

And I for one will not deny that I have done them. I will not deny that I have sinned exceedingly and come short. But I will add, 'I understand that there is no law against me; I understand that He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to His cross.' And I know that the Judge on that great day will find that there is no condemnation to me who am in Christ Jesus, because there is no longer any law to condemn me.

So to every one of you there remains a choice of two clear courses. Either you may abide by the law, or you may take your place by Jesus Christ. For the law is there still. Jesus came not to destroy it. It is God's law, and it is binding as ever it was on the creatures of God. So you may appear before the Judge on that great day, having your boast in the law if you will. You do not mean to deny that you have transgressed a little and come short; but then there are circumstances, and, after all, when you look around you,

you are able to say sincerely, 'God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are.' You do not wish that another—that any other—should suffer for your sins. You will endure the penalty of your own sins yourself. You will stand by the law.

But your position, which seems so reasonable, is surely most unsafe. Of the two pleas, 'Guilty or not guilty?' you plead the second. Yet you admit some slight shortcomings, and even some comparatively trifling transgressions. The admission is fatal. Your sentence is read already. For it is written, 'Cursed is every one which continueth not in *all* things that are written in the book of the law to do them.'

Will you not take your place in Christ, then? It is true you throw yourself then absolutely on the mercy of the Judge. You plead guilty without reserve. But there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made you free from the law of sin and death.

Recent Foreign Theology.

The New Testament Formula 'In Christ Jesus.'¹

WE do not generally think of St. Paul as representing the mystical side of Christian teaching. Our thoughts turn rather to St. John on this subject—perhaps rightly. Yet true Christian mysticism has a large place in St. Paul's writings, only it is overshadowed by other doctrines, which have bulked largely in Christian thought. Justification and redemption in all their bearings are linked inseparably with the name of Paul, while union and fellowship with God through Christ suggest at once the name of John. Yet Paul, no less than John, is a Christian mystic. This side of his teaching is focused in his favourite formula, 'In Christ Jesus,' which has been made the subject of careful investigation by a German author in the scholarly treatise named below.

First, as to statistics, the phrase is found 24

¹ *Die N. T. Formel 'In Christo Jesu.'* Von Lic. Theol. G. Adolf Deissmann. Marburg, 1892.

times in St. John's writings; 8 times in Acts and 1 Pet.; not at all in the Synoptic Gospels, or in Jas., 2 Pet., Jude, Heb.; 164 times in different forms ('in Christ Jesus' 48 times, 'in Christ' 34, 'in Jesus' once, 'in the Lord' 50, 'in Him (Christ)' 18, 'in Whom (Christ)' 11, 'in Him that strengtheneth' once, 'in the Beloved' once) in St. Paul. It begins with the earliest Epistles (1 and 2 Thess.), in proportion occurs oftenest in the Prison Epistles, and is found in 1 and 2 Tim. of the Pastorals. The only one of Paul's Epistles from which it is absent is Titus.

The peculiarity of the phrase is the use of *ἐν* (in) with the singular dative of a person. The use with the plural both of persons and things is, of course, common (= among); so with the singular of things. But here persons are said repeatedly and emphatically to be in a person. The phrase, if not exclusively peculiar to, is intensely characteristic of, Paul. What does he mean by it?

In an elaborate examination, first of profane Greek authors, then of Greek authors writing under Semitic (Hebrew) influence, Deissmann shows that the apostle has no precedent among them for

the phrase. The prevalent use of the preposition in both classes of writers is with the plural. And where it is used with the singular, the meaning is such as throws no light on the Pauline phrase. Generally speaking, the meaning is 'forensic' = *in my judgment*, or 'psychological' of mental faculties or ethical qualities conceived as residing in the subject. In the LXX, indeed, the phrase is more common, but here it is a mechanical, unidiomatic reproduction of the corresponding Hebrew preposition. The majority of cases in which *ἐν* occurs with the singular of a person are cases of pronouns.

