

The Enigma of St Paul

Henry Chadwick

D.D. F.B.A.

*Regius Professor of Divinity
in the University of Oxford*

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It is never easy to comprehend the mind of any figure of past history, belonging to a society with assumptions very different from our own. But in some surprising way it seems even more difficult to do this when that figure is a man who, long dead though he is, retains a living power to move us; when he is a man whose problems are at least in part our problems; and whose problems are ours in no small degree because of the way in which he wrote about them. That is to say that whether we like it or not and whether we know it or not, he is part of our very selves. Our minds and consciences are different from what they would have been had he never lived.

I suppose that the apostle Paul has always been something of a problem. During his own lifetime, as his surviving correspondence shows, he provoked passionate hostility from some, enthusiastic devotion from others. There seem also to have been those whose regard for him may be defined as that respect which falls short of affection. We hear of some Christians of the second century who were glad to acknowledge the magnitude of his heroic achievements as a missionary, but could not suppress misgivings about some of his ideas and about the more vehement sentiments occasionally expressed in his letters. Passages in Galatians and in 2 Timothy especially distressed them. More extreme critics of the apostle passed into a more fundamental opposition and regarded him as the archdeceiver and corrupter of the original gospel who had

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offered deplorable cover for antinomianism and moral anarchy. On the opposite wing there were ecstatic admirers of Paul, so fervent in their admiration that they even suggested the identification of the apostle with the Comforter promised by the Lord in St John's Gospel, as the one who would lead the Church into the comprehension of truths too profound for simple Galilean fishermen bound by their Jewish tradition and upbringing. They added that the reason the Lord had been unable to grant the sons of Zebedee thrones on his right and left in his kingdom was that one place was reserved for Paul.

When the Church of the third and fourth centuries looked back on the beginnings of the Christian movement and wondered how so great a flood could have come from such small beginnings, they were well aware of the immense debt that they owed to the energy and power of this extraordinary man—even if they were not always certain that they understood

him, and even if, at times, individual theologians wished that the apostle had sometimes expressed himself with more caution and finesse. The interpretation of Paul's letters became a highly controversial issue during the second century as their authority gradually came to be recognized, principally (but not exclusively) because of the gnostic crisis. The gnostics claimed to find in Paul much support for their determinism, for their pessimistic dualism, and for their world-rejecting version of the doctrine of redemption. Paul, together with Plato, enjoyed vast authority for them. Orthodox interpreters inevitably wished that the apostle had composed his letters more slowly and carefully. Origen, for example, in a fragment of his commentaries lately discovered on papyrus, remarks that many heterodox doctrines have originated from incomprehension of Paul's text; for the apostle being, as he himself said, 'rude in speech', failed to exercise proper caution in expressing himself.

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We are reminded of the warning and regretful words in 2 Peter iii. 16 that in Paul's letters there are 'certain things hard to be understood which the unlearned and unstable wrest to their destruction'.

At the end of the third century we find an interesting comment on Paul's style and method from a rather eccentric writer named Methodius, bishop of a see somewhere in Lycia, perhaps at Olympus: 'You should not be upset by the sudden shifts in Paul's arguments, which give the impression that he is confusing the issue or dragging in irrelevant material or merely wool-gathering.... In all his transitions he never introduces anything that would be irrelevant to his teaching; but gathering up all his ideas into a wonderfully harmonious pattern, he makes all bear on the single point which he has in view.' (*Symposium III*, 3.)

Methodius is the first person to comment on a phenomenon that has puzzled many readers especially of 2 Corinthians and Philippians. In these two letters the apparent lack of connexion lays the reader under such strain that, since the eighteenth century, there have been critics who with differing degrees of confidence have proposed the hypothesis that these letters at least, and if these then perhaps I Corinthians also, consist of scattered fragments of authentic Pauline letters pieced together by the first editor of the Pauline Corpus after rummaging in an old chest in some Corinthian or Ephesian attic.

I have ventured to mention these ancient opinions about St Paul because they may save us from the common illusion that such questions have only occurred to modern readers. In medieval times it was still possible to hear criticism of the apostle, usually from Moslem critics who coupled his name with that of Constantine the Great as chiefly responsible for corrupting an original Nazarene gospel which had so remarkable resemblance, the Moslems believed, to the doctrines of the Quran. An example of this type of criticism

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of Paul occurs in the tenth-century work of Abd al-Jabbar, the recent discovery of which led to some over-excited newspaper reports in July 1966 to the effect that new evidence was now throwing doubt on the reality of the Crucifixion—not a very surprising doubt if the text is Islamic, since this is just what the Quran says.

