

Social Consciousness in the New Testament : Jesus and Paul —A Contrast

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Not infrequently one meets scholars and laity who envisage Paul, the apostle, as a revolutionary and Jesus as a non-violent, non-aggressive person (except perhaps for his cleansing of the Temple). Is this view correct? It will be the plan of this paper to suggest—but by no means to come to a firm conclusion—that the opposite is true. When I speak of 'Paul' I shall be speaking of the Pauline school, not necessarily of the individual apostle, and when I speak of Jesus I shall not always distinguish between the *ipsissima vox*, the very voice of Jesus, and *ipsissima verba*, the very words of Jesus, as redacted by the evangelists. Further in examining Pauline theology we must remind ourselves continually that in all likelihood the apostle never saw one of our written canonical gospels.

Paul

Paul's greatest revolutionary enterprise was the incorporation of the Gentiles into the Church. This he did without any precedence of a Gentile mission on the part of Jesus.¹ Yet he accomplished it within the time span of the greatest missionary work implemented by the Pharisees (c1 B.C. to c1 A.D.). Paul's audacity is shown in the waiving of circumcision for the male adults and a mitigation of some of the dietary laws² but this is done with the support of the revelation made to Peter, which Luke repeats twice in his typical way of emphasising and witnessing³ through doublets (Acts 10 and 11) and with the decision of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15). Thus the innovation came with Peter although, of course, Paul became the apostle of the Gentiles *par excellence*. Further, Paul is exceedingly accommodating, e.g., he circumcises Timothy because of the Jews in Asia Minor (Acts 16 :3) and he ignores or observes the ritual laws in accordance with the company which he keeps (1 Cor. 9; Acts 21 :17-26 Paul assists with the Nazirite vow). Thus I should like to argue that St Paul implemented an essential work which was revealed first to Peter but that this was a religious rather than purely social innovation. In fact one finds a certain social conservatism in Paul in respect of the following points.

¹J. Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise to the Nations, Studies in Biblical Theology*, S.C.M. Press, 1958.

²Paul gives us no information about his position on *niddah* (impurity of women).

³F. Rehkopf, *Die Lukanische Sonderquelle. Ihr Umfang und Sprachgebrauch*, Mohr-Siebeck, Tübingen, 1959, 2 volumes.

1) *Slavery*

Paul appears to accept quite uncritically the institution of slavery and the master-servant relationship. One finds this in 1 Cor. 7:21 (although with the qualification that one may accept the opportunity of freedom if it is offered); the letter to Philemon and the housecodes found in Col. 3:22-4:1; Ephes. 6:5-9; 1 Tim. 6:1, 2 and Titus 2:9, 10 (cf 1 Pet. 2:18-25). I am inclined to think that Paul would have accepted apartheid in South Africa and counselled the Africans to serve the Africaaner yet 'in the Lord'. Indeed, Paul's teaching in Philemon and the housecodes does not go beyond contemporary teaching among Roman and Greek philosophers or Jewish custom. Further, although there is reciprocity in the codes, as in some of the Stoic ones, there is still the clear implication that the partners are unequal.

2) *Man and Woman Relationship*

Paul accepts the man-woman relationship which his culture and Jewish religion offered him. It is my belief that he was not a misogynist and did raise the status of women to some degree, e.g., by treating them as equal partners in marriage in 1 Cor. 7 going so far as to say that the wife has authority over the *soma* (person) of her husband and carefully considering marriage, widowhood and probably celibacy (continence) first from the man's point of view and then from the woman's.⁶ Nevertheless the implicit subordination of woman in Eph. 5:22-33 and explicit inferiority in 1 Cor. 11:2-16, man being the head (*kephale*) of the woman, shows that Paul has not surpassed his culture with regard to women. Indeed, he had not progressed as far as the Pythagoreans, the Therapeutae or Plato in the *Republic* who suggests equality between man and woman.⁷ Aristotle called it 'barbarian' not to distinguish between a woman and a slave.⁸ Marcus Barth asks whether Paul relies 'on late Jewish-patriarchal notions and other relics that he in effect does no more than adumbrate museum pieces with a Christological halo, and impose polished antiquities as a house rule upon the Christian community?'⁹ He observes that modern scholars answer this question in the affirmative. 'The cult of the Great Mother and the Artemis temple stamped this city more than others as a bastion and bulwark of women's rights'.¹⁰ Indeed, Marcus Barth asserts that Paul 'intended to assert the priority of Christ's rule over a revolution started for its own sake: "Because you fear Christ subordinate yourselves to one another"' (5:21). This type of teaching becomes even more authoritarian in 1 Tim. 2:12: 'I do not

