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The Inclusiveness and the Exclusiveness of the Gospel, as Seen in the Apostolate of Paul

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[ED. NOTE: This article is the first in a projected series of studies on Galatians. Other topics to be presented are "Faith, Not Works," "Faith and Works," "Liberty."]

OUR Lord promised the Spirit to His Apostles and said that when He came, He would convict the world concerning sin and concerning righteousness and concerning judgment (John 16:8). He was indicating thereby that the work of His Apostles would involve the same conflict and struggle with self-assertive man that had taken place in His own disputes with the Pharisees;¹ for, as Schlatter has pointed out, these three: sin, righteousness, and judgment, are central concerns of Pharisaic piety.² The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians is the chief document of the struggle within the church between the Gospel of Jesus Christ and Pharisaism, now a Christian Pharisaism.³ Galatians therefore sounds, with radical insistence, two notes of our Lord's proclamation which are basic to the existence of the church of all time: the all-inclusiveness of the Gospel, the fact that God's grace is as wide and as inclusive as man's need, that the kingdom of heaven is given to the poor, to the beggars who bring nothing but their need to God, the fact that the Christ of God has come to call sinners and not the righteous to repentance, that the Son of God is revealed by the Father to the simple and not to the wise, that the grace of God comes to man in spontaneous, universal fullness; and, as the obverse

of this, there is the brusque exclusiveness of the Gospel over against all earthly-human claims, conditions, and magnitudes, the fact that the grace of God which will refuse no petition will annihilate every demand of man; the fact that those who will not justify God and bow before Him when He calls their sin and offers them salvation on terms of forgiveness purely are setting aside the counsel of God for themselves (Luke 7:29, 30).

This double note of exclusiveness and inclusiveness runs through the whole Epistle to the Galatians and is found in the apology for the apostolate of Paul (chs. 1, 2) and in Paul's delineation of the new life of freedom from the law (chs. 5, 6) as well as in the more specific defense of His *kerygma* of salvation by grace through faith, without the works of the Law (chs. 3, 4). A full study of the inclusiveness and exclusiveness of the Gospel in the Epistle to the Galatians would take us beyond the scope of an article. We shall therefore concentrate on the apostolate of Paul as we find it portrayed and defended in the Epistle to the Galatians and confine ourselves to those passages outside chs. 1 and 2 where Paul is personally, that is, apostolically, involved. These sections may not illumine the topic under discussion as directly and as fully as chapters 3 and 4 might, but there is an advantage in letting this oblique light fall on the subject, for an oblique light will perhaps bring out more sharply the contours of the twofold reality of the Gospel, a twofold reality which the church is constantly tempted to simplify at the cost of sacrificing one or the other of the two elements and ultimately to the vitiation of both.

I

THE ALL-INCLUSIVENESS OF THE GOSPEL AS SEEN IN THE APOSTOLATE OF PAUL

Paul insists at the outset, in the salutation of the letter, upon the divine origin of His apostolate; his apostolate is neither derived from men, nor is it mediated by any man; Paul is an Apostle through Jesus Christ and God the Father (1:1). This insistence is more than an answer to the attack upon his apostolate, though it is that, too; in the question of his apostolate Paul sees the whole issue of the epistle involved; for the origin of that apostolate

was purely in the grace of God "the Father" seen in the face of Jesus Christ. Paul spells out the divine sovereignty of the grace that has laid hold of him and has made him an Apostle by pointing to the resurrection: the Father, who raised Jesus Christ from the dead, is the Author of his apostolate: the resurrection is, first, the crown and seal of God's redemptive act in Christ without which the Gospel is emptied of its content and the justification of the sinner is unthinkable (1 Cor. 15:14; Rom. 4:25); and as such it is, secondly, the ultimate revelation of God's power, of the "effectual working of the mastery of His strength" (Eph. 1:19 f.), the manifestation of God's glory (Rom. 6:4) — when Abraham in faith gave God His glory, he believed in Him as the God who raises the dead (Rom. 4:17, 20). Paul at the outset links his apostolate, and by implication links his Gospel, with a solely divine act of power and glory and grace, beyond all human possibilities, inaccessible to human devisings, that act which shuts out all possibilities of a human contribution. Man has as little to say and to contribute to the creation of an Apostle as he has to contribute to the resurrection of Jesus Christ or to the *fiat lux* of the first creation, to which Paul on another occasion compares his call (2 Cor. 4:6).

