclesia* is assumed throughout the Epistle to the Ephesians. There is also distinct evidence of the existence of a regular ministry, such as we failed to find in the Pentecostal Church.[2] And the Church is regarded as a society with authority equal to that of the State, and charged to administer discipline over its own members (1 Cor. v. 13, etc.), and, what is more remarkable, to avoid friendliness with outsiders (2 Cor. vi. 14). In the Pastoral Epistles Church order is even more strongly asserted, and the Christian ministry is treated as an established institution. Evidence of its existence is also found in the Epistles of St. Peter and St. James.[3] From these passages it is clear that neither St. Paul nor his colleagues knew anything of that figment so dear to modern minds—a non-ecclesiastical Christianity. To them Christ was the Head of the Church, and Christians were members of His Body. Thus we see how the wise master-builder gave its constitution to the Church, which is still the most influential institution in the world, and formulated these imperishable doctrines which are enshrined in the Christian Creeds.

[1] 1 Cor. i. 10, and xi. 18, 19; Rom. xv. 17.
[2] Eph. iv. 11; Phil. i. 1; Acts xx. 8.
[3] 1 Pet. ii. 5; Jas v. 14.