⁴E. G. Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St Peter*, New York, 1964, p. 430.

⁵James E. Crouch, *The Origin and Intention of the Colossian Haustafel*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1972, pp. 16ff.

⁶Else Kahler, *Die Frau in den Paulischer Briefen*, Zurich, 1960. Pp. 17-21 give important tables to show that the statements about men and women are corresponding not different from one another.

⁷Marcus Barth, *Anchor Bible Commentary on Ephesians 4-6*, volume 2, Doubleday, New York, 1974, p. 657.

⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 657-658.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 659.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 661.

permit a woman to teach or to have (supreme) authority over man . . . ?

3) *Parent-child relationship*

Even as the housecodes are relatively conservative with regard to slaves and to women likewise Paul accepts the parent-child relation and commands the children to obey (*hupakouo*). Here in all probability Paul would not confine his admonitions to minors in our contemporary sense but to boys and girls, men and women of all ages who were expected to obey their elders. There is no intimation that the call of Christ might supersede a 'child's' duty to his parents.

4) *The State*

Paul appears to accept civil obedience (Rom. 13:1-7). Marcus Barth refers¹¹ to 'the revolutionary tendency . . . among the Christians in Rome who were called to order' in this text. Here the apostle speaks of the authorities established by God, the state as 'a minister of God to you for good', which does not bear the sword in vain, to whom taxes are due. I am aware of the extreme complexity of this text but I am persuaded that scholars, such as Oscar Cullmann¹² have over-simplified the three Pauline texts concerning the State, namely, Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Cor. 6:1-8 and 1 Tim. 2:20. Curiously Cullmann does not mention the fact that Paul was a Roman Citizen and, as such, may well have had an attitude significantly different from that of Jesus, a non-Roman citizen, to the State. We can, at least, assert that Paul's attitude towards the State is more positive than that of Jesus but certainly not as negative as the zealots (the Jewish nationalists). We may contrast the prayers for civil leaders in 1 Tim. 2:2 with the action of Eleazar who stopped the sacrifices for the Emperor in 66 A.D. Paul would probably have borne arms for the Empire if he had been asked to; according to Hengel¹³ many Jews were in the army in the Hellenistic era.

5) *Ecclesiastical obedience*

Paul appears to accept ecclesiastical obedience especially when his own authority is at stake (1 Cor. 11:2; 2 Cor. 10; 2 Tim. 3:10, etc.). He is much more authoritarian than Jesus. We may contrast 1 Cor. 4:15: 'For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel' with Matt. 23:9: 'And do not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven'. Further, until the later epistles Paul is harsh towards sinners, e.g., 1 Cor. 5, the man who is living in incestuous union with

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 661, note 219.

¹²Oscar Cullmann, *The State in the New Testament*, Charles Scribner, New York, 1956, pp. 50-70 but see also E. Käsemann, 'The Interpretation of Romans 13', pp. 196-216 in *New Testament Questions of Today*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1967. Cullmann thinks that it is 'dangerous to set up an eschatological horizon behind these verses': this happens only in Revelation.

¹³Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, volume 1, E.T. Fortress Press, 1974, pp. 15-17 speaks of Jewish mercenaries in the Greek armies and their influence in the Diaspora.

his father's wife, 1 Cor. 6 the lists of sinners whom one must avoid and 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 (if this is Pauline)¹⁴ where shunning is advocated again. Paul is confident about who is the sinner and who is being saved, who is the one who rules in the assembly and who is ruled.