What is thus stated thetically in the salutation of the epistle is spelled out historically in Paul's account of his conversion and call (1:13-17). Paul's conversion was anything but a rectilinear development from what he had been in Judaism; it was a radical collision with all that he had been in Judaism, for he had been the persecutor of the church of God and had sought to destroy it; his conversion and call were a vertical and uncaused intervention of God in Christ; it was that love of God of which St. Paul speaks in Rom. 5:5-10, the love of God for men who are weak and incapable of any response to His love, God's love for the godless, for the sinner, for His enemy. Here, as in every notice of his conversion (1 Corinthians 15; 1 Timothy 1), Paul, far from blinking what he had been, underscores the fact that he had been, up to the very moment of his conversion, the resolute and completely consistent enemy of God. It was God's free good pleasure (εὐδόκησεν 15) which called him as it had called Moses and the prophets. It was the grace of God which called Paul

and creatively made him what he was to become, the Apostle who labored more abundantly than they all (1 Cor. 15:10). The initiative was all God's: before all accidents of Paul's history God had separated him out, from his mother's womb. Paul's conversion remains the classic example of the fact that it is not man's willing or running but God's mercy that counts (Rom. 9:16). How completely God's the will, the decision, the act in all this was, and how universal therefore its import, appears in the purpose of Paul's calling: "In order that I might proclaim the good news of God's Son *among the Gentiles.*" — Paul the Hebrew of the Hebrews, the Pharisee, the zealot for the traditions of the fathers, is turned one hundred and eighty degrees around by the mighty and gracious hand of God, to become the Apostle to the Gentiles. This is purely divine grace, and it is all-inclusive grace. When St. Paul speaks of his apostolate, the word "grace" is never far from his thoughts; so when in 2:9 he speaks of the fact that his apostolate was recognized by the Jerusalem Apostles, he says that they recognized the grace that was given him; they saw that God was at work in him and through him (2:8) and had entrusted him with the good news.

This intervention of a divinely sovereign grace in Paul's life gives him that large and whole-souled detachment which is so characteristic of him in Galatians and elsewhere. Questions which agitate the perverters of the Gospel simply lie outside his sphere of existence. He is the slave of Christ (1:10), of that Christ who gave Himself for men in order that He might remove them from this present evil world (1:4). Paul is forever removed from the values, standards, and magnitudes of this age by that act of God in Christ, and he has transcended all the distinctions of race and class which mark the course of this world. When the grace of God in Christ laid hold of him, he needed not consult with flesh and blood, with any human greatness to have that act confirmed in him (1:13-17); even the greatness of men in the church does not, ultimately, count any more (2:6). A death by crucifixion has intervened and has shut out decisively and forever the claim and conflict of this world (6:14); and St. Paul bears in his body, which had endured suffering and persecution for the Gospel's sake, the visible signs and seal of

this detachment. The *stigmata* of Jesus have marked him as exclusively His; none other has any right or claim upon him.