The singularity of the phrase is emphasized by the apostle's careful use of prepositions throughout his writings: Gal. i. 1, 'from' and 'through'; 1 Cor. iv. 15, 'in' and 'through'; viii. 6, 'from,' 'for,' and 'through'; xii. 8 f., 'through' and 'according to'; Rom. i. 17, 'from' and 'for,' etc. This is enough to show that prepositions are not used at random, as has been implied by some expositors. The latter course was taken even by the Greek expositors of the Ancient Church, to whom the apostle's language had as strange a sound as it has to us (p. 73). They almost always replace it by *διὰ* or *παρά* or *κατά*, a fact which proves two things—(1) that the phrase was not according to Greek usage, and (2) that even these Early Greek expositors had lost touch with Paul's line of thought. These early writers have had imitators in modern rationalists.

The following may serve as examples of the use:—1 Thess. ii. 14, 'the churches of God in Christ Jesus'; iii. 8, 'if ye stand fast in the Lord'; iv. 1, 'we exhort you in the Lord Jesus'; Gal. iii. 28, 'ye all are one in Christ Jesus'; 1 Cor. iii. 1, 'as unto babes in Christ'; iv. 15, 'in Christ Jesus I begat you'; iv. 17, 'my ways which be in Christ'; ix. 1, 'are not ye my work in the Lord?'; xv. 58, 'your labour is not vain in the Lord'; xvi. 19, 'salute you much in the Lord'; Rom. viii. 1, 'to them that are in Christ Jesus'; xvi. 3-22, 'my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus,' etc. Our author notes, moreover, that Christ never uses the phrase to describe His people's relation to Himself, and, further, that Paul's 'acknowledged Epistles never represent any event lying before the resurrection of Christ as having taken place in Christ.'

Later writers, following in the steps of the earlier ones, have got rid of the phrase as mere circumlocution. John Piscator in the 17th century

paraphrased it by 'on account of,' 'with,' 'through,' 'from.' Expositors and lexicographers of the present century have rendered it by 'in the Christian religion,' 'in the Lord's cause,' 'in Christ's camp,' 'in Christ's state,' 'in the Lord's family.' Luther's literal rendering is characterised as a 'barbarous translation.' On the other hand, all the best exegetes of more recent days, in obedience to the laws of sound philology, as well as of honest exposition, adhere to the literal interpretation. According to them, the formula is 'a solemn phrase for the relation of the Christian to the Saviour; Christians are in Christ, who is viewed as their life-element, their life-sphere.'

Who is the Christ here meant? Not the 'historical' Christ, who, as Deissmann holds (p. 80), is a non-biblical, indeed quite-modern, conception, as much as any doctrine of Nicene or mediæval theology, but the exalted, glorified Christ, the 'pneumatic' Christ. The exalted Christ was as real a being to Paul and the early Christians as the 'historical' Christ of the Gospels. Paul had seen the former (1 Cor. ix. 1, xv. 8); not the latter, as far as we know.

This interpretation is confirmed, and light thrown on its meaning, by two other phrases of Paul: (1) 'In the Spirit.' 'In Christ' and 'in the Spirit' are used as parallels. 'Faith in the Spirit,' 'faith in Christ Jesus,' 1 Cor. xii. 9, Gal. iii. 26; 'righteousness,' 2 Cor. v. 21, Rom. xiv. 17; 'justified,' Gal. ii. 17, 1 Cor. vi. 11, etc. Whether the Spirit is conceived personally, we need not here inquire. Also, Christ is spoken of as Spirit, 2 Cor. iii. 17; 1 Cor. xv. 45, vi. 17 (Deissmann, p. 84). As believers are said to be in the Spirit and the Spirit in them, so they are said to be in Christ and Christ in them. The two modes of existence are parallel. (2) 'In Him we live and move and have our being,' Acts xvii. 28; also, 1 Thess. ii. 2; Rom. ii. 17, v. 11; Col. iii. 3; Eph. iii. 9. Here the parallel is complete; men are in God a spiritual personality, and believers are in Christ. 'To me it seems most natural that the being in God is to be regarded as spatial in a quite proper sense, although not dependent on the means by which the usual relations of space are known.'