6) *The Poor*

Although the Jewish law provided for both the poor Hebrew and the poor alien Paul himself does not show a great deal of interest in social concern. In his epistles we find no diatribes against the rich as we do in the Gospels and in James 5 except the *obiter dicta* in 1 Tim. 6:10 which finds a parallel in, e.g., Sirach 27:1-3; *Test. Jud.* 19:1 or profane authors.¹⁵ Paul bids Christians to love their brothers and to do good but 'especially to the household of faith' (Gal. 6:10). He remembers the 'poor' (Gal. 2:10) and the poor saints (Rom. 15:26) but it is not clear whether Paul's concern and the actual collection that he makes is for the poor in general or for the poor among Jews and Christians.

Summary

Thus, although I should not wish to underestimate St Paul's heroic work in winning full citizenship in the Church for the Gentiles (including ourselves), I see this as a religious innovation implemented with the support of Peter and the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15). Paul accommodates to the Gentiles 'for the sake of peace',¹⁶ a phrase which was used by the Jewish missionaries when they made concessions for converts. In other regards socially, politically, economically, and philosophically I find the apostle somewhat conservative. It is to be noted that most reactionary groups within the Church rely heavily—sometimes exclusively on Pauline writings and overlook the teaching of the Gospels.

The Gospels (The Gospel)

In contrast to St Paul the Gospel is very disturbing, it does, indeed, comfort the afflicted but it also afflicts the comfortable. It concerns a divine person with a fully human nature who has experienced the weakness of humanity (cf Hebrews 4:14-5:10—an epistle, which if, as many scholars aver,¹⁷ it was written before 70 A.D., the fall of the Temple, was an extremely provocative document not only on the religious level but also socially and economically, for it would undermine the main business in Jerusalem where approximately 18,000 clergy worked each year and where brisk trade was carried on in order to serve the Temple, many of the priests had serious business invest-

¹⁴This pericope may not be genuine Pauline material, see J. Gnilka, '2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 in the light of the Qumran texts and the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs' in *Paul and Qumran*, edited by J. Murphy-O'Connor, Priory Press, Chicago, Illinois, 1968 and B. Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament*, Cambridge University Press, 1965, pp. 49-56.

¹⁵C. Spicq, *Saint Paul, Les Epîtres Pastorales*, Tome I, Paris, 1969, pp. 563-564 gives a reference to Sirach 27:1-3; *Test. Jud.* 19:1 and profane writers. He remarks that the love of money is one of the most exploited themes of the diatribe.

¹⁶David Daube, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism*, University of London, Athlone Press, 1956, pp. 336-351.

¹⁷For the date of Hebrews see H. W. Montefiore, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, Adam and Charles Black, London, 1964, pp. 28-29 who gives the date 52-54 A.D.

ments¹⁸ and the cessation of sacrifice would have caused a major unemployment crisis). Hebrews presents to us a remarkable poise between the divine nature and the human nature of Christ.

Christ's circumstances

I concur with Professor David Flusser¹⁹ who states that Jesus may well have been more educated than Paul and I add more alert on the religious, social and economic levels. I agree with Professor Buchanan²⁰ that it is legitimate to accept 2 Cor. 8:9 quite literally, 'our Lord Jesus Christ, being a wealthy man . . . on account of you became poor'. I quote from Buchanan:

'The likelihood that Jesus was originally from a wealthy family and that he gave up his wealth for the movement he led seems greater when his relationship to the wealthy tax collectors and rulers is considered. Most of his parables and teachings seem to have been directed to an upper class of people who had money to lend, give, and use for hiring servants. His willingness to surrender this for the Kingdom of God would have given him more authority to ask others to give up all they had than he would have had if he had been reared in poverty. It would have been difficult in the Near East for a poor man to gain a hearing with the rich as Jesus evidently did'.