A consideration of the origin of Paul's apostolate has shown: here God counts fully and solely in the sovereignty of His grace — any limitation or restriction imposed upon that grace by standards of men, of this age, of the flesh, of the world, are a perversion and a denial of that grace. This same stark either-or is seen also in Paul's description of that which is the content of his apostolate: the Gospel. The Gospel, which St. Paul proclaims, lies on no human level, nor is it derived from men (1:11, 12). — It came to him by the revelation of Jesus Christ, and revelation is pure grace, mere condescension. Revelation is "the turning of the holy and gracious God to a mankind lost in sin and death, a revelation prepared for in Old Testament redemptive history, actualized in the appearance of Jesus Christ, His death and resurrection, awaiting its consummation in the parousia of the exalted Christ. . . . Revelation in the New Testament sense is . . . the Father of Jesus Christ offering Himself for communion to men."⁴ As such, as the ultimate revelation of the one God, who is not the God of the Jews only, but the God of the Gentiles also, it is absolutely universal revelation, "to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 3:29). St. Paul safeguards this universality of God's ultimate revelation throughout the Epistle to the Galatians by a series of stringent antitheses: the preachment of faith over against the works of the Law; the spirit over against the flesh; blessing over against the curse; the promise over against the Law; the son over against the slave; God over against the weak and beggarly elements of this world; Jerusalem above over against the Jerusalem now; freedom over against the yoke of slavery; grace over against the Law; life eternal over against corruption; boasting in the cross over against boasting in the flesh; circumcision and uncircumcision over against the new creation. How sharp and inexorable the antithesis between the Gospel and any other magnitude (including so great a magnitude as the very Law of God) is, appears from St. Paul's own experience as he describes it in 2:19: "I through the Law died to the Law that I might live to God." The gulf which separates the Law, with its exclusions

and divisions (Gal. 2:15; Eph. 2:14), from the universal Gospel is as deep and as definitive as death, the death of Christ, in which Paul partook in Baptism.

This revealed Gospel, this ultimate and infinite condescension of a gracious God, is in its freedom and universality at no one's disposal; no man may deal with it as he sees fit, not even Paul. Paul includes himself when he invokes the judicial wrath of God upon all perverters and distorters of the Gospel (1:8). To depart from it, to seek to control or modify it or to limit it, would be to nullify his apostolate and put himself under the anathema. So little is the Gospel limited by anything or anyone.

The call to the apostolate being what it is, the content of the apostolate being what it is, the life of the Apostle can have only one goal: the glory of God in Christ, the praise of the glory of His grace. "If I yet sought to please men, I should not be the slave of Christ," Paul says (Gal. 1:10). This verb "to please"⁵ is one of a number of Biblical expressions which indicate that God is the measure of all things, that all depends on His will and His judgment, that man depends absolutely upon God and *is*, as the rabbis had already said, what he is in God's eyes. St. Paul is not pleasing men but God in preaching the Gospel of free grace without any limitation whatsoever; he is the slave of the Christ who gave Himself as a ransom for many, that ultimate revelation of the serving and self-giving God. His apostolate is "for His name's sake" (Rom. 1:6) — in order that God's name which Christ reveals may be hallowed by all men everywhere.

The form which St. Paul's account of his early labors takes in 1:23, 24 points up this doxological character of his apostolate as he himself conceives of it. He was unknown in person to the churches of Judea; only they kept hearing about him that "he who once persecuted us is now proclaiming the faith which once he sought to destroy — and they glorified God in me." In proclaiming faith St. Paul had to proclaim grace (Rom. 4:16); and thus, in proclaiming faith, he was proclaiming that which glorified God, for only faith gives God His glory (Rom. 4:20). Paul did not set aside the grace of God by any limitation or restriction upon it (2:21); and so his "boasting" could only be in the Lord, in that act of God where He appears in the unique glory of His gracious

and righteous Godhead, in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ (6:14); any boasting in the flesh which obscures the universality of that grace of the Cross is ruled out.

All this can be seen plastically and visibly in Paul's exercise of his apostolate, in the Gospel-impelled and Gospel-informed Apostolic career of Paul, of which the Epistle to the Galatians particularly gives us such revealing glimpses. In the second chapter Paul describes the division of labor decided upon between him and James and Peter and John, the pillars of the Jerusalem church. It should be noted that this description (vv. 8,9) follows upon the recognition of the apostolate of Paul as fully valid. This division of labors cannot therefore be interpreted to mean the exclusion of any. Rather, it is designed to insure the inclusion of all. This diversity in the fields of labor does not mean separation, but rather common participation (*κοινωνία*, v.9) in one great task. And it should be noted also that this division is not formal but functional. It did not mean a mechanical "hands-off" restriction. Paul preached consistently in the synagog, as the record of Acts and the composition of his churches show; and Peter's First Epistle is addressed to churches which are predominantly Gentile. This division of labor is a good example of that diversity in the service of unity of which the Epistle to the Ephesians speaks (Eph. 4:11-16).