In modern times, since the seventeenth century at least, the sense of a contrast between the gospels and the epistles has commonly found expression in a disparagement of Paul in comparison with the Sermon on the Mount. In part this has been the consequence of the success of Luther's picture of Paul, seeing in the epistles a reflecting mirror portraying his own tortured conscience and introverted self-scrutiny. The liberal rationalists of the Enlightenment accepted the truth of that picture and turned away from it in revulsion: it expressed a sad, pessimistic view of the world and of humanist values. The liberal rationalists wanted simplicity and disliked the apparently abstruse, cloudy questions of theology. Paul seemed to them the man who had superimposed on the basic Christianity of the Golden Rule a complicated structure of doctrine about the Atonement and the Sacraments and, to make things worse still, had an anti-feminist obsession. In many respects the rationalists shared the attitudes of the eighteenth-century pietists who also wanted 'the simple gospel' (and seldom reflected how complicated an idea that is) and who reacted against the subtleties of theological speculation as an arid scholasticism, preferring their doctrines to be practical and 'experimental'. Where the rationalists suspected theology of being intellectually narrowing, the pietists suspected it of being spiritually desiccating. Nevertheless the evangelicals often found it harder to fit the gospels into their theology than the epistle to the Romans. I suppose it would have to be said that they found simplicity in Paul by leaving on one side his ecclesiological and sacramental passages. They thereby provided the presuppositions of the

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view that the strongly 'catholic' letters to the Colossians and to the Ephesians, and perhaps also the Pastorals, must come from another author than that good Protestant, the writer of Galatians and Romans.

The pietists and rationalists shared a common picture of the apostle. The evangelicals gloried in, the liberal rationalists recoiled from, the Pauline story of divine grace reaching down in Christ to redeem a lost and corrupt humanity. The liberals preferred to think of their Master as a wise and benevolent teacher by the sunlit shores of Galilee, with the lilies of the field putting Solomon to shame, and they looked with puzzled amazement, fear, and distaste at the epistles with their tortuous arguments, bizarre logic, and dark estimate of human perfectibility. They preferred Erasmus to Luther, and therefore had no instinctive pull towards Luther's principal hero. Luther had discovered Paul after a period of inward wrestling and through a painful personal quest for peace in his conscience; and of the power and reality with which the epistle to the Romans spoke to Luther there can be no doubt. At the same time it is fair to say that Luther found so many of his own problems in the epistles that he was unconsciously inclined to picture the apostle as having undergone an experience virtually identical with his own. No doubt there are genuine analogies in some respects. Luther's problem was a plagued, wounded conscience, profoundly aware of the cruel paradox that strenuous moral efforts do not as such lead to a healed conscience any more than desperate attempts to achieve happiness can ever succeed in bringing their desired end nearer. In some ways this is extremely close to Paul. Moreover, Paul, by virtue of his background as a Jew of the Greek Diaspora, was extremely interested in and exercised by problems of the conscience. No writer before Paul, not even his contemporary Seneca, treats of the dilemmas of the conscience with such acute sensitivity. In the history of the moral ideas

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of the western world the Pauline letters mark an epoch. But it is surely a mistake and a distortion to portray this man as if his face were twisted with the pain of tortured, introverted self-scrutiny. He is at least credited with speaking of having lived with a good conscience before God, and the only part of his past that haunted him seems to have been the persecution for which he was responsible before his conversion. Would he have subscribed to the view we associate with Kierkegaard that genuinely sincere introspection will lead any man to the conclusion that inwardly he is utterly miserable? We may doubt whether Paul would have had much sympathy with the common modern notion that neurosis is an indispensable attribute of genius and that to be torn and twisted, dogged by drugs and drink, is a necessary qualification for recognition as a true artist.

