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JOHN MILTON AND ST. PAUL: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in

The Department of English

by

Darryl Lee Tippens
B.A., Oklahoma Christian College, 1968
M.A., Louisiana State University, 1971
December, 1973
For Ann—σύνε γυνής
Philippians 4:3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In appraising such a piece of work as this, one might paraphrase a line from Augustine's Confessions: "So small a work and so great the debts." If I cannot repay the debts, though, at least I can admit them, which I am happy to do. My most obvious debts may be categorized according to the two stages of my studies. First, I owe an immeasurable debt to a host of teachers who have, for over twenty years, instructed me in Pauline lore. In many respects this dissertation is the culmination of studies which began in my earliest years. The second stage of my studies began in 1969 when Dr. Lawrence Sasek of Louisiana State University introduced me to the music and power of Milton's poetry and ideas. Since then, he has continued to give me generous assistance, good judgment, and abundant encouragement. His wise counsel has had much to do with the fruition of my research. When I think of the debts I owe I also naturally think of Dr. Annette McCormick and Dr. William J. Olive who have been extraordinarily good to me, both in the classroom and in their advice on my research.

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ABSTRACT

This study demonstrates, through a comparative examination of Milton's prose and Paul's epistles, that Milton is a Paulinist in religion and that the Pauline context sheds light on several Miltonic problems.

Chapter I suggests that Paulinism (a distinctive, unified religious system) accurately describes Milton's theological position, and is more precise than other terms applied to Milton: e.g., Christian, biblical, unorthodox, Puritan, non-conformist, etc. Paul's extraordinary place in Western civilization, in Reformation thought, and in Milton's polemical prose demands such a comparative study.

Chapters II and III concern Milton as a Pauline theologian, while IV and V concern him as a Pauline prophet. Chapter II examines his doctrines of "the old creation" (creation and nature) and "the old Adam" (anthropology). Creation is inherently good but temporarily fallen, Logos-inspired, ex Deo, hierarchal, and God-revealing. Man shares the flawed nature of the first Adam. He is God's faded icon—divine in origin but profoundly marred. Man is a monistic being—body and soul are inseparable. Paul and Milton believe the woman to be subordinate to the man, but they are far from being misogynists.

Chapter III examines Milton's doctrines of "the new creation" (atonement, soteriology, eschatology) and "the new Adam" (Christology). The Adam/Christ antithesis of Romans pervades Milton's thought. He holds
to a forensic theory of atonement articulated by Paul and popularized by
the Reformationists. He accepts blood atonement but sees the cross as
a soteriological abstraction, inappropriate for artistic presentation.
Man is guilty of original sin through solidarity with Adam but is
released through mystical union with Christ. Life in the Kingdom is
both a present reality (as a private pneumatic order and as the church)
and an unrealized future event (to be founded by Christ). The Kingdom
is not an earthly political order with fleshly power. The belief that
body and soul perish together, and await the final resurrection, is
partially founded on Paul (I Corinthians 15). Milton's non-Trinitarian
and subordinationist Christology is actually Pauline. Christ is Lord,
Logos, Second Adam, Messiah, and Spirit.

Chapter IV argues that Milton, like the Apostle, is more a
religious prophet than a dogmatic theologian. Feeling "inspired" in
some sense, he is burdened with the divine commission to proclaim his
message. He is an exiled layman, passing judgment on the clergy and
functioning independently of all institutions. He is the athletic and
martial struggler, the ascetic agonist, for the Cause. He is charac-
terized by a prophetic temperament (haughty, humble, and intensely per-
sonal) and employs a strongly polemical style in preaching his message.

Chapter V considers the central message of the Pauline prophet—
liberty. True Christian liberty is theological and pneumatic, not
political, in origin. The Gospel's purpose is to liberate man from the
arbitrary restraints of external law. The prophet of liberty faces a
host of enemies (Judaizers, Gnostics, Pharisees). Using Pauline
metaphors of bondage and liberty, Milton vehemently attacks these opponents of freedom. Eventually, Milton accepts the radical and unorthodox Pauline view that the Law is fully abrogated and superseded by the internal rule of charity.

Chapter VI enumerates these conclusions: The Pauline context enhances one's appreciation and understanding of Milton's ideas. Milton handles the Bible honestly; some of his heresies do come from Scripture, just as he claims. His fidelity to Paul increased with time. The prophetic institution sheds light on his manner and message. And the renascence of Paulinism in our time helps secure the future of Milton's ideas.
JOHN MILTON AND ST. PAUL: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Men, whose life, learning, faith and pure intent,
Would have been held in high esteem with Paul,
Must now be named and printed heretics.
—'On the New Forcers of Conscience'

Wherefore, I pray you, be yee followers of me.
—Epistle to the Corinthians

The purpose of this dissertation is to bring together, in a systematic and thorough fashion, the prose works of two extremely important members of the Western Christian tradition—John Milton and St. Paul. My purpose is to study the significant parallels between these two men who are intimately united in their commitment to the Christian God.

While the first-century Apostle and the seventeenth-century humanist are very different from each other, while they are separated by vast social, philosophical, scientific, and religious changes, nevertheless, for important reasons—some obvious, some subtle—the writings of these two men belong together in a comparative study.

A comparative study of John Milton and St. Paul serves several useful purposes. First, it makes explicit certain strains of thought, certain ideas, beliefs, and points of view which Milton derived from his Christian past, thereby helping us to secure a more accurate and sympathetic understanding of what made Milton the man he was.
This comparative study more sharply defines the Christian context of Milton's thought. As others have pointed out, too many generalities attend past attempts to assess Milton's relationship to his tradition. This study, therefore, is aimed at moving us a little closer to a just understanding of Milton's intellectual "raw materials." St. Paul's genuine contribution to the thought of Milton has, in the past, been overlooked or submerged into anonymity by being considered simply part of the Bible. Yet, St. Paul had about as much as any man to do with the formation of the matrix of Milton's thought. A comparative study could heighten our perception of the possible or actual connections between the Renaissance man and his Christian past.

Second, by examining Milton's change in his attitude toward Paulinism, we may achieve a more precise understanding of Milton's unique intellectual and religious development. The fact that Milton emphasized certain Pauline ideas, and minimized or ignored others is instructive. And Milton's changing response to Paulinism in the years of great controversy is helpful to our judgment of the man.

Third, a comparative study of St. Paul and John Milton sheds light on peculiar Miltonic problems that have for years been fuel for discussion—his personality, his renunciation of orthodoxy, his attitude toward women, etc. These topics, and others like them, are much more comprehensible in their Pauline context.

Fourth, a comparative study gives the historian of ideas a clearer understanding of the history of Pauline thought in the seventeenth century. Modern theologians commonly assert that St. Paul was a
considerable influence upon the development of Western thought. 1 Paul's mark on Milton in particular, and upon seventeenth-century Protestantism in general, is distinguished and worthy of examination. In the heated theological debates of Milton's day, as in the intramural church fights of the preceding centuries, St. Paul was a central figure. So, a study of Milton's Paulinism could serve as a paradigm of Paul's influence on the leftward movement of Protestantism in the seventeenth century.

There have been, of course, numerous studies of Milton's religion. In order to understand a man like Milton, the critic must come to terms with Milton's religious experience, and so far critics have not been reluctant to do so. One may justly wonder, therefore, what new or important observations can be made. In response, it is most important for us to notice that there are actually several aspects to Milton's religion. Some of these aspects have been rather widely examined, while others have been all but neglected. Perhaps most popular has been the comparison of Milton's doctrinal ideas to the theological system of orthodox Christianity. Such studies often center on Milton's heterodoxy, for example, on Arianism, mortalism, anti-Calvinism, and the creation heresy. There have been many monographs concerning Milton's theology. These studies may be subdivided into several parts (e.g., specific doctrines such as atonement or Christology, comparisons with

1 Consider, for example, Henry Chadwick, The Enigma of St. Paul (London: Athlone Press, 1969), pp. 3, 7-8: "Our minds and consciences are different from what they would have been had he never lived. . . . In the history of moral ideas of the western world the Pauline letters mark an epoch."
Protestant and Puritan ideas, comparisons with historical or contemporary heretical movements, comparisons with the Church Fathers, and comparisons with Judaism and Semitic writings).\(^2\)