This unity in diversity (which insures universality) is seen also in a request made of Paul by the Jerusalem Apostles. They asked him to remember the poor of Jerusalem. St. Paul had even before been zealous to do that very thing (v.10). We know from Paul's letters how dear the collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem was to his heart and with what zeal he pursued its completion. He even went to Jerusalem at the risk of his life, as he well knew, in order to "seal this fruit" of an all-embracing charity to the church of Jerusalem.⁶ The liberty which Paul proclaimed to his churches had not served as an occasion for the flesh. The children whom he had begotten by the Gospel served one another by love, even across the boundaries of circumcision and prejudice. The grace, the free, universal grace, of which his apostolate was the vehicle, had taken concrete shape in the generosity of the Gentile Christians (2 Cor. 8:1-6).

How far the apostolate of Paul could go in reaching out to include all who called Jesus Lord, how delicately it could deal with the weak faith of Jewish brethren, and how resolutely it could receive all whom Christ had received, is clear from what is presupposed in 5:11. St. Paul there says that he has been charged with "preaching circumcision." That charge is no doubt an exaggeration of what Paul did in order to become all things to all men (1 Cor. 9:22), a distortion of such incidents as the circumcision of Timothy (Acts 16:3). The spirit of Christ, who could sit at table with both Pharisee and publican, without compromising the Gospel and the call to repentance to either, lived again in the Apostle Paul.

The Epistle to the Galatians is itself an exercise of the apostolate of Paul, and the manner in which Paul deals with the endangered Christians there is an instructive chapter in the inclusiveness of the Gospel. First of all, familiarity should not blind us to the miracle of Paul the Jew, the Pharisee, the rabbi, the zealot for the traditions of the fathers, writing to Gentiles of Galatia and calling them brethren. The mere fact of this letter is a testimony in history to the fact that Christ is our Peace, who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile and has destroyed the enmity in His flesh (Eph. 2:14); a witness to the fact that the first step toward the new mankind, which is one in Christ, is here realized. Paul sends greetings to "the *churches* of Galatia." He does not deny to the Christians of Galatia the title "church." They are baptized, the Word of God holds sway over them, and though they are veering toward the error, they are not yet committed to it. Weak and wavering though they may be, they are still church of Christ.⁷ St. Paul's attitude here is his own admonition to the Thessalonians translated into life: "We urge you, brethren, to admonish the disorderly, to comfort the faint-hearted, to lend a hand to the weak, and to be *patient toward all*" (1 Thess. 5:14). Even the opening word of the body of the letter, "I marvel" (1:6), combines gentleness with indignation, as Luther in his commentary notes. Paul is mindful, Luther says, of the admonition which he gives to his Galatians later on at the beginning of chapter six ("Brethren, if a man be overtaken in some fault, do you who are spiritual

correct him in a spirit of meekness") and adds that we in such cases should be like parents whose child has been bitten by a dog: we should sail into the dog but comfort the boy. So strong is the tension between tolerable weakness and intolerable error. And elsewhere, too, in this most rigorous epistle, the overruling tenderness of the Apostle breaks forth. In a veritable passion for his "little children," for whom he is again in travail until Christ be formed in them (4:19), he wishes that he might be present among them personally and change his voice and find yet one more way of calling them back in his perplexity over them. Always Paul would by all means gain some. The Epistle closes with a benediction, not with a rebuke or a warning, and the benediction itself closes with the word "brethren" (6:18).

In Paul's recollection of his first meeting with the Galatians (4:13, 14) the whole paradox of the apostolate of divine grace becomes apparent. He came to them in such "weakness of the flesh" that they might well have shrunk from him in horror; and yet it was just in this weakness that they received him as a messenger of God, as Christ Jesus. Paul insists on both facts. Both in his complete selflessness and in his unbroken assurance of power (the assurance that Christ Himself is speaking in him, 2 Cor. 13:3), the divinity of the Gospel, and thus its universal inclusiveness, becomes apparent: no strength of man can advance the Gospel, no weakness of man can impair it (cf. 2 Cor. 1:9, 4, 7).