The reason for this doubt may be found in the whole character of the letter to the Philippians. This is a letter of thanks for a gift of money, written from a Roman (or conceivably, Ephesian) prison. Ancient prisons were not comfortable places where people were content to be the emperor's guests for a time, but dirty institutions where the prisoners were dependent for food and the necessities of life on friends kind enough to visit them. But the local church, probably but not certainly Rome, had not been overanxious to acknowledge responsibility for this visiting missionary, always (as he himself came painfully to realize) a possible source of embarrassment to his hosts. Little had been done for him. But far away in Macedonia the apostle's first congregation on European soil remembered him. They sent him money by the hand of one of their number named Epaphroditus. When he arrived, however, he at once saw that the Philippians had sent nothing like what was actually required. Somehow he found a job, and then worked himself almost to death in the endeavour to support Paul. Finally he carried back to Philippi the apostle's expression

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of gratitude. The letter is intensely personal and cheerful. But the sun and the warmth are the more deeply felt because they come through gaps in ominous storm clouds. Rumbles of thunder tell us of feelings that could not be suppressed, not so much because of the physical discomforts of the prison as because of personal difficulties. Paul had been treated to a certain amount of envy, malice, and lack of elementary kindness. Yet there is no self-pity. He has only gratitude for the Philippians' generosity. There is no weary disillusionment or cynicism. There is disappointment, but no suggestion of disenchantment, no hint that his time in prison is time lost in purposeless waste.

The main liberal rationalist accusation against the apostle has been that he is principally responsible for introducing into the stream of Christian history a deep-seated fear and hostility towards sex. And it should be conceded at once that there are passages that make it easy and natural to interpret him as a misogynist celibate, with an obsession about women's hair so acute that he demands the wearing of hats in church, and with the strongest views of female subordination. 'It is good that a man should not touch a woman.' 'The women must keep silence in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the law says. If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.' And so on.

If the charge is one of fear, then there is probably truth in it. It is not easy to be sure on the point, but it would be very intelligible if a passionate man like Paul were touched by fear. The suppression or subordination of women in undeveloped societies probably owes a substantial amount to the formidable threat offered by feminine sexuality to masculine honour and dignity. And the apostle gives the impression of writing as if he knew that there were hazards about. But if the charge is that of responsibility for a gnostic

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and Manichee revulsion from the basic facts of the natural, created order, then this breaks down on its misconstruction of the locus classicus, I Corinthians vii.

This chapter, it is true, is very commonly read even now to mean that the apostle was anxious to disparage the married state and to emphasize the superior moral and religious quality and status of the celibate life. A superficial reader supposes that in Paul's opinion there have been too many weddings in the church at Corinth during the months immediately preceding his letter, and he wants to put the case for restraint.

I must not get married in Advent or Lent
Unless I have first got the Bishop's consent

to borrow some words I once heard being recited by an infant school.

I remain entirely persuaded, and think it worth reaffirming, that this reading of I Corinthians vii must be wrong. It makes the chapter unintelligible. In the immediately preceding chapter Paul has been dealing with an antinomian group at Corinth. This group understood Christian freedom from the Law to mean that the spiritual life absolutely excluded on principle the notion of having some moral rules. The new ethic of love had no room for any obedience to actual commandments. For this group all things were lawful. Evidently they passed into erotic excesses, and Paul rebuts them as dualists who are setting physical actions altogether apart from the higher and inner life of the spirit, and therefore fail to recognize the psychosomatic unity of body and soul implied in the resurrection. Even so, the apostle characteristically begins his argument by accepting their principle that all things are lawful. It is the relevance of their principle which is put in doubt. The Corinthian libertines appear to have suffered from the illusion that the case for sexual restraint merely

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rests on an externally imposed prescription in a book of rules.

At the beginning of chapter vii the argument undergoes a sudden change of direction. The apostle is no longer facing antinomian licence, not the scandal of the young man alleged to have been having improper relations with his bright young stepmother. Paul is now confronted by a group on the opposite wing—a group which deduced from the doctrine of the higher life of the spirit a radical rejection of the body. For them the higher ethic demanded of them by baptism meant an ascetic renunciation of marriage. In pagan antiquity it was a widely

attested axiom that continence was an indispensable prerequisite for the offering of acceptable worship. Like abstinence from food, it freed the soul from the downward pull of matter, elevated it above the distractions of earthly things, and laid it open to inspiration from higher powers. Moreover in a considerable series of pagan texts we meet the idea that he who is granted the love of the gods must forswear the love of mortals. Dedication to the higher requires a setting aside of the lower love.