One aspect of Milton's religion which has received considerably less attention is his relationship to the Christian Scriptures. In this present study, I wish to make a clear distinction between Milton's relationship to the Pauline Biblical documents and Milton's relationship to theology or to the Christian tradition. Although the Bible is vitally related to theology and the tradition, they should not be confused, for much orthodox doctrine is not even apparent in the documents of nascent Christianity that the church later canonized. The Bible operated on, formulated, and conditioned traditional Christian theology; but they are not synonymous.\(^3\) Most studies of Milton's religion, while drawing from


\(^3\)The Milton student who is content to see Christianity only this side of Nicea and Chalcedon, this side of Augustine, Aquinas, and Luther will have a very imperfect perception of the religious system Milton tried to reinstate in his own day. The later Greek, Latin, and
Scripture, largely ignore it for a study of post-biblical theology or
tradition. We have heard for some time of Milton's debt to Augustine,
the Reformation Fathers, the Semitic writings, and other Christian
sources, but we have heard curiously little of Milton's debt to the
Bible itself. Perhaps it is due to our age's unfamiliarity, even uneas-
iness, with the Bible. Harris Fletcher observes a perplexity in critics
when they come to Milton and the Bible. But beyond this possibility,
it may just be that we have assumed that when Milton's theology has been
covered, the Bible has necessarily been included. In other words, the
assumption may have prevailed that the Bible and the Christian tradition
or theology are rather the same category. Thus, we find much discussion
of Milton's Puritanism or his Reformation outlook but find little close
study of the biblical documents themselves.

Reformation theologies are not synonymous with the Pauline Gospel.
Schweitzer warns: "Paulinism must be regarded as distinct entity; very
often Paul's doctrine has been included in the 'Religion of the New
Testament' or taken together with the Johannine and Early Greek theology.
On this method only false results can be looked for. Paulinism, and
therein lies the special problem which it offers to scholarship, is an
original phenomenon which is wholly distinct from Greek theology."

Paul and His Interpreters: A Critical History, trans. W. Montgomery

4The Intellectual Development of John Milton (Urbana: University

5One may divide the biblical studies related to Milton into
categories: 1. Milton's attitude toward Scripture and his system of
hermeneutic. 2. The importance of certain English and Latin transla-
tions. Typical of this approach is Harris Fletcher's The Use of the
3. The Bible as a literary influence upon Milton (biblical rhetoric,
genre, narrative, theme, characterization, etc.). This kind of study is
the most common and can be found in most detailed studies of his art.
This approach usually treats the Bible as a single literary unit.
4. Another approach is to study Milton in the light of a single
To be sure, Milton should be studied in the context of the larger Christian tradition. After all, he drank of it deeply. He read all the Christian sources available to him, and no doubt was molded by them. But it is quite certain that he was not equally indebted to all the sources available to him. If one were to construct a hierarchy of sources according to the value Milton placed on them, the Bible would have to be at the top of the list—not Augustine, Calvin, or some Reformation catechism. Yet, with the exception of Sims, Fletcher, and a few others, Milton students compass land and sea to search out new sources, leaving unexamined the best source of all—the domain of the canon. Harris Fletcher's 1929 statement in The Use of the Bible in Milton's Prose still has validity: "As subjects of special study Milton's knowledge and use of the Bible have been almost completely neglected by scholars and students of his work. . . ."

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6Fletcher, p. 9.
It would be a great mistake to confuse Milton's debt to the Bible with his debt to the Christian tradition (whether contemporary Protestant, early Reformation, Medieval, or ancient), for Milton always (theoretically at least) sharply differentiated between them. In \textit{Eikonoklastes} he writes: "For all antiquity that adds or varies from the Scripture, is no more warranted to our safe imitation, then what was don the Age before at Trent" \textit{(V, 183)}.\footnote{All references to Milton's prose are to the Columbia Edition edited by Frank Allen Patterson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931-1938), 18 vols. Citations will appear in the body of the paper. I have generally disregarded the italics as used in the Columbia Edition, substituting quotation marks where quotations are intended.} He looked back to the "purer times" \textit{(III, 14)} where he could drink the "plentiful and wholesom fountains of the Gospell" \textit{(III, 82)}. Milton's passionate aim was to lift the moldy veil of Christian tradition and gaze anew at the shining gospel. Of course, Milton never fully succeeded. He always remained a captive of the English Renaissance and the Protestant movement. His seventeenth-century presuppositions (just as do our twentieth-century presuppositions) blocked his true understanding of the Bible. But Milton tried—and in my opinion succeeded reasonably well—to forsake the Christian tradition in order to return to the original Biblical message. Milton found it easy (distressingly easy to some) to reject parts of the tradition which did not coincide with his interpretation of Scripture. He relished trampling "the broken reed of tradition" \textit{(III, 81)}. He could lightly sweep away sixteen hundred years of "rubbish" \textit{(XV, 265)} (the tradition), just as the Apostle Paul could reject all his tradition for the sake of Christ: "Yea, doubtlesse I thinke all things but losse for the excel­ lent knowledge sake of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have counted all
things loss, and do judge them to bee dung, that I might winne Christ."8

Under Milton's critical scrutiny, no belief was secure merely because it bore the label "Christian tradition." When he wrote De Doctrina he sincerely claimed to have adhered to Scripture alone:

For my own part, I adhere to the Holy Scriptures alone; I follow no other heresy or sect. I had not even read any of the works of heretics, so called, when the mistakes of those who are reckoned for orthodox, and their incautious handling of Scripture first taught me to agree with their opponents whenever those opponents agreed with Scripture. If this be heresy, I confess with St. Paul, Acts xxiv.14. "that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets;" to which I add, whatever is written in the New Testament. Any other judges or paramount interpreters of the Christian belief, together with all implicit faith, as it is called, I, in common with the whole Protestant Church, refuse to recognize. (XIV, 15)

Since Milton's desire to return to Scripture, and Scripture alone, was so intense, it is logical for the student of Milton to bring the two together to see their relationship.

The task of scholarship often includes the process of refining one's terms. In the case of Milton, a man whose intellect is rich and complex, this task is essential. In this study I insist on proceeding beyond the general terms applied to Milton's religion—terms like "Christian," "Protestant," and, above all, "Puritan," because they are imprecise instruments. While I do accept their general and descriptive value, I find it essential to move beyond them in order to fulfill Fletcher's wise goal of replacing "many of the more loosely contrived generalizations

8Phil. 3:8. Biblical references will be to the Authorized Version, 1612 edition printed by Robert Barker.
which have heretofore held sway." To say that something is "Christian" is to speak vaguely, for Christianity is a large body of disparate components. Christianity has always been surprisingly syncretistic, willing to baptize and welcome many a new idea. Even nascent Christianity had a surprising variety of strains according to the conclusions of modern biblical research. Early Christianity flowered in a Mediterranean culture which was exceedingly syncretistic, and modern biblical scholarship has spent much effort in trying to sort out the various ingredients of Apostolic Christianity. There is the Judaistic influence (which is itself quite complex; e.g., Diaspora Judaism, Pharisaic Judaism, Apocalyptic Judaism, etc.). Then there were the Hellenistic forces which seem to bear heavily on the first centuries of the church. Later, as the church developed westward, the heterogeneousness of the church only increased. So, we have a considerable problem in determining what is "Christian." Christianity has never been a monolithic society of rigid beliefs, not even before Luther, contrary to the popular view. To be sure, though, the problem of the definition of Christianity only increased after the Lutheran revolt. If we are going to understand Milton, we are going to have to seek out a term more precise than "Christian" or "Christian theology" or "Christian tradition."

One could substitute the term "Puritan" for "Christian" in defining Milton's mind; but, unfortunately, we find that this narrowing of the definition is little improvement. As Arthur E. Barker points out in

Milton and the Puritan Dilemma the term "Puritan" has had a variety of meanings ascribed to it: 1) Some historians equate Puritanism with Presbyterians. 2) Others "use it to mean the beliefs of all who wished to purify the Church of England, including some supporters of prelacy." 3) Woodhouse's larger definition includes Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Separatists, and Anabaptists. The important unifying element for Woodhouse is the active ideal of the holy community, whether spiritual or temporal. 4) J. W. Allen includes under the term only the Presbyterians and Congregationalists before 1640, since after that date "it cannot be defined as a set of opinions upon any one subject." He narrows the unifying thread among Puritans to their concept of election and "the idea of Hell." When we apply the term to Milton, no matter how it is defined, we find problems with it. The first definition does not apply, for Milton broke sharply with the Presbyterians. Definitions two and three would include Milton but they would make incompatible bedfellows for him. He would quote II Cor. 6:14 (as he often did on other occasions) in response to such a classification:

"Be not unequally yoked with the infidels: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousnesse? and what communion hath light with darkenesse?" As definition four points out, the fragmentation after 1640 (when Milton did most of his polemical writing) makes the term doubtful. Thus, in applying the term "Puritan" to Milton we find that it does not precisely fit, and so we conclude that if he was a Puritan, he was his own kind of Puritan.