How far removed the Apostolic consciousness of office is from any suspicion of doctrinaire arrogance, how completely it remains under the control of the divine grace, is seen also in the importance which Paul attaches to the *consensus fratrum* in 1:2: "All the brethren who are with me." The sovereign grace which produces the apostolate, an apostolate of divine independence, does not abrogate the brother relationship but creates it and sustains it. This aspect of the apostolate elsewhere finds expression in Paul's requests for the intercession of his churches (e. g., 2 Thess. 3:1; Rom. 15:30). And the same Paul who almost fiercely insists on the independence of his apostolate in chapter one can without contradicting himself in chapter two point to the fact that his apostolate was recognized by his fellow Apostles in Jerusalem. It is the spirit which animates the Lutheran Confessions. The

confessors are willing "to appear with intrepid hearts before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ and give an account" of their confession, and yet they, too, lay great stress on the *consensus fratrum et patrum*.

The apostolate of Paul in its origin, in its content, in its goal, and in its exercise is a concrete and vivid testimonial to the absoluteness, the unconditionally spontaneous, self-giving character of the grace of God in Christ, proclaimed and proffered in the Gospel, a grace which is therefore universal and inexorably all-inclusive.

II

THE EXCLUSIVENESS OF THE GOSPEL AS SEEN IN THE APOSTOLATE OF PAUL

The exclusiveness of the Gospel is based on and grows out of its inclusiveness, of which it is also a manifestation. Because the Gospel is as wide as the grace of God and as the need of man, therefore the Gospel is ruthlessly exclusive of and resists any change, elimination, distortion, addition, supplement, any reshaping, by man's thoughts or man's desires. Because the apostolate takes its whole color from the Gospel, because the Apostle is "separated unto the Gospel," the apostolate is vigorously polemical, to the point of being savage (5:12), and will risk any estrangement for the truth's sake, not callously or harshly, but in sorrow (4:16).

To appreciate the whole rigor of Paul's exclusiveness, we must recall just what his opponents in Galatia were. It is all too easy to reconstruct, by taking only part of the evidence and by misinterpreting the vigor and violence of Paul's polemics, a Galatian heresy which is a chimaera never seen on land or sea in all the subsequent history of Christendom and so to make the Epistle to the Galatians merely the record of a first-century bad dream, without any particular relevance for today. The very rapidity with which Paul's own children, the Galatians, were turning to the false teachers, astonishing as it is to St. Paul, ought to warn us against conceiving of it too crassly. Men as independent of one another as Adolf Schlatter and Wilfred Knox have pointed out that what the Judaizers brought to Galatia was very plausible mischief. Schlatter points out that Pharisaism was "in the first

years, if not the most violent, yet the most dangerous enemy of the church, because it combined with its contradictions of the rule of Jesus a potent piety.”⁸ And speaking specifically of the conflict which underlies the Epistle to the Galatians, he says: “For Paul the antithesis to Judaism was not yet a conflict concerning the divine sonship of Jesus; nor was the teaching that the church possessed the Holy Spirit involved in the struggle. The Pharisaic Christianity which sought to disturb the work of Paul obviously also maintained the thought of the Christ in the greatness which it had acquired by the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus and saw in the fact that Jesus reigned in the glory of God and gave His Spirit to the church the glorification of Israel.”⁹ And Wilfred Knox points up what is indicated by Gal. 3:3: that Paul’s opponents did not accuse him of preaching a false Gospel but rather implied that he had given the Galatians an incomplete Gospel.¹⁰ Indeed, in view of the fact that they accused Paul of being a man pleaser (1:10), it is perhaps not too much to say that they represented themselves as the bearers of the genuine old-line, rigorous orthodoxy of the authentic Jerusalem vintage. Such a positive emphasis and such a far-reaching consensus with Paul might readily blind the Galatians to the fact that they tended to thrust the cross aside as an episode which could be forgotten, as a misfortune which had been compensated for by the exaltation of Jesus; that they did not see in the death of Jesus the revelation of God’s judgment upon Israel’s guilt and that proffer of divine grace which gave the church reconciliation;¹¹ and it could blind them also to the fact that these men by reimposing the Law were actually canceling out the cross entirely. Paul’s whole background and history made him sensitive to all that was involved, and he threw the whole weight of his apostolate into the fray.