The former of these two ideas can even be found in the documents of Greek Judaism. Normally Judaism was not ascetic, at least in its main stream. The strong coherence of the family bond meant, as it still means, that marriage and raising a family are good works and cooperating with the Creator. By the same token the Jewish ethic includes strong disapproval of fornication and of unnatural vice. The notion of the isolated, self-directed individual is at a discount, and in antiquity is not found. Nevertheless the influence of hellenism on Judaism of the Dispersion produced a certain amount of ascetic theology and practice. Philo, for example, remarks that Moses dedicated himself in continence so as to be ready at any time to receive the inspiration of prophecy—an observation that may well have had deep influence on Ambrose of Milan and the fourth-century movement

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towards clerical celibacy in the Western Church. If, then, the Greek synagogues were no strangers to these ideas, we need not be astonished to find some use of them in Paul. Moreover, such notions may easily have penetrated Palestinian Judaism also. As is well known, the evidence concerning the Essenes, if they are indeed the community from which the Dead Sea Scrolls come, is not consistent on precisely this point. Our Greek sources (Philo, Josephus, and the source of Pliny's *Natural History*) write of the Essenes' exaltation of the celibate ideal. The Dead Sea Scrolls are quite silent on this attitude to marriage. The gospel tradition, however, records a saying of Jesus concerning those who have renounced marriage for the kingdom of heaven's sake (Matt. xix, 12), where the immediately preceding words make it clear that this renunciation is not for all disciples.

The parallel between this saying and I Corinthians vii is very close, and the context of the discussion is similar. Only Paul has complicated the issue by adopting his usual method of recording agreement in principle with the ascetics and then continuing to make practical recommendations that run in quite the opposite direction: those who marry do no sin; married couples must on no account cease to live together, even if it is a mixed marriage where one partner is a Christian and the other is not. The Christian cannot stop the pagan partner from going off if he or she wants to do so, but according to Paul will not take the initiative in dissolving the union. There is no ritual or moral pollution in a mixed marriage, and the Corinthians are to have no fear that somehow their children might be tainted. It is sufficient if one of the parents be a believer. Moreover, the Christian partner may be the means of conversion of his or her spouse. The Corinthians are on no account to suppose that baptism marks a discontinuity with the past so radical and so absolute that marriage is abrogated by it. It is like circumcision

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or slavery—a natural state which the convert brings with him into the new life in Christ.

The two analogies for the permanence of the marriage bond through the radical act of baptism are not perhaps free of some disparaging overtone. Paul does not tell the Corinthian ascetics that there is no place in the spiritual life for the celibate ideal. The two ideas inherited from pagan antiquity, which we have already noticed, both make a christianized appearance in the concession that marital relations may be suspended for a time, by mutual agreement, for the purposes of prayer, and in the proposition that while a married person is anxious to please his or her spouse, the unmarried person is free to be dedicated to the Lord in an undivided love. Nevertheless the apostle never allows a dualism of spirit and matter to influence his thinking. The missionary task, the shortness of the time, the relative and transitory nature of this fleeting world, make it necessary to travel light, to be detached and ready to go at any time. Those who have should be as though they had not. It is a hellenized restatement of the gospel saying, ‘Seek first the kingdom...’

The chapter we have been briefly considering is one among several examples in Paul’s letters where vast concessions of principle are allowed to the opposition, while the practical recommendations are very different from what they expect. The procedure is exactly in line with the familiar, passionate protest of I Corinthians ix: ‘Necessity is laid on me, woe to me if I do not preach the gospel. To the Jews under the law, I have been as one under the law. To Gentiles without the law I have been as one free of the law, though remaining under obligation to Christ’s law. I have become all things to all that I may by any means gain some.’ This passage is considerably illuminated by two passages in Philo of Alexandria when he tells us that there was lively discussion in the Greek synagogues about the intellectual integrity

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of the missionary apologist, seeking to interpret his faith to people with strong prejudices. How far might he go in accepting their language and principles in making his faith intelligible and acceptable to them? His purpose, says Philo, is to save whom he can; yet there are limits imposed by personal integrity and by loyalty to the truth. What are these limits, we at once ask. But at this critical moment Philo’s discussion tantalizingly breaks off. At least it is evident that he regarded a certain flexibility and adaptability as both necessary and right. He felt it a merit to use tact in presenting a case, and no doubt wisely declined to lay down a general rule. These texts of Philo are important evidence that Paul’s procedure was in line with a recognized line and not merely the unprincipled vacillation of a trimmer, as his critics took him to be when they accused him of ‘pleasing men’ (Gal. i. 10 etc.) or of writing with such uncandid subtlety and irony that one could not be sure of the meaning (the charge rebutted in 2 Corinthians iii-iv).