It is my suggestion that a more precise way of measuring Milton's religious position is to employ a term which is more exact and definable. Paulinism is one such term. Its characteristics are relatively coherent, unified, and ascertainable.

I have made the claim already that there have been few specific studies of Milton and the Bible. I do not suggest, however, that critics have overlooked Milton's debt to the Bible. Of course it is not at all new to point out Milton's knowledge of and use of the Bible. His commentators and editors have not failed to point out specific references to Bible passages. And if one were to collect all the Milton studies which in some general way resort to the Bible, he would find it a mountainous accumulation. But there have been few specifically biblical studies as such. James H. Sims studied some of the literary effects of the Bible on Milton's epic poems. His study concentrates on the Bible's influence on Milton's diction, dramatic technique, and epic unity—rather than on the influence of its actual theological content. Only one chapter deals with the thematic role of the Bible in the epics. Sims also includes a valuable table of Scripture allusions. Harris Fletcher produced *The Use of the Bible in Milton's Prose* in 1929, the only lengthy treatment of the Bible's relationship to the prose. His book was a useful beginning point in my own study, but it only establishes certain important benchmarks, such as which English and Latin translations of the Bible Milton used, how and when Milton cited, paraphrased, and translated the Bible, and the extent of Milton's knowledge of the biblical languages. Fletcher included a valuable but incomplete appendix of
Scripture citations and quotations in Milton's prose. He, even more than Sims, ignores the thematic content of Scripture—and its influence upon Milton.

In addition to brevity and incompleteness, another objection to past studies of Milton and the Bible such as Sims and Fletcher have given us is that they fail to recognize the great variety of Scripture. The diversity of early Christianity, which I mentioned earlier, was reflected in the documents that formed the New Testament canon. The Bible appears even more diverse when one considers the Hebrew Scriptures. Just as one would not look upon an anthology of Greek drama as a unified production (in spite of valuable parallels and certain agreement), so we should not view the Bible as a unit. It is a collection of documents, not a single document. Biblical scholars insist upon the individuality of the biblical materials, and the Milton student who wishes to understand Milton's use of the Bible must understand this diversity. The portrait of the church in the book of Luke is not the same as that of St. Paul. The Evangelists had unique intentions, and thus differ from each other, and from St. Paul. The Hellenistic tendencies in Paul's message separate it from the Palestinian Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels. The question, then, for the Milton scholar is not simply: Did Milton quote the Bible? And what of it? But rather it is: What were Milton's

\footnote{My own study of Milton's references to the Pauline letters in Milton's prose shows Fletcher's table to be quite incomplete. For example, Fletcher lists 41 references to I Corinthians in the prose exclusive of De Doctrina, but I find 57. Fletcher cites 16 references to II Corinthians, but I find no less than 26. Fletcher's study is highly preliminary in its treatment of the Bible and Milton's prose.}
various responses to the various documents of the canon? We know that from some he lifted his narratives (Genesis, Judges, Luke). Others offered him well-known stories to which he could allude, giving his epics "authoritative reality" (Sims' term). Some served as patterns for imaginative works which were never realized (biblical drama based on Job or Revelation). But in the case of the Pauline epistles, we find a collection of writings by a single ingenious mind which profoundly affected Milton's whole personality. It was Paulinism, as I hope to show, which colored and tempered Milton's reading of all the other documents of the Bible. When Milton "gospelized" the Old Testament, he actually was "Paulinizing" it. So, tables such as Fletcher's or Sims' do not tell the full influence of Paul, even though they indicate a great influence.

In stressing the diversity of the Biblical documents—a realization which has partly resulted from nineteenth and twentieth-century biblical scholarship—we must not think that Milton was himself a modern biblical critic fully aware of this diversity. But Milton was an extremely careful reader of his Bible, and he was a biblical scholar in his own right; therefore, it is not impossible that he was sensitive to the individuality of the Scriptural documents and of the religious systems expressed therein. In fact, it is altogether logical that his liberal tendencies in biblical interpretation would have taken him in this direction. Milton surpassed his generation in his hermeneutics.

Interestingly enough, it was in Milton's own age, too, that the uniqueness of Paulinism began to be perceived. Chadwick tells us that since the seventeenth century scholars have sensed the contrast between the gospels and the epistles (The Enigma of Paul, p. 6).
in several points. He saw the fallacy of proof-texting (VII, 119), though he slipped into it himself. He accepted the spirit of the message, rather than the letter. He was never a biblicist confined to "the verbal straightnesse of a text" (IV, 135). Thus, he took the "pattern of St. Paul's reasoning" (IV, 265; III, 417) to make a spiritual, not a literal, application. He insisted on interpreting Scripture in its literary and historical context (which anticipates the nineteenth-century historical-critical method). He was sensitive to the literary qualities of the Bible; thus, Paul's statement in Galatians 5:12 is "a zealous imprecation, not a command" (VI, 17). On the subject of divorce, Jesus is speaking hyperbolically to evil Pharisees (IV, 259; III, 429-430).

But, again, Milton never admits to the kind of diversity among the New Testament documents that we know is there. He probably never fully saw the uniqueness of Paulinism, or its differences from the Johannine or Synoptic traditions. But we do not have to perform the anachronism of making Milton a modern Bible critic, in order to see the unique effect of Paulinism on John Milton. Milton would not have to be aware of the individuality of Paulinism in order for that Paulinism to affect him deeply. It is possible that the influence of Paul on Milton occurred without Milton being conscious of "Paulinism" as such.

If we accept the claim of modern biblical scholarship that the Bible is a collection of diverse documents, then Milton's peculiar relationship to those documents is somewhat more complicated than earlier studies might indicate. Rather than try to define Milton's relationship to all the biblical materials, I have chosen to study Milton's
relationship with what I consider to be the most important segment or unit in the Bible—insofar as Milton is concerned—the Pauline corpus.

My reasons for selecting the Pauline epistles, a relatively small portion (about five per cent) of the Bible, are several.

First, a study of St. Paul and Milton is warranted simply because St. Paul had an enormous influence upon the culture of which Milton was a part. Paul's influence was so extensive that such a study would be valid even if there were no known direct connection. Though we may be unconscious of it today, St. Paul is an important contributor to our civilization. This "second founder of Christianity" is, according to Professor Whiteley, "the greatest innovator that the Christian church has known." Samuel Sandmel echoes Albert Schweitzer's dictum that Paul transmuted Christianity. William Wrede assessed Paul's legacy in these terms: "For Paul it demonstrably was who first introduced into Christianity the ideas whose influence in its history up to the present time has been deepest and most wide-reaching. Tertullian, Origen, Athanasius, Anselm of Canterbury, Luther, Calvin, Zinzendorf—not one of these great teachers can be understood on the ground of the preaching and historic personality of Jesus; their Christianity cannot be comprehended as a remodelling of 'the gospel'; the key to their comprehension,


though of course sundry links stand between, is Paul." F. F. Bruce claims that "Paul is one of the most significant figures in the history of civilization. To him, far more than to any other man, Christianity owes the direction which it took in the first generation after the death and resurrection of Jesus." The place of Paul, then, as a contributor to our Christian civilization is important enough to warrant a comparative study, aside from any direct genetic relationship. A comparison would be enlightening simply as a study of the history of an idea.