I also tentatively suggest that perhaps Joseph, Jesus's foster-parent, would not have been taxed if he possessed no property (although there were census for military service, etc.). Prescinding for the moment from the notorious problem of the census in Luke 2:1-3 one remarks that in describing the census implemented by Quirinius Josephus (*Ant.* 18:1) expressly states that the assessment pertained to property:

Quirinius . . . arrived in Syria . . . to make an assessment of their property (*ton ousion*). . . . Quirinius also visited Judaea . . . in order to make an assessment of the property of the Jews (*autòn tas ousias*). . . . Although the Jews were at first shocked to hear of the registration of property, they gradually condescended. . . . So those who were convinced by him (the high priest Joazar) declared, without shilly-shallying, the value of their property (*apetimòn ta chrèmata mèden endoiasantes*).

Thus, but one cannot be quite certain about this, Jesus's family was probably a propertied one.

With this in view let us take the points which we made about St Paul and see where Jesus stands in relationship to the social concerns.

¹⁸J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, S.C.M. Press, E.T. London, 1969.
¹⁹David Flusser, *Jesus*, Herder and Herder, E.T. 1969, p. 18. 'Viewing Jesus' sayings against the background of contemporary Jewish learning, however, it is easy to observe that Jesus was far from uneducated. He was perfectly at home both in holy scripture, and in oral tradition, and knew how to apply this scholarly heritage. Jesus' Jewish education was incomparably superior to that of St Paul'.

²⁰George Wesley Buchanan, *To the Hebrews, The Anchor Bible*, Doubleday, New York, 1972, pp. 208-9.

1) *Slavery and master-servant relationship*

Although Jesus does not address himself directly to the issue of slavery an appreciable amount of his teaching (both by word and by action) does allow us to make some reflection on this subject. The key to the footwashing ceremony which is recorded only in the fourth Gospel is *the most vivid dismantling of the slave (servant)-master relationship which could have occurred*, perhaps a prophetic *ôth*, hence St Peter's startled reaction and Jesus's wise observation: 'You may not realise now what I am doing, but later you will understand'. Indeed, it must have taken a very long time before the Church really accepted each member as equal (does she now?). Jesus also says: 'If I do not wash you you will have no share in my heritage'. These are strong and frightening words indeed. But Jesus further explains the traumatic act to his followers by teaching which shows that he identifies himself with the servant and yet not countenancing the slave above the master or the master above the slave (John 13:13-17). As Bultmann²¹ states the fulfillment of Jesus's precept here:

'is not by performing a work analogous to his, but *by readiness for the same existing for the other*. The imperative does not demand an action in return, to be rendered to Jesus—14.15-24 will explain how the disciples's love cannot have him as its immediate goal—but rather the turning to one's fellow. Jesus is not the *hupodeigma* for an *Imitatio*; but *by receiving his service a new opportunity of existence together is disclosed to the disciple; and his readiness to grasp this opportunity will show whether he has rightly received the service*' (pp. 475-6 emphasis mine).

It is the 'new opportunity for existence' which is the important factor, an obliteration of rank, class, inequality. Or as Ernst Käsemann would express it:²²

'The community which knows itself to be governed by the Spirit can let the apostolate, the ministry and its organisation melt into the background and understand itself in the manner of a conventicle which is constituted through its individual members and which designates itself as the circle of friends and brothers (and sisters)'.

It is this concept of brother and sister which is important to Jesus. We may compare also Mark 10:44-45, the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve; Matt. 23:8-11 which we have cited above and Luke 6:40: '... but every student when he (or she) has finished his (their) studies will be on a par with his (their) teacher'; these are not words which we would expect from St Paul. Thus Jesus bids his disciples to be like him: 'I am among you as he who serves' (Luke 22:27). This attitude of Jesus is the more astonishing when one considers that he used 'serve' in association with the title of Son of Man who in apocalyptic literature is a celestial figure whom many serve

²¹R. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, E.T. Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1971, pp. 475-476.

²²E. Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus*, S.C.M. London, 1968, p. 30-31.

(cf Dan. 7:14 . . . that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him . . .).