The accusation against Paul that he was a mere weathercock, never continuing in one stay, only too willing to adapt himself to the prejudices of his audience, was no doubt unfair. But it

is entirely intelligible in the situation in which Paul found himself. The earliest Christians were Jews. They took for granted not only the continuity of the new covenant with the old but the continued validity of the old religion given on Sinai, with the traditional Jewish feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, the observance of circumcision, the weekly sabbath, and the Mosaic customs about kosher food. Certainly the coming of the Messiah inaugurated a new covenant between man and God (as foretold by Jeremiah xxxi), a new understanding of faith with far deeper inwardness, and a universal faith that would gather in the Gentiles to a true worship of the one God of all the earth. But in this new development of the divine redemptive plan it was not perfectly clear what the status of the Mosaic law

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would be. This hesitancy appears to be reflected in the gospel tradition where it is not entirely beyond doubt whether the Lord intended the mission to be extended beyond Israel and whether the observances of the old Law were abrogated or not. A pungent comment in the second-century pagan Celsus asks (through a Jewish spokesman) whether Jesus meant his disciples to keep the Jewish law or not. If not, was it not misleading of him to observe it himself? And by what right did he take upon him to overthrow the traditional customs of his forefathers? A catena of early Christian texts could easily be brought together to show the Church wrestling with this issue long into the second and third centuries. The problem particularly exercised Justin Martyr. But by his time the Gentile Christians were in the majority in the Church. In Paul's time the situation was very different. Then it was a question whether and on what terms any Gentiles were to be admitted to the church at all. Were they also to be circumcised? keep the food laws? Were they full members of the ecclesia, or were they second-class citizens in the city of God? In the latter case could they advance their status by undertaking to be circumcised, even though, or because, it would strictly be a work of supererogation? If they observed none of the traditional, distinctively Jewish customs, there remained practical problems of conscience. Loyal Jews did not like to eat food with Gentiles indifferently. Could Jewish and Gentile Christians meet at a common table?

On the opposite extreme from the conservatives there soon developed an extreme Gentile position which argued that the Mosaic law was not merely in no sense binding on Gentile Christians but indeed ought forthwith to be abandoned even by Jews in a recognition that the covenant of Sinai had now been superseded by the advent of the expected Messiah. Perhaps (some thought) the ceremonial laws enjoining restrictions on food, and prescribing

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circumcision were temporary measures imposed by God as visible signs to mark out the chosen people and to prevent them losing their identity among the Canaanite tribes. And perhaps the rest of the Levitical law was really a penalty imposed on the Jewish people for their deplorable worship of the golden calf. From this it was a short step to saying that the Mosaic law was of doubtful status as God's permanent revelation of his will for all mankind. Not only was it an expression of the particularism of Judaism which no longer fitted in with the universalist divine plan for all humanity; it was also a purely temporary, provisional, *ad hoc* piece of legislation given to Israel at a critical moment in her history, but never intended to be taken as final and perfect. If God had really meant the Mosaic law to be the permanent

expression of his will for all peoples in space, or for Israel for all time, why did he wait until Moses' time to give it?

Paul's letter to the Galatians, written at white heat, stands as his most notable and problematic contribution to this controversy. An impassioned torrent of words, compressed and at times running over into incoherent syntax, it vigorously refutes the charge of being a trimmer without a clear-cut policy on the central issue of the controversy. Nevertheless critics have not failed to observe that when the syntax is incoherent, as in the famous passage about the circumcision of Titus in Gal. ii.3-5, there is method and ingenuity in the incoherence which looks far from accidental. In fact the epistle to the Galatians, for all its militancy and hard-hitting zeal, ends with a position of peculiar subtlety and finesse by seeing the Law as having a valuable provisional purpose in the onward-moving divine plan. The Law was like a tutor of inferior status who guards the young from danger and teaches them elementary etiquette, but then hands them over to the schoolteacher for real instruction. So the Old Testament is seen as a progressive education.

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To say that there should be no reversion to an earlier stage, such as would be implied in the adoption by the Gentile Christians of traditional Jewish customs, does not deny the value of the early part of the process of divine revelation.