Second, and a corollary to Paul's influence on the Western Christian tradition, is Paul's special place in the Protestant Reformation, and in the intense theological debates of Milton's England. "The Reformation," observes Schweitzer, "fought and conquered in the name of Paul." Paul's own practice seems to have invited this use of him. A close study of the Paul of the New Testament reveals an intense polemical fighting for his revelation of the Lord. It is significant for our study of Milton that Paulinism has repeatedly been present in the church's controversies. Thought a schismatic in his own day, and later


vindicated as orthodox by the writer of Luke-Acts and the second-century church, Paul was still appropriated by the heterodox repeatedly. Thus, in the second century, the Gnostic Marcion claimed an expurgated version of the Pauline epistles as his true Scripture. Tertullian called him "the apostle of the heretics."¹⁸ In the sixteenth century, it was Martin Luther's fresh personal discovery of the meaning of the Epistle to the Galatians which gave to the Lutheran movement the stress on grace as opposed to Rome's seeming legalism.¹⁹ Milton, conscious of Paul's identification with the heretics, both in Paul's own day and in subsequent centuries, was certainly influenced by the apostle. Thus, in his poem "On the New Forces of Conscience" he takes his stand with the "heretic" Paul against the "orthodox" church. In De Doctrina he follows the apostle Paul in opposition to the received doctrines: "If this be heresy, I confess with St. Paul ... so worship I the God of my fathers" (XIV, 15). Perhaps it was this appropriation of Paul by the unorthodox which caused some Jesuits to disparage St. Paul calling him "a hotheaded person," which occasioned Milton's indignant knuckle-rapping (III, 21-22). E. F. Scott suggests that while the orthodox church has quietly and officially accepted St. Paul, it has in fact held aloof from true Paulinism, and Paulinism has remained a minority view in


¹⁹The revolutionary effect of Paul on Christianity seems to continue. In the twentieth century Karl Barth's Commentary on Romans radically challenged traditional Protestant Liberalism, and changed the direction of theology.
the church.\textsuperscript{20} This statement is significant in considering the seventeenth-century Church of England torn by dissonant voices. In some ways Paul figured in—some would say fueled—many of the chief church controversies (predestination, election, original sin, faith vs. works, Christian liberty, etc.). In Milton, as in similar Christian innovators, one senses the implicit feeling that while others have renounced the true tradition Paul received from the Lord, Milton is Paul's true follower and interpreter.

So, a comparative study of Milton and Paul is important because of Paul's general legacy to our civilization and because of his particular bearing on the theological struggles of Milton's day.

But a third reason, most important of all, for this study is that Milton, by his own admission, is deeply indebted to Paul. Irene Samuel claimed that no one to her knowledge had ever doubted that Milton knew the Dialogues of Plato.\textsuperscript{21} With more certainty could one say that no one had ever doubted that Milton knew—and knew thoroughly—St. Paul's epistles. His debt to Paul is marked out on nearly every page. St. Paul is "that transcendent Apostle" (V, 84).\textsuperscript{22} Milton preferred "the heavenly teaching of S. Paul" to "the hellish Sophistry of Papism" (III, 247). In debate "the pattern of St. Paul's reasoning" helped him to disprove

\textsuperscript{20}Contemporary Thinking About Paul, p. 355-356.


\textsuperscript{22}One wonders if Milton, in using this expression, intends to elevate Paul in some way above the other Apostolic writers as did Marcion and some of the Christians in Corinth (I Cor. 1:12).
the sophistry of his opponents, and St. Paul was his intimate co-defender who always guaranteed him victory: "And there is yet to this our exposition, a stronger siding friend, then any can be an adversary, unless Saint Paul be doubted. . . ." (IV, 185).

Milton's great respect for St. Paul is also evident from the large number of citations and quotations from the Pauline corpus in Milton's prose and poetry. James Sims lists about 340 references to Paul's epistles in Milton's epics. Harris Fletcher also records a heavy debt to St. Paul in the prose works. Although the Pauline epistles compose only about one-fourth of the New Testament, according to Fletcher's table 53 per cent of Milton's New Testament references in the tracts are to St. Paul. According to Fletcher's table, 26 per cent of Milton's Old and New Testament allusions in the tracts are to St. Paul, although St. Paul wrote only about 5 per cent of the Bible. For two reasons, Milton's debt may be greater than these statistics indicate. First, Fletcher's table is incomplete. But if Fletcher's table is incomplete on the other books of the Bible to the same degree that it is incomplete on the Epistles, then the percentages would not change much. But for a second reason, we may justly say Paul's influence is greater than the tables indicate. Milton's use of the Bible was itself influenced by St. Paul. Just as St. Paul "gospelizes" the Old Testament, so does Milton. Milton found in St. Paul's exegesis of the Hebrew Scriptures a

23 The percentages given above are the result of my own computation based upon Fletcher's tables. The percentages are slightly lower in De Doctrina: about 40 per cent of the New Testament citations are Pauline, and about 20 per cent of the Old and New Testament citations are Pauline.
hermeneutical principle that governed his own exegesis of the Old Testament. When seeking support for his position that Scripture permits husband and wife to separate when they are unsuited for each other, he "Paulinizes" a passage from Deuteronomy:

He [God] teaches, that an unlawfull mariage may be lawfully divorc't. And that those who having throughly discern'd each others disposition, which ofttimes cannot be till after matrimony, shall then find a powerful reluctance and recoile of nature on either side, blasting all the content of their mutual society, that such persons are not lawfully married, (to use the Apostles words,) "Say I these things as a man; or saith not the Law also the same? for it is writ't, Deut. 22. 'Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds, lest thou defile both.' Thou shalt not plough with an Oxe and an Asse together," and the like. I follow the pattern of St. Pauls reasoning: "Doth God care for Asses and Oxen," how ill they yoke together ... what can be a fouler incongruity, a greater violence to the reverend secret of nature, then to force a mixture of minds that cannot unite. ... (III, 417)

Milton repeats the same interpretation of Deuteronomy in Colasterion. (IV, 265) In the poetry, one finds this same Pauline exegesis at work. Paul's concept of the First and Last Adam ("For as by one mans [First Adam] disobedience many were made sinners, so by that obedience of that one [Second Adam] shall many also bee made righteous." Romans 5:19) is taken up by Milton in Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained. The Pauline doctrine of Adam is fundamental in John Milton; it is implicit in the openings to the two epics, and in much of the prose. So, the story of the Fall, while based on the Genesis narrative, is actually Pauline in import. A simple table of biblical references would not measure this Pauline exegesis of the Old Testament.

Aside from the place of Paul in our civilization and his role in the theological struggles in Milton's day, and aside from Milton's frequent allusion to the Pauline epistles, there is another reason for studying Milton in the light of Paul. I refer to their similarity as prophets. In manner and message Milton seems to have shared much in common with religious prophets in general and with the Pauline order of prophet in particular. Whether by fate or design, whether a result of Milton's close study of St. Paul or a cause of it, Milton and Paul had some surprisingly similar experiences and outlooks. The Pauline experience, one which included an intimacy with the Divine, trial, suffering, loneliness, imprisonment, and even rejection by a sizeable portion of the church, was confirmed in Milton's own life. No other sacred writer has left a record of the anguish of living in difficult times, who knew

25It is not a minor point that for both men, their personalities and their biographies always seem to figure in the discussion. In fact they fuse themselves with the Cause they represent. One case among many is the relationship of their physical ailments to their writings. (There is a tradition that St. Paul's weakness was eye trouble, too.) Of course, it is only coincidental that both men had ailments, but it is important that in both cases their opponents use their ailments against them as a sign that God has shown them disfavor. And it is even more significant that Milton is so conscious of St. Paul's similarity to himself that he appeals to Paul for vindication. Recalling the passage from II Corinthians 12:5-10 in which St. Paul recounts his famous "thorn in the flesh" as a weakness given him by God, not for punishment but to demonstrate God's greatness, Milton writes in Defensio Secunda: "There is a way, and the Apostle is my authority, through weakness to the greatest strength. . . ." (III, 243; 248-249). This is an important Pauline theme developed in many passages (II Cor. 11:30; II Cor. 1:5-10; II Cor. 4:8-10; Phil. 3:7,8). Milton's conscious paralleling of his own life with Paul's occurs elsewhere also. In a letter to Richard Jones, Milton compares himself to St. Paul, Richard to Paul's younger companion Timothy, and Richard's mother to Timothy's mother, Eunice. Such biographical paralleling is an important clue that Milton was quite aware of St. Paul as a model for his own life. It was St. Paul, after all, who said, "Be yee followers of me" (I Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Phil. 3:17).
the full meaning of suffering, and who could interpret it in metaphysical terms. No one else expressed the urgency to obey the call of God in a world of unbelievers. "Woe is me, if I preach not the gospel."