Further Jesus calls as His immediate disciples (perhaps twelve, all Jews) a motley crowd. They were probably middleclass businessmen doing well on the fish and salt trade (the salt from the Dead Sea and the fish from the Sea of Galilee). There is nothing in the New Testament to suggest that the disciples came from the poorest class of Jews. Baron²³ states that the numerous fishermen at Lake Tiberias (the Sea of Galilee) or along the Mediterranean Shore 'enjoyed a reputable, if not high, social standing'. Wilhelm Wuellner concurs.²⁴ Jesus also included a taxgatherer, perhaps the ancient equivalent of a member of the Mafia, as tax collectors could turn out to be extortioners, thieves, torturers and murderers. (According to Josephus (*Ant.* 12, 4, 4) Joseph ben Tobiah, nephew of the high priest Onias II, beheaded twenty citizens of Ascalon and Scythopolis for refusing to pay their taxes and then he confiscated their possessions.) Jesus had at least one Zealot, probably five.²⁵ The majority of the circle would seem to be converted property owners perhaps even capitalists; cf Mark 10:28: 'Master, we have left all'—presumably they had quite an amount to leave, e.g., the father of James and John had hired servants.

Thus Jesus's group was probably well informed politically, alert from the point of view of business and perhaps able to read and write—at least this must have been so for Matthew. Yet Jesus schooled them to become detached from their worldly security after his resurrection and to turn to become fishers of mankind.

But more importantly it is against this background and in view of this audience that one must appreciate Jesus's social concern. He preaches in parables, stories and sayings against the rich (e.g. Dives and Lazarus which may not be a parable); he praises the widow's mite which episode is strategically placed in the gospels so that it is really the climax of Jesus's attack on the wealth-ridden Temple. Jesus obliquely criticises usury in the parable of the Wily Servant (Luke 16:1-15).²⁶ He addresses himself to heavy taxation in the parable of the Unjust Servant (Matt. 18:23-35): as Derrett explains, this parable can only be understood against the tremendous sums of money involved in taxing large areas, such as, a whole province, Jesus's figures are then realistic, not imaginative.²⁷ He may regret absentee landlords of the large latifundia²⁸ (estates) in the parable of the Tenants (Matt. 21:33-41). Jesus seems fully apprised of the economic situation in Palestine and does not hesitate to implement a little consciousness-raising.

²³S. W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, Columbia University Press, New York. 1958, p. 254.

²⁴Wilhelm Wuellner, *The Meaning of 'Fishers of Men'*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1967, pp. 26-63.

²⁵O. Cullmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-17, who lists Simon, Judas, Peter, James and John.

²⁶J. Duncan M. Derrett, *Law in the New Testament*, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1970, pp. 48-77.

²⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 32-47.

I cannot wholly concur with André Trocmé²⁸ and John Howard Yoder²⁹ who suggest that Jesus may have been formally initiating the Jubilee Year commanded in Lev. 25 wherein there would be cancellation of debts, release of prisoners and slaves and return of land to the original tribal family but it seems to me that the theology and sociology of the Jubilee is entirely consonant with Jesus's preaching. R. North³⁰ quotes Eichrodt: 'The basic concept of this law is a consistent and energetic defense of the independence and freedom of all the citizens. In opposition to that dominant latifundism which imposes itself almost with the necessity of nature in the centres of Oriental culture as we meet it in such a crass form in Egypt and Babylon—there is proclaimed here an original view, which does not hand over economic development to exploitation by the portion of the population which dominates in capital; instead it seeks to restrain it within healthy bounds' (Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*). See also Hengel's *Property and Riches in the Early Church*.³¹

2) Ecclesiastical and civil disobedience

Jesus spares no criticism of the shortcomings of Judaism (e.g. his fierce denunciation of the Pharisaic School of Shammai³² in Matthew 23). He is adamant about the Jewish dietary laws using strong words which would not be acceptable in Victorian company (Mark 7:19). He insists on the Biblical regulations concerning the sabbath rather than the elaboration of prohibitions such as we find among the Pharisees but more particularly among the Qumran Covenanters. He repudiates scrupulosity over religious washing of hands, religious tithing of commodities not mentioned in the Biblical Law and also perhaps the laws about forbidden junctures, that is, growing diverse types of seed together (the parable of the darnel and the wheat, Matt. 13:25). Like the Pharisees of the School of Hillel he tried to mitigate the traditions with which men had surrounded the law³³, 1) because they burdened the poor who would be short of land as well as water, and 2) because it caused a severe class distinction against those who could not keep the ritual laws—often for purely economic reasons—and were despised as the *'am ha aretz* (the people of the land).