'Christ is the element, within which the Christian lives and all expressions of the peculiarly Christian life are seen. The formula is the technical term for the Pauline central thought of fellowship with Christ.' Hence to reproduce it by the paraphrase,

'in fellowship with Christ,' is, as to substance, unobjectionable, but may easily lead to a misunderstanding of the apostle's peculiar, concrete mode of expression, and is therefore best avoided. Merely to express the thought 'in fellowship with Christ,' another preposition (like *μετά* in the Synoptics) would have been enough.

The truth is, that in this remarkable phrase we have a striking instance of a new idea demanding and giving birth to a new name. Other Christian terms were old enough in themselves, but they soon received new meanings. So here. So far from the phrase being an isolated phenomenon in Paul's writings, it is bound up with the thought of the union or solidarity of the race, and especially of believers, with Christ. He is the Head, the Church is the body, Eph. i. 23. We all died in His death, 2 Cor. v. 14. We are buried, rise again, are glorified with Him, Rom. vi. 4 f., viii. 17; Col. iii. 1.

Paul has also the complementary thought of Christ being in the believer, although it is less prominent, Col. i. 27, cf. John xv. 5.

On one important point the present writer differs from the writer of the treatise. The latter regards St. Paul as the author of the phrase in question. He speaks of him indeed as its framer, fashioner (*Bildner*); but he plainly means author, as he instances the use in St. John's writings as 'the plainest and most pregnant effect of the Pauline formula' (p. 130). The order is surely the reverse. It is true St. John's writings are later than St. Paul's. But the body of the Lord's teaching must have been current in the apostolic circle and the Christian community. The classical passage on the subject is the simile of the Vine and the Branches, John xv. 2-7, which, in our belief, is the source of the whole doctrine. On the face of the matter, Paul's elaborate treatment has the look of a development from a similar statement, such as is found in John's Gospels and Epistles. Our author speaks of St. John as 'completing and enriching' Paul's teaching. To our view this is inverting the natural and true order. Still less should we say with the author: 'That John in his Gospel puts into Christ's lips what Paul affirms of Christ, is of no material importance.' By the same rule John iii. 6 would be a development of Paul's doctrine of the flesh and spirit in Rom. viii. For the rest, we are rightly reminded that where Paul speaks of *being* in Christ, our Lord in John

speaks of *abiding* in Him—a distinction worth pondering.

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Bruston on 'Christ's Descent to Hell.'¹

THE solid and satisfactory results reached by Professor Bruston in such works as his *Études sur Daniel et l'Apocalypse* lead one to turn with eager expectation to this supplementary tractate. The question it discusses is one of the most highly controversial and ill-understood in the whole realm of theology. It is inevitable that many of our author's conclusions should provoke warm dissent—possibly no reader will agree with him in every detail; but we are certain that no one will fail to learn much from a discussion where the material is so clearly and skilfully arranged, and in which moral earnestness is as conspicuous as erudition. If any one, in view of the conclusions of Professor Bruston, which we are going to state, should imagine that there is nothing in his book but what has long been familiar to them, this would be a serious mistake, for the methods and the exegesis by which these results are reached have a freshness and a brilliancy all their own.

It may be well to remind our readers that Bruston contends strenuously that the eschatological teaching of our Lord and His apostles differed materially not only from the chiliasm of Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, and other writers of the second century, but also from the doctrine of the ancient Church, which was taken over with some modifications by the Protestant Churches. The resurrection of the flesh or the body at the end of the world, the last judgment at the same moment, the visible bodily coming of Jesus to execute these functions,—all these he regards as Judaistic notions, which had no basis in the teaching of Jesus or His apostles. Early in the second century they found their way into the Christian Church by a natural reaction against Doketism and Gnosticism. They were combated with a certain measure of success by the Alexandrians of the third century,—Clement, Origen, and

¹ *La Descente du Christ aux Enfers, d'après les Apôtres et d'après l'Église.* Par C. Bruston, Doyen de la Faculté de Théologie de Montauban. Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1877. Pp. 46.