St. Paul's statement is Milton's apology for his own prophetic mission. (VI, 93; cf. III, 231-232). It is likely that Milton's own disappointments and sufferings confirmed the value of Paul (in the same way modern interest in Paul among liberal theologians increased in the twentieth century with the rise of a more pessimistic outlook). St. Paul, very much like Milton centuries later, embarked on a sea of harsh disputes; he sought to direct the community of God on a pilgrimage away from the bondage of Sinai (which included his own past) toward a new land of freedom and grace. How much this calling was adopted by Milton (although the terms were different) is made evident by the number of times Milton cites St. Paul's comments on liberty. But the sailing was fraught with danger. Just as Paul sought to avoid at all costs the two extremes of legalism and libertinism, so did Milton. Just as Paul took up the pen as a task almost incidental to his ministry in the churches, in order to give vital direction, so Milton left off his preferred occupation to write his own kind of "epistles" in the form of tracts to give direction to the people of God. They employed a strong polemic style, not only to condemn the unbelievers outside the movement, but also to castigate the inconstant members of the community of faith. The loneliness of the struggle seems to have been intense at times. Both men not only were estranged from the dominant orthodox society, but even within the minority cause itself, they find themselves in the left camp of the cause.
But there was that inner assurance of the mind that—as prophets of God—they were building their fame in heaven, not on earth.

Milton is like St. Paul in another important way: the particular topics of controversy which engaged Milton's attention in the 1640's and 1650's are closely related to issues which St. Paul commented on. To be sure, Milton does not say what Paul said, but it is evident that Paul had a considerable influence on the discussion. Milton's doctrine of charity, his attitude toward pagan philosophy, his austerity, his sometimes harsh prophetic posture, his comment on women, his understanding of redemption, and above all, his concept of liberty—all these owe something to St. Paul. We should not fail to note that these topics—many which have been the subject of much critical discussion—are legacies of Paulinism. Concerning freedom, Milton, I hope to make evident, saw St. Paul involved in the same cosmic struggle for liberation that he was engaged in. Thus, while the ostensible topics were ecclesiasticism, marriage, and politics, Milton was joining his "stronger siding friend" in the battle for Christian liberty.

In addition to those given above, I would like to add one last reason—perhaps not a scientifically measurable one, but nonetheless an apparent one. Herbert Agar called it "affinity of spirit," in his comparison of Plato and Milton.26 I find Milton and Paul have a genuine similarity of outlook and temperament. This judgment does not come from counting biblical allusions or adding up parallels. It comes from an

extensive reading of the two men's works over a period of time. Milton's ideas are not merely related to Paul's ideas, but Milton himself is closely akin to Paul himself. Milton incorporated not merely the letter, but the spirit, of Paulinism. Many of Milton's radical insights are merely extrapolations (from a first-century message) into the seventeenth century. Milton learned not merely the content of Paul's teaching, which any "crabbed textuist" (III, 378) might do, but he imbibed the pattern of Paul's reasoning, and attempted to preserve the spirit of Paulinism in his own time. Not just the ideas, but the Pauline temperament, which has been the subject of much discussion (he has been accused of being high-strung, arrogant, and unfair with his opponents), seems to have been congenial to Milton. Some of Milton's so-called "Puritan" qualities, his taint of asceticism (not a harsh asceticism which is legalistic and rigid beyond reason, but a quiet asceticism of spirit that we might call moral fervor and uprightness) is closely akin to St. Paul, a man who chose not to marry not because of some divine prohibition, but likely because it would interfere with the call of God.\footnote{On Paul's marriage asceticism see below pp.69 ff. The fact that Milton was married three times and Paul possibly not at all, does not mean that they were far apart on the issue of marriage.}

The essential Paulinism according to E. F. Scott is the assertion of "the Christian demand in its full extent, without compromise."\footnote{Contemporary Thinking About Paul, p. 355.} This essential Paulinism, Milton fathomed. This urgency to do right can be found in Paul as easily as it can be found in Puritanism. Milton's humorless earnestness, his almost martial zeal for the True Cause, his
intransigence in the face of opposition, his extravagant self-esteem, his uncanny tendency to fuse himself personally with his cause, his sense of estrangement from a world gone wrong, his alternations of joy and despair, his suffering and corresponding sense of divine purpose, his tenderness toward true believers who are wronged, his never-ending certitude, his sense of the Divine in his life—all these may also be noted in Milton's great predecessor, St. Paul. And they became apparent to me, long before I began to look for parallels or tables of Milton's Scriptural allusions.

In considering a study such as I am attempting, one may fairly ask if Milton's Pauline context is very significant in comparison to his immediate seventeenth-century context. There is perhaps some tension between the two approaches. One method, such as Arthur Barker employs in Milton and the Puritan Dilemma, is to study Milton against his immediate background to show how much Milton is like (or unlike) his contemporaries. Thus, Barker's stress is on Milton as a man of his time. Barker, I feel, conclusively establishes that Milton was a man of his own day. He proves that Milton's ideas on liberty, for example, have unmistakable similarities to the radical Puritan movements of his day. My approach, by contrast, is to forego Milton's immediate context, to study Milton against the backdrop of an old historical document—not a product of Milton's own milieu—but which had an unquestioned influence upon seventeenth-century man. Barker calls these older sources Milton's "true originals." One may be unwisely tempted to set up a dichotomy of influences upon Milton, the ancient ones and the contemporary ones, and
view them as in opposition in some way. But they are both valuable in that they give us more than one perspective of the man. While Barker's study confirms Milton's affinity with certain radical positions of his day, his study taken alone can also lead to misunderstanding. It stresses contemporary relationships (Milton and Roger Williams, for example) while it ignores Milton's connections with St. Paul. He leads us into an intricate examination of Milton's concept of liberty as it related to his (sometimes obscure) contemporaries, but it totally misses Milton's proximity to the Apostle. I offer my study, not in opposition to studies of the contemporary setting, but as complementary to them. Barker himself warns that all the similarities between Milton and his fellow Puritans do not necessarily imply a debt: "Not that Milton derived all, or most, of his ideas from contemporary arguments. What were his true originals we shall never certainly know."29 Thus, it is not a question of Milton's past versus his present, because both operated heavily upon the mind of Milton. My approach is only one option, but one which may correct the mistaken view that Milton can only be understood as a man of his time—as a Renaissance humanist or a Puritan leftist.

Obviously, any division between the Pauline past and the Puritan or humanistic present is an artificial one, for Paulinism had a profound influence upon the seventeenth-century milieu.30 It is, of course, possible that some of Milton's Paulinism came not through a direct encounter with the Pauline corpus, but through some intervening links of modified

29Puritan Dilemma, p. xxi.
30Coolidge, p. xiii.
Paulinism, such as Augustinianism, Lutheranism, Calvinism, or some strain of Calvinism. But at the same time it would be an error to recognize only Paul's Augustinianism or his Protestantism, without perceiving the possibility of a direct influence of Paulinism. Such an error seems to occur in George Wesley Whiting's attribution of a Pauline thought to Protestantism: "In Ephesians 2:8-9 we read 'For by grace are yee saved through faith, and that not of your selves: it is the gift of God, Not of workes.' This Protestant doctrine Milton accepts."\(^{31}\) Unless Whiting is claiming that the translation is so biased that it distorts the sense of the Greek original, then he has confused Paul with Protestantism.

Let us give Paul credit where it is due.

While we grant the possibility that Milton's Paulinism may partially derive from the modified Paulinism of his own day, we must also remind ourselves that Milton, perhaps naively to us, actually thought he could return to the original sense of Scripture and derive his theology from it alone. While he may have failed in many respects, he may also have achieved some success. "He was honest enough in stating that he was going to set forth a system of theology based solely on Scripture. But for a man who had read as much critical biblical material as he had, such a procedure was actually impossible, although he himself may have been and no doubt was completely unaware of the fact."\(^{32}\) Perhaps we need to distinguish, as Bultmann does, between critical presuppositions (which all

\(^{31}\text{Milton and This Pendant World (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1958), p. 131.}\)

\(^{32}\text{Harris Fletcher, Milton's Rabbinical Readings (1930; rpt. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books), p. 304.}\)
men have) and preconceived judgments about what the text says. Milton had critical presuppositions, but he did his best to dispense with preconceived judgments. While Milton's Puritan context surely conditioned his reading of Paul, Puritanism was only the tutor which led him to Paul, and when Milton found the message of Paul to conflict with the tutor, he left no doubt as to where his allegiance lay. Thus, Milton broke with the parties of his day. A blind acceptance of any set of ideas (unless they were biblical) was not typical of Milton. One important clue that Milton read his Paul better than his contemporaries (and certain of his critics since), comes from some of the modern judgments about Paul. Some modern theologians have redeemed John Milton because in their effort to understand biblical Christianity in an undogmatic fashion, they have found to be simply Pauline that which we call heresy in Milton. D. E. H. Whiteley, for example, states that Paul's language on the relative position of Jesus Christ and God the Father has undoubted traces of subordinationist language; he further adds that early Christians were most reluctant to call Jesus "God." Milton denies predestination to damnation while allowing for predestination to salvation. Whiteley's

Theology of St. Paul, p. 119.

Ibid., pp. 105, 106. Consider also: Paul "was too good a Jew to have meant that Jesus was God—though in the Septuagint, the Greek Old Testament, the word κύριος—Lord—which Paul used of Jesus, is habitually used to represent Jahweh." Kirsopp Lake, Paul: His Heritage and Legacy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1934), p. 172. Modern scholarship seems to agree that the rigid Trinitarian formulas of later church councils would have been foreign, perhaps even objectionable, to the Apostle.
conclusion is that this was Paul's position.\textsuperscript{35} Another eminent Bible scholar among others, Oscar Cullman, holds that Paul's concept of eschatology includes the sleep of the soul which is similar to Milton's mortalist heresy.\textsuperscript{36} Perhaps, then, we should pay attention to Milton's own claim that he discovered his heterodox ideas in Scripture before he found "heretics" who corroborated them. In view of these "heresies" which some scholars now say are actually present in Paulinism, it is rather striking what Milton said in "On the Later Forcers of Conscience"—men in closest agreement with St. Paul must be named and printed heretics. Milton probably would have agreed with E. F. Scott that Paulinism, in its truest sense, has only been accepted by a minority of the church, never the full body.\textsuperscript{37}

I have used the word "source" in talking about the relationship of Paul and Milton, but I would like to distinguish between a true source study (which this dissertation is not) and a comparative study. Of course, St. Paul is an incontrovertible source for Milton. He drew on the Apostle, and it has been rather easy to demonstrate that he did so. But in a true source study, it would be necessary to establish what points Milton actually derived from his Christian predecessor, what points came from one of the links in between, and what parallels are merely coincidental and not derivative. Such would be a formidable, if not an

\textsuperscript{35}Theology of St. Paul, p. 97.


\textsuperscript{37}Contemporary Thinking About Paul, pp. 355-356.
impossible, task. While it is possible to substantiate Milton's conscious employment of Pauline thought in his prose and poetry, it will not be my purpose to prove the full degree of Milton's debt to St. Paul. Barker was correct in saying that we will never certainly know Milton's true originals: "It would require a mind as capacious as his own to follow him through his studies in classical and Christian literature, in history, theology, and poetry." Even if one had the capacity of Milton's mind he would have no way of knowing the precise experiences, attitudes, and feelings which shaped Milton's response to his various studies.

There are two other factors which discourage us from any kind of true "source" study. In the first place there are elements in the complex of ideas which we call Paulinism which actually have their antecedent in the Mediterranean world before Paul ever wrote his epistles. There have been many disputes about the source of Paul's theology and ethics, but there is a consensus that his thought has its roots in Hellenism and Judaism. His belief in a dualistic universe in which one order of reality is divine, immutable, and unchanging, and another which is transient and corruptible (II Cor. 4:18), may derive from his acquaintance with Hellenistic thought. Milton's greatest debt was to Judaism, but biblical scholars now know that Judaism itself was not homogeneous. Paul's thought seems to be indebted to Apocalyptic Judaism, Pharisaic Judaism, and Hellenistic (or Diaspora) Judaism. So, it is futile to ask about Paul as a source for Milton, in one sense, because some Paulinism may actually be pre-Pauline. Even so, it is logical to believe that most of

38 Puritan Dilemma, p. xxii.
Milton's seemingly Pauline ideas came from Paul, in view of his respect for the New Testament. But we cannot be certain, except when Milton directly alludes to Paul. A second factor which complicates Paul as a source for Milton is the already mentioned problem of Paul's modified presence in the intervening centuries. Paulinism has been a living influence on every age of our civilization. Roman Catholicism, Scholasticism, Puritanism, Anabaptism, humanism, all were influenced in some way by Paul. Just as Marcion in the second century, Augustine in the fifth century, and Luther in the sixteenth century, so Christians in the seventeenth century accepted a modified Paulinism congenial to their own situation. Milton perhaps picked up some of his Paulinism as it popularly floated around in some derivative form. It would be, again, extremely difficult if not impossible to sort out direct and indirect influences.

Two extreme points of view will be avoided in this study, however. One would naively suggest that everything that appears in Milton as Pauline is indeed Pauline. The other would suggest that whatever Milton shares in common with St. Paul actually comes from the Paulinism as received by the Protestants of his day. This simple view implies that Milton always remained a seventeenth-century school boy who could not see beyond the biases of his day. But Milton's rejection of so much orthodoxy in a sincere effort to return to Scripture denies such a claim. While we grant the reality of intervening links, we at the same time insist it was Milton's fresh untrammeled reading of St. Paul (and all of the Bible) that sent him on his particular course. Milton was a Bible
scholar in his own right, so Fletcher affirms. He knew Paul's letters in the Greek language, and would have been sensitive to the singularity of Paul's style and content. He was exceedingly capable of knowing the original Paul. Perhaps Milton read into the epistles a post-Reformation Paul. Perhaps he was guilty of eisegesis. But at the same time Milton often clashed with Reformation theology precisely because his understanding did not concur with the leaders of the Reformation.

My approach in this study, in view of the above, is to avoid talking about St. Paul as a "source," exclusive of those times Milton himself directly cites St. Paul as the author of his ideas. I examine the two men's prose works side by side. Perhaps some parallels arise which are of little consequence; others may appear because Milton unconsciously owed a debt to Paul either through a medium or through some silent incorporation of Paulinism as a result of his thorough Bible study. But other parallels are unmistakable, unquestionable ones which Milton admits. In all cases I hope to be sympathetic and cautious in my purpose. I lay no claim to St. Paul as some kind of overpowering influence that supersedes all others. Above all, I hope I have spared myself the illusion that everything in Milton has its parallel in Paul.

This study, then, is a study of parallels, not sources. I will not try to prove any debt other than that which Milton himself records. In the last analysis, it will be left up to the reader to weigh the parallels to determine their usefulness in understanding John Milton.

One last question to be taken up in this introduction concerns the limitation of my subject chiefly to the prose. I do not exclude
poetry because it would weaken my thesis. On the contrary, I regret the exclusion of poetry because I am excluding abundant confirmation of my thesis. Occasionally, I shall resort to certain quotations from the poetry because they will be so germane to the discussion that it would be arbitrary and artificial to ignore them. But some kind of workable limitation is necessary, and prose is the logical beginning place.

While Paulinism is evident in all of Milton, usually it is more transparent in the prose. In the prose, Milton most fully developed his theological ideas, and in the prose Milton's polemical posture in the church controversies is most like Paul's. In the prose, Milton is more the advocate of God, and less the pure artist. Furthermore, an understanding of the prose seems to be requisite to an appreciation of the poetry. What conclusions arise from a study of the prose will have a logical place in understanding the poetry as well. And, after all, the prose is interesting in and of itself. In it we find a brilliant, energetic, creative mind wrestling with the issues which have always been important to man. In the dust and heat of battle appears the Milton who is most like his first-century comrade in arms, the Apostle Paul.
CHAPTER TWO

THE OLD CREATION AND THE FIRST ADAM

In this and the following chapter it is my purpose to introduce some of the chief Pauline doctrinal themes and to show their relationship to John Milton's theology. The subjects of Paul's and Milton's theologies have received rather detailed treatment, in their respective disciplines of religion and literature. It will not be possible, therefore, for me to give the kind of detailed attention that they have received elsewhere. But what I propose to do in this chapter and the next which no one else has done is to demonstrate the considerably Pauline cast of Milton's doctrine. Thus, while I shall not be making

One problem which must be dealt with at the outset is the issue of what constitutes Paulinism. One of the biggest problems one faces in comparing Milton with Paul is deciding what Paulinism really is. In order to decide that, one must settle the difficult question of the Pauline corpus. In the early nineteenth century the Tübingen School challenged the authenticity of certain of Paul's letters. The more radical Dutch school went much further and doubted whether there even was a man named Paul. With the passage of time and the employment of a more accurate historical and scientific approach, the authenticity of most of the letters stands.