It is noteworthy in this connexion that, except in Galatians and Romans where the controversy demanded it, the Old Testament is quoted by Paul remarkably seldom. It is a theological and literary influence upon him of course. But he does not argue much from Old Testament texts; and when he does, it is usually to commend conclusions that he has visibly reached on other grounds.

The controversy about the Gentile mission was made up of several factors. It was a conflict about authority, not only of the Old Testament, but of the mother-church of Jerusalem, and of Paul himself. For Paul was identified, in a unique degree, with the ideology of the Gentile mission. The Acts portrays him as knowing from the moment of his conversion that he was called as the apostle of the Gentile churches, and there is not the least reason to doubt the record. He himself looked back on his conversion as a prophet's call. In Galatians i. 15 he speaks of his apostolate in language directly allusive to that used by Jeremiah in speaking of his call. Accordingly, the authority attaching to Paul's gospel was charismatic rather than legal or traditional (to borrow the terms made familiar by Max Weber), and it was bound up with his own standing as an authentically commissioned apostle.

The point bears directly on our comprehension of several passages that often cause distress to the uninitiated reader—passages that appear to express pride and self-concern and acute anxiety about status. 'Are they apostles? so am I. Are they children of Abraham? so am I. Are they servants to Christ? I am more....' Or 'Am I not an apostle? have I not seen the Lord? have I not the right to take my wife with me on missionary journeys like Peter and the other apostles and

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the Lord's brothers?' (You notice how even in the apostolic age there had been some controversy on the question whether the travelling expenses of wives were a proper charge on the host church.)

These and several similar texts are not mere egotism and self-assertion. Paul's standing as an apostle of Christ was being widely denied. His refusal to allow his expenses to be met by his churches was twisted to imply a tacit admission that he did not really feel able to ask what was due to him as an apostle. The illnesses and hardships of his strenuous life were interpreted as a sign of personal weakness, perhaps even of providential displeasure. Against this background Paul wrote the most moving and difficult of all letters, the Second Epistle to the Corinthians.

The generalization may be ventured that while historians normally find it possible to grasp the character of men who have tried to express their feelings in their writings, they have found it much harder to grasp the mind of men of action, energy, decision, and will. Paul was certainly a man of action and indefatigable energy. Yet his letters contain many passages peculiarly personal in which his heart stands bared before our view. Even so he remains singularly inaccessible to us. Some of the barriers, as I have tried to suggest, may be of our own making, and arise from the prejudices with which we have allowed our spectacles to be coloured. There are also the peculiar complexities attaching to attempts to understand a Jew whose mother-tongue was Greek, who possessed Roman citizenship, and who became the most important Christian of the first century as the historian must judge these things. Moreover, his temperament, the *sudden* quality of his mind, the intensity of his psychological and religious insight, all these things put him apart from us, at the same time as they bring him alive and enable him to speak with perennial power.

In a delightfully written and still instructive book,

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Light from the Ancient East, written early in this century at the time when Grenfell and Hunt were exciting the scholarly world by their volumes of newly discovered papyrus texts, Adolf Deissmann printed texts and translations of many private letters of the age of Paul with the intention of illustrating how ordinary and everyday and natural the Pauline letters are. I think it must be said that he conspicuously failed to prove his thesis. The Pauline letters are exceedingly unlike the everyday correspondence unearthed from Egyptian rubbish heaps, even though the papyri contribute much to our understanding of the idiom of the language used by non-literary persons. It is true that one can name familiar examples of the letter-form being used before Paul as a vehicle for doctrinal instruction—most obviously in the letters of (or ascribed to) Plato and Epicurus. Yet in the literature of antiquity there is nothing quite like the Pauline letters. He had a close imitator in Ignatius of Antioch. But ultimately we must say that Paul's letters are *sui generis*, for the reason that he was a very unusual person and we know of nobody remotely like him.

This is one of the principal reasons why, to the puzzled astonishment of the layman, scholars still find it so hard to be perfectly confident about the authenticity of some of the documents

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preserved under his name such as Ephesians. It is, I think, certain that, if not Pauline, Ephesians is the work of a close and intimate disciple with a rare and brilliant capacity for rightly interpreting his master. But the arguments are quite evenly divided either way, and there is no means of settling the problem except by an *a priori* decision about what manner of man the apostle was and what he had it in him to do and to be. And of that question the discussion will see no end.

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