Men were trying to master the Gospel, trying to reshape it in their interests and for their purposes; in so doing they sought to undermine the authority of Paul, branding his apostolate as derived from men (the elder Apostles) or mediated by a man. Over against this error St. Paul asserts in the first verse of the epistle the wholly divine origin of his apostolate. The exclusion of every human element has a sharply polemic and exclusive edge

here. Men were trying to shift the center of gravity of the Gospel from the cross elsewhere, and so Paul at the very beginning (1:4) emphasizes the *σκάνδαλον* of the cross; and he emphasizes the effect, too, that this *σκάνδαλον* has on the lives of all who submit to it: they are removed by it from this present evil age. This marks the exclusiveness of the Gospel; there can be no Gospel that has not the offense of the cross in it; the Gospel, to be Gospel, must run counter to all the standards and norms of this age and cannot compromise with them. The Gospel ushers in a new, transcendent order of things, not to be classified with or harmonized with the magnitudes of the old order. The apostolate which is identified with this Gospel is exclusive and polemic as surely as it is inclusive and irenic.

There cannot be "another Gospel." The teaching of the opponents of Paul in Galatia is, however much they may conceal it from others or even from themselves, not another Gospel but the perversion of the one Gospel of Christ. In fact, Paul does not even concede that they are unintentionally perverting it: "they *want* to pervert the Gospel of Christ." One who has known the Gospel of Christ cannot claim ignorance, or an honest but misguided concern, as an excuse for his perversion of it. Man is responsible for what he does with the Gospel; and so St. Paul utters his anathema, invokes the wrath of God upon all perverters of the Gospel, excepting no one, not even himself, from the judgment of God if the Gospel suffers at his hands. A church may buy exemption from persecution by modifying the Gospel, by "wise accommodation" (whether in the direction of circumcision and the Law, as at Galatia, or whether in the direction of wisdom, as in gnostic Christianity, does not finally matter); a church can avoid the *σκάνδαλον* and thus avoid persecution (5:11); but the church should remember that it buys this exemption at a terrible price: It has lost the beatitude of our Lord upon the persecuted and has come under the anathema of Paul (6:12, 13).

The polemic exclusiveness of the Gospel comes out also in one of the last words in the epistle (6:16): Here Paul speaks of the Gospel (which he has summed up once more in v. 15) as a *κανών*, a norm, a standard of judgment; and on those who walk in

ordered ranks according to this norm or standard Paul invokes peace and mercy, as upon the true, the only Israel of God. This is the positive counterpart to the anathema of chapter one; but, whether for curse or for blessing, the Gospel is seen as a definite standard, which can be known and which can be applied, which cannot be relativized into indecisive obscurity; the Gospel delimits, marks off, rigorously and unsentimentally.

The fact that the apostolate has its goal in the glory of God in Christ (1:10; 1:23) has its polemic aspect also. Paul as an Apostle cannot and dare not please men. He cannot make the Gospel more "inclusive" than it is by his persuasive skill or by accommodations dictated by a human desire for success. The goal of the apostolate remains the glory of the jealous God who is involved in the Gospel, the God who will not give His glory to another. Where that glory is called into question in any way at all, man is struck again by the anathema.

This "intolerance" of the Gospel appears in Paul's exercise of his apostolate also. When Jewish Christians at Jerusalem demand that Titus be circumcised before they will admit him into fellowship with themselves (2:1-5), Paul recognizes with the sure instinct of one committed wholly to the Gospel that in the circumcision of this one Greek all is involved. If one link in the chain which binds all Christendom into one is broken, the whole is broken. In the circumcision of Titus the truth of the Gospel itself is at stake. The Gospel is not true if it is not a Gospel for Greek and Jew on equal terms, if it is not an all-inclusive good news, if it cannot create brethren across the boundary line marked by circumcision. And so St. Paul brands brethren who will call only a *circumcised* Greek a brother, as false brethren. They have laid profane hands on the universal Gospel and have thus forfeited their right to a place in the church.