Scholars widely agree that the following letters are genuine: I Thessalonians, Galatians, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Romans, Philippians, and Philemon. Some suspicion remains concerning II Thessalonians and Colossians. Stronger doubt attends Ephesians and the Pastorals (I and II Timothy and Titus). But even scholars who reject Ephesians and the Pastorals often consider them Pauline in some sense. They may be the reworking of earlier genuine letters or at the least may be the products of a Pauline School, that is, the writings of Paul's disciples who knew his thought well.

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claims for the discovery of new ideas in Milton's theology, I believe I can point out valuable antecedents to his religious thinking which no one else has noted.

1. The Logos-created World

When J. H. Adamson wrote that John Milton was "a singer of the Logos" he expressed a great insight that holds true not only for Milton, but also for his great predecessor, St. Paul. All of Paul's thought is "Christocentric," and this holds true for his concept of creation as well. The cosmos, the material world, both heaven and earth, came into being by the power and agency of Christ. "For by him were all things created, which are in heaven, and which are in earth, things visible and invisible: whether they bee Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers, all things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things, and in him all things consist" (Col. 1:16-17). St. Paul does

Since the thirteen letters named above are Pauline, whether directly or indirectly, I shall rely on all of them (recognizing that some of them may not have come directly from Paul's hand). Particularly, since Milton accepted the thirteen letters as Pauline, do I feel the necessity of using all of them in my study.

The book of Hebrews poses quite another problem. Since the earliest centuries of the Christian Era, its authority has been uncertain. Although some editions of the Authorized Version in Milton's day attached Paul's name to it, the essentially un pauline nature of it was known then. I know of no Pauline scholars who accept it as the work of Paul, and I know of no occasion when Milton speaks of the Hebrew epistle as being Paul's (cf. XIV, 21; XIV, 193; VI, 56).

not use the expression "Logos" in this his most famous Christological passage, but biblical scholars are unanimous in seeing the Logos concept permeating Paul's expression. Paul's Christ is the Logos, but he is not the original impulse behind the creative act; he is the instrumental or mediator of the creation. "For by him" (διὰ εὐαγγελίου) expresses instrumentality. Christ was the agent through whom God the Father worked. The creation originally came from God the Father and ultimately returns to the Father (Rom. 11:36). But the cosmos functions and is sustained by the Son: "in him all things consist."

These basic Christological conceptions are strictly adhered to by Milton. Christ is the Logos-creator, the instrument of creation, "the instrumental, or less principal cause" (XV, 7). Milton in full agreement with Paul sees Christ as prior to the created order, both in point of time and in dignity (XV, 11). He is the mediator of our existence (XV, 7). Milton's Creator-Christ is quite Pauline. Because St. Paul and John Milton were writing in quite different contexts, the implication may be left that Paul's Christ is far more elevated, far more divine than Milton's. In fact, when the actual concepts are


4 On Milton's Christology see below, pp. 118-128.

5 The context of Paul's writings has everything to do with their meaning. It is of first importance to accept the "occasional" nature of Paul's writings, a fact stressed by all of Paul's recent interpreters. The letters were rather informal communications about pressing issues which needed immediate attention. They had a specific context (in Corinth
weighed, Milton and Paul stand very close together on their understanding of the Christ as cosmic creator. Milton and Paul had nearly opposite circumstances. Paul was writing to Colossian opponents who had degraded Christ to the level of a minor deity among many. The function of Paul's polemic is to show Christ's supremacy and his uniqueness (without confusing the Son with the Father). Milton by contrast is fighting a tendency opposite to the Colossian problem—the exaltation of Christ to the point that his distinction as the begotten Son is obscured. Except for these opposite purposes, their views are essentially the same. Both agree that the Father is "the primary cause" (XV,7), for "there is but one God, which is that Father, of whom are all things" (I Cor. 8:6), while Christ is the agent of creation.

The issues were schism, idolatry, charismatic ecstasy, and sexual immorality.

Paul never attempts to give a complete statement of his kerygma. He is writing to churches who have received the gospel message; therefore, he sees no need to itemize the points of his catechism. Oftentimes, the foundational doctrines are only mentioned incidentally as he discusses more pressing matters. The letters often deal with burning issues which are not relevant to later interpreters, and so they forget the essentially polemical quality of his statements. They forget what Milton did not, that Paul's letters contain "zealous imprecation."

The context of Paul's own life is exceedingly important in judging his thought. No one else speaks quite like him because no one else had his experiences. Paulinism, like Miltonism, is an intensely personal construct of ideas. His thought is inevitably misunderstood when it is severed from Paul the man. Rigaux speaks of the profound "union of the man with his message," The Letters of St. Paul: Modern Studies, ed. and trans. Stephen Yonick (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1968), p. 166. To a great extent, Paul's argument is himself.

The Logos-created world, because it comes into being by the power of a supremely good God, is itself good. The goodness of creation is a fundamental Jewish conception which both Paul and Milton accept. This fact needs considerable stress because of a popular misconception of Paul's view of the world, that he found it abhorrent and intolerable. On the contrary, Paul writes to the Corinthians to give up their ascetic food laws "For the earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is" (I Cor. 10:26). What a man eats or drinks, Paul concludes (thus stepping beyond the boundaries of his Jewish heritage) is not a factor in spirituality. Even though the Jerusalem Council (in Acts 15) binds certain food restrictions on Gentile converts, Paul nowhere enjoins them upon his converts.

Subsequent readers of Paul, including Milton critics, have confused a Hellenistic world-view with Paul's Jewish concept of creation. The material world to Paul was God-ordained. It comes from him, indeed "out of" (εκ αὐτοῦ) him (see Rom. 11:36, I Cor. 8:6, I Cor. 11:12). The material world included the human body (σῶμα) or human flesh (σώματος), and even these were good to St. Paul. When William Empson finds Milton less corrupt than St. Paul, he is probably alluding to the familiar picture of Paul as one who was always trying to put "the flesh" into subjection, and who was opposed to theatres and Maypoles and other heinous vices. Later, we shall deal with Paul's anthropology in detail.


but here we may say that the human body as a part of creation was neither evil nor reprehensible for Paul, but on the contrary, the body is the dwelling place of God, sanctified, "for the Lord," and a "member of Christ" (I Cor. 6:13-15). Thus, redemption is not the saving of a man's spirit merely, but it is the saving of the body (Rom. 8:23).

The creation is good in Milton's scheme also, a fact which needs less documentation since it is widely accepted. The material world is not to be denigrated or thought of as being somehow unholy: "For the original matter of which we speak, is not to be looked upon as an evil or trivial thing, but as intrinsically good, and the chief productive stock of every subsequent good" (XV, 23). "It is not true . . . that matter was in its own nature originally imperfect" (XV, 23). The goodness of creation includes the human body also. For centuries the church had accepted the inherent wickedness of the flesh, and redemption was thought to be a release from the sinful body. But Milton accepts the ancient Pauline conception of human nature, in which body and soul are one, and both are the subject of redemption (XV, 39ff.).

In view of St. Paul's concept of creation, it is incorrect to see Milton's humanistic view of the world as radically opposed to St. Paul. The acceptance of an inherently good created order was compatible with New Testament concepts. It is probably true that Milton's

9On Pauline anthropology, see below pp. 65-69.
10The logical alternative—Gnostic dualism as espoused by Marcion, who radically rejected the Old Testament God of creation—is untenable.
Renaissance background caused him to go much farther than any biblical writers went in asserting the goodness of creation, but Milton and the New Testament writers do not express incompatible views.' Tillyard, then, is only half correct when he says that Milton broke with St. Paul and the Puritans on the question of the goodness of creation. He writes: "This belief is one of those that separates him [Milton] so far from St. Paul and contemporary Puritanism and makes him as in some ways he was, so curiously modern." Milton did in fact break with the Puritans, but it is a fatal error to confuse Paulinism with Puritanism, in spite of their connections. Milton certainly broke with a world-denying modified Paulinism, but Milton did not at all think—and I believe he thought correctly on this point—that he was breaking with Paul, for he quotes the Apostle (I Cor. 15:45) to establish his thesis that man is an essentially good, unified psychosomatic being—not a discordia concors.