3) Jesus and Women

Even though Jesus did not include women among his apostles he did accept them as disciples: Luke 8:1-3 (the Galilean women); Luke 10:38-42 (Mary and Martha) and perhaps Luke 10:1-12 the sending out of the seventy, the gender here seems to be common. It is also possible that when he wished to illustrate the qualification for the kingdom that he placed a little girl in their midst (Mark

²⁸André Trocmé, *Jesus and the Nonviolent Revolution*, E.T. Herald Press, Scottdale, 1973.

²⁹John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus*, Eerdmans Grand Rapids, 1972.

³⁰R. North SJ, *Sociology of the Biblical Jubilee*, Rome, 1954.

³¹Martin Hengel, *Property and Riches in the Early Church*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1974.

³²Asher Finkel, *The Pharisees and the Teacher of Nazareth*, Leiden, 1964.

³³Louis Finkelstein, *Akiba Scholar, Saint and Martyr*, Meridian Books, Philadelphia, 1962 and Nahum N. Glatzer, *Hillel the Elder, the Emergence of Classical Judaism*, Schocken Books, New York, 1966.

9:36-37): *paidion* (child) can mean little girl or boy, the pronoun which the texts uses is neuter. But more importantly three pericopes show that Jesus met women at the very point where there was discrimination and social ostracisation. Firstly, he congratulates the menstruous woman who touched him and was cured on his way to raise Jairus's daughter. This is a very significant act. He should have regarded himself as defiled and expected a diminution of his power. If the woman came from an observant family she could not sleep with her husband, prepare food, partake of the priest's due, in fine her social and religious activities were severely or completely restricted. Through her healing the woman could take her rightful place in the family. Thus Jesus overlooks the laws of purity both in this case and in the incident of the Samaritan woman. Samaritans were considered menstruants from the cradle (*Niddah* 4:1) and by using her drinking vessel Jesus was showing that he did not observe the prohibitions against using Samaritan property and, in the case of drinking or eating vessels, being contaminated by her saliva.

Secondly, Jesus elevates the position of women in the pericope about Martha and Mary. Here Gerhardsson³⁴ has made a close parallel between this passage and Acts 6 (the choosing of the male deacons). He submits that behind both pericopes we have the Jewish idea of two lots, the lot of the one who does manual work and has no time for studying (and teaching) the Torah and the lot of the one who is free for the Torah. In Acts 6 the apostles are left free for the lot of the Torah, prayer and preaching, in Luke 10 Mary is commended for choosing this same lot and the Lord says that it will not be taken away from her. Luke probably inserted this incident in view of the number of women workers, including women teachers and deacons, in the early Church.³⁵

Thirdly, Jesus has compassion on the prostitutes who repent. In a fascinating article Duncan J. Derrett³⁶ has shown the awkward position in which the persistent woman with ointment placed Jesus. By Jewish Law an observer could not benefit from filthy gain (gain earned through prostitution, theft, tax-collecting, usury, etc.) and a prostitute could not make an offering to the Temple. But the woman was bringing perfume, which was probably bought at a great price with her colleagues and used as a tool of her trade to make themselves more attractive to their customers, she pours it over Jesus without giving him the chance to refuse. Judas makes a sensible suggestion, namely, that the ointment could have been sold and the proceeds given to the poor, for this was permitted, that is, to change the ill-gotten gains into another form and benefit from that. Jesus with wry humour and with knowledge of the Law remarks that the woman has done this with a view to his burial. Legally he is perfectly correct. Ill-gotten or non-kosher materials could be used for a corpse for a

³⁴B. Gerhardsson, *Memory and Manuscript*, Lund, 1963, p. 100.

³⁵Cf H. Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, E. T. Harper & Row, New York, 1960.