Nor is there any respect of persons in this fight for the sole validity of the universal Gospel. No one, not even Peter, is exempt (2:11-14). Peter at Antioch very gradually and very unobtrusively introduced a distinction between himself and his Greek brethren in Christ by withdrawing from table fellowship with them. But this is nothing less than "not walking a straight course in accordance with the truth of the Gospel," and so Peter's conduct is hypocrisy,

a clash between conviction and action, and Peter stands condemned. By no one and at no point, however slight or seemingly inconsequential that point may appear to be, dare the universality of the Gospel be darkened, obscured, or limited. Where this does take place, Paul does not speak merely of a regrettable inconsistency or of an allowable weakness; he speaks of hypocrisy, and he speaks of condemnation.

St. Paul's Apostolic action in the Letter to the Galatians itself bears the imprint of this exclusiveness of the Gospel: It is not only in the fury with which he turns upon the misleaders of the young churches of Galatia, not only in the furious anathema of 1:8, 9, and not only in what is probably the fiercest expression that we have from his pen in 5:12, where he bids those who insist on cutting flesh go the whole way of self-emasculation after the manner of the devotees of Attis and Cybele in Galatia; the hard edge of exclusiveness becomes apparent also in his Apostolic dealings with those who are permitting themselves to be misled. The *adscriptio* is as brief as can be, simply: "To the churches of Galatia," with none of the honorific or endearing additions with which St. Paul is wont to adorn it. He is dealing with them paternally but, as it were, at arm's length. "Die gewollte Distanz des Apostels ist deutlich" (Schlier). The Galatians are still church, still brethren, but Paul makes clear with the complete candor of involved concern that they are on the way toward unchurching themselves, toward annulling brotherhood. Their existence as church and as brethren is on the razor's edge. When he calls his Galatians "foolish Galatians," that is not an intellectual accusation but a religious one, as the context shows, and he frankly expresses the fear (4:11) that his Apostolic labors on them may, after all, prove to have been in vain. And it is with an emphatic "I, Paul," throwing his whole weight as Apostle and as person into the statement, that he confronts them with the all-or-nothing character of the grace in Christ in its all-inclusiveness and in its sharp exclusiveness (5:2, 3).

These two elements of inclusiveness and exclusiveness coexist in Paul, conditioned by each other, in a living tension. And they must coexist in any church that deserves that high name. To attempt to resolve the tension between the two by compromise

or by a rational equalization instead of living in that tension is to lose both the warmth of inclusiveness and the strength of exclusiveness. Where the capacity for a genuine anathema is lost, there is no capacity for a genuine fraternal inclusion either; the church has become a club whose terms of admission are easy and whose ties are loose. Or, again, to attempt to resolve the tension by holding merely to the one or to the other is equally fatal. A missionary triumph at the cost of a confessional defeat will be no triumph, for it will not produce the church which is the body of Christ. And, conversely, a confessional rigor that has lost its missionary outreach and its capacity for a truly evangelical discipline (in the sense of Matthew 18), may serve to sustain a chattering sect, but it will not produce or sustain the witnessing, functioning church, the body of Christ.

St. Louis, Mo.

NOTES

1. F. Büchsel, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* (*Das NT Deutsch*, 4.), ad loc.
2. A. Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Johannes*, ad loc.
3. A. Schlatter, *Die Geschichte des Christus* (2d ed., 1922), pp. 403—407.
4. A. Oepke, *TbW*, III, 595, 596.
5. E. Stauffer, *Die Theologie des NTs*, p. 121 and n. 450.
6. Rom. 15:28; cf. 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8 and 9.
7. H. W. Beyer, P. Althaus, *Die Kleineren Briefe des Apostels Paulus* (*Das NT Deutsch*, 8.), p. 5.
8. *Die Geschichte des Christus*, 2d ed., p. 403.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 405.
10. *St. Paul* (Appleton Biographies, 1932), pp. 65, 66.
11. A. Schlatter, *Die Geschichte des Christus*, 2d ed., pp. 405, 406.