12A considerable difficulty arises in trying to disentangle biblical Paulinism from popular and traditional views of Paulinism. Paul has always been a controversial figure, and he has never lacked detractors. To William Empson, Milton is only slightly less corrupt than St. Paul (p. 134). To many he is the essential falsifier of Christianity—"the monstrous imposition upon Jesus" (George Bernard Shaw), "the completely uncalled apostle" (Paul Lagarde), and the proclaimer of the "dysangel" (Nietzsche)—as noted in Wayne A. Meeks, ed., The Writings of St. Paul (W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1972), pp. 272 ff. Unfortunately, even among Milton scholars, Paul often comes through as a stuffy Reformation dogmatist or a Victorian moralist. The unflattering portraits of Paul (as a Puritan, a misogynist, a prude) do not come from a critical reading of the Pauline letters, but rather from his enemies, and his friends who are themselves Puritans, misogynists, and prudes. The Paul of the New Testament is a great and a unique figure who does not fit the traditional molds, although isolated passages can be mustered to support the caricatures.
of corruption and goodness. When Milton cites Paul in The Apology for Smectymnuus that "the body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body" (III, 306), he is not arguing that sexuality is inimical to God's holiness, and neither was Paul. They are both arguing for sexuality within certain ethical guidelines. Neither Paul nor Milton objects to the procreative process. Paul in fact says in the preceding verse (I Cor. 6:12) that "All things are lawful." But because the body is holy, and not an evil thing, it must be used in a holy way. Paul is arguing against consorting with temple prostitutes; he is not arguing for celibacy. Likewise, in Milton's discussion, the question at hand is fornication, not celibacy.

2. Creation ex Deo

Milton critics have for some time now occupied themselves with Milton's unusual conception of creation ex Deo, that the world was not created "out of nothing" but that it emanated out of God Himself, like light emanating from the sun. "As the sun poured out an eternal stream of light, so the Uncreated Essence overflowed with life which penetrated down into all levels of being. Having reached the lowest level, it turned again and, yearning for its source, traveled back through the levels of being until it once more reached the Divine." So J. H. Adamson explains the theory as espoused by Plotinus. Adamson also

13I Tim. 4:1-3 denounces rigid insistence upon celibacy: "Now the Spirit speaketh evidently, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith . . . Forbidding to marry. . . ."

14Bright Essence, p. 83.
points out that Plotinus' theory, like Milton's, denies the "age-old Greek duality of matter and spirit, postulating instead a metaphysical monism." Adamson gives a very fine discussion of Milton's concept and its important historical antecedents, but his study is typical of those which deal with the Christian tradition to the exclusion of the biblical sources. He can find the concept of creation \( \text{ex Deo} \) in Plotinus, Gregory of Nyssa, pseudo-Dionysus, and Meister Eckhart, among others, but he appears to be unaware of any biblical basis for it, even though he mentions that Gregory of Nyssa claimed biblical support. Milton, like Gregory, claims that his theory comes from the Scriptures—not from Plotinus, or anyone else. In support, he cites Romans 11:36 "for of him, and through him, and to him are all things," and I Cor. 8:6 "there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things" (XV,21). Yet Adamson ignores the lead which Gregory and Milton give him.\(^\text{16}\)

Milton's claim of biblical support deserves more than casual mention, for there appears to be some solid basis for it, according to Pauline scholars. First of all, St. Paul, like Plotinus, rejects the Greek duality of matter and spirit. The material is spiritual. Paul rejects the gnostic antithesis of good spirit and evil corporality. Thus, man is a unitary being. Body and soul are together, and they are redeemed together (see I Cor. 15). Bultmann gives this important concept


\(^{16}\text{Woodhouse goes further than Adamson in recognizing Rom. 11:6 as supportive of creation \( \text{ex Deo} \), but he doesn't elaborate. Ibid., p. 212.}\)
considerable attention in his *Theology of the New Testament*. He writes, "man does not have a soma [body]; he is soma, for in not a few places soma can be translated simply 'I'." The resurrection is not the spirit arising to God and leaving the body behind to decay (cf. Hellenistic view of immortality). Paul strenuously fought such error in Corinth. He insists on a bodily resurrection ("the body is sown in corruption, and is raised in incorruption" I Cor. 15:42); while it is a glorious incorruptible body, it is authentic—not ghostlike, incorporeal, docetic. Paul "never regards the body and corporeality as just one part of man, as is done, for example, in the classical (Orphic) formula of the body as a tomb (soma/ sema), the prison of the soul, or as did the 'enthusiasts' at Corinth, who made a distinction between the body as the inferior, earthly part and the higher 'pneumatic self' (I Cor. 6:12 ff.). As used by Paul, 'body' is man as he actually is." Paul's polemic is directed against those who would deprecate the material aspect of existence. In a sense, St. Paul is a materialist, for he finds a place for the material world in God's redemptive plan; redemption is physical, for eventually God will win back and reconcile all things (tà πάντα, Col. 1:20).
Milton claims that his notion of monism derives at least in part from St. Paul: "Nor did St. Paul hesitate to attribute to God something corporeal; Col. ii.9. 'in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.'" (XV, 25). He also recognizes the implicit monism in Paul's doctrine of a bodily resurrection (XV, 25). By taking the principles of the bodily resurrection in the End Time, and then by working backwards to the creation, Milton deduces that materiality has always existed: "Neither is it more incredible that a bodily power should issue from a spiritual substance, than that what is spiritual should arise from body; which nevertheless we believe will be the case with our own bodies at the resurrection" (XV, 25).

From the implications of monism in St. Paul it is an easy step to creation ex Deo. St. Paul never gives anything like a detailed discussion of the creation. Usually, when he does mention the original event of creation, it is a brief allusion to support some argument he is making. But in his casual remarks, Milton discovered strong support for his belief (XV, 21). In the following verses Milton could find his chief support:

For of him (ἐξ αὐτοῦ), and through him (δι' αὐτοῦ), and for him (εἰς αὐτῶν) are all things: to him be glory for ever, Amen. (Rom. 11:36)

Yet unto us there is but one God, which is that Father, of whom are all things (ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα), and we in him: and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. (I Cor. 8:6)

For as the woman is of the man, so is the man also by the woman: but all things are of God (ἐξ θεοῦ). (I Cor. 11:12)
For by him were all things created, which are in heaven, and which are in earth, things visible and invisible: whether they bee Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers, all things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things, and in him (ἐν ὑμῖν) all things consist. (Col. 1:16-17)

Phrases from these passages permeate Milton's language in his discussion of creation: "for the Father is not only he 'of' whom, but also from whom, and for whom, and through whom, and on account of whom are all things" (XV, 9); "'God the Father of whom are all things';" "'he of whom are all things' is clearly distinguished from him 'by whom are all things.'" (XIV, 203). On the origin of matter, Milton writes that "we have the authority of Scripture, namely, that all things are of God" (XV, 21). Milton's acquaintance with the Greek language probably confirmed his interpretation of the ex Deo theory. The preposition ("from" or "out of") implies that the stuff of creation existed "in God" and that God is the source and the location of creation.

Bultmann lends support to Milton's claim that creation ex Deo is behind Paul's statement in Romans 11:36. "Paul is using a formula of Stoic pantheism. But in this Romans passage it is especially clear how far Paul is from orienting his concept of God to the cosmos in the Greek sense."21 While Paul is not really pantheistic, just as Bultmann says, he nevertheless uses the language of pantheism in such a way as to suggest that creation is the efflux of Deity.22 On this verse the

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21Bultmann, I, 229.

22St. Paul has been mistakenly called pantheistic, as W. W. Gauld has noted in "St. Paul and Nature," _Expository Times_, 52 (1940-1941), 394.
Jerome Biblical Commentary notes: "The prep. ex denotes 'origin', dia (with the gen.) the 'originator, source' of an action or condition, and eis (with the acc.) the 'end, goal'. There is no doubt that Paul is expressing in this prayer the absolute dependence of all creation on God; but it is also quite likely that the formulation is influenced by Hellenistic philosophical thought (cf. Marcus Aurelius, Medit. 4:23)."23

In his Meditations, Marcus Aurelius expresses a thought amazingly similar to Paul's: "From you are all things, in you are all things, and to you all things return."24 Woodhouse notes the important relationship between Milton's creation ex Deo and the tradition of theistic monism of which the Stoics were an ancient representative.25 In view of the similarity between Paul's statement and that of Marcus Aurelius and other Stoics, perhaps Paul is the significant link between Milton and the Stoic concept.

It might be argued that Romans 11:36 only claims that God authored the creation, that it began in the mind of God as an idea; but Milton counters by claiming it is no more impossible for "a bodily power" to "issue from a spiritual substance, than that what is spiritual should arise from body [as in the resurrection]" (XV, 25).


25 "Notes on Milton's Views on the Creation," p. 222. Woodhouse's stress is on "contemporary analogues," however; so he passes over any possible analogue in Paul.