³⁶Derrett, *op. cit.*, pp. 266-278.

corpse was unclean in itself and could not be further polluted. Thus Jesus accepts the prostitute's gift for the Temple which is His body.

Throughout the Gospel we meet no criticism of women at all, only openness and kindness. After all God chose a woman, Mary, as the principle human figure in salvation history.

4) *Jesus and children*

Jesus blesses the little children (Mark 10:13 and par.). As this pericope comes directly after Jesus's discourse on divorce in all three Gospels it is possible that the children may have been *mamzerim*, bastards, that is, children born in unions within the forbidden degrees, or of second marriages while the first spouse was alive. A *mamzer* could not become a member of the religious community of Israel. I say this very tentatively. Further Jesus recognised the right of children to choose their own vocation and sometimes he demanded a radical break with families for those who wished to be his disciples (cf Matt. 8:22, let the dead bury their dead and Mark 10:29, Matt. 19:29 and Luke 14:26). We recall also the division of the families predicted in Mark 13:12 par.

Finally, Jesus maintains an open or not committed view towards the State. The Sermon on the Mount appears to advocate pacifism but Luke 22:35-38 concerning buying a sword could be interpreted to mean that self-defence was permissible even though Jesus did not avail himself of this. His answer to the question about the taxes to Caesar still remains enigmatic but at least he did not refuse to look at the image on a coin as the Zealots, Jewish nationalists, did.³⁷

In summary we can say that Jesus's words and actions are more provocative than those of Paul. Further, he places social concern higher on the list of qualifications for entry into the kingdom than the praeternatural or charismatic gifts. In Matt. 7:20-23 the evangelist represents his saying:

'So then, you will know them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord", will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?" And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness".'

The scene of the Final Judgment recorded in Matt. 25:31-46 differs radically from the judgment scenes in apocalyptic literature where the Son of Man both raises up and puts down the mighty and vengeance is achieved for the righteous (1 Enoch 46-47). In the passage from Matthew there are two points of interest. Firstly the sheep are divided from the goats on the grounds of social awareness and action. Secondly they enter the blessing of the Father although, in their

³⁷. . . they will never touch a coin on the ground that one should neither carry, nor look upon, nor make an image. . . . Hippolytus, *Refut. Omn. Haer.* ix. 26 quoted by S. G. F. Brandon. *Jesus and the Zealots*, Manchester University Press, 1967.

humility, they have not realised the good which they implemented. The judgment hinges solely upon the corporal works of mercy. The same is true in much of the teaching found in the Gospel of Luke.³⁸

Thus a study of the Gospel in distinction from St Paul calls us to a radical social sensitivity but one which is not to be achieved save through the grace of God, personal living faith in His Son Jesus and a continual communication and inspiration of the Holy Spirit who will teach us all things and bring to our remembrance all that Jesus said to us (cf John 14:26).

³⁸The author realises that she has not used a redactional critical methodology but is preparing this at more length in a book probably to be entitled *The Evolution of Social Consciousness in the Judaeo-Christian Tradition*.

The Papacy and the Historian VI: Kith and Kingship

Eric John

I want to take as my next vantage point from which to survey the traditions of papalism the achievement of the policy Gregory the Great had started—though it had acquired some accretions he might not have cared for very much—the confiding of the rule of the Church to a specially marked-off status group of ordained persons. This is usually called the Gregorian Reformation, after its most famous protagonist Gregory VII. This is very misleading, especially as it leads scholars to see Gregory VII's pontificate as the beginning of something when it is just as much a dead end. Gregory is supposed to have been an original and creative pontiff who saw the truth that the Church was subject to the Babylonish captivity of the lay princes of the day, notably the German Emperor (or potential Emperor to be strictly correct). He surveyed the great traditions of the Catholic religion, starting with St Paul, and by wielding his remarkable gifts of iron logic he laid the foundations of a recovery of Christian liberty. This meant in practice a hierarchical Church much more tightly governed than ever before but by clerics. At times Gregory's letters suggest he thought of the Church as one huge parish with himself as parish priest, the bishops, etc., as curates and the lay princes as a sort of churchwarden or leader of Catholic action. It is not true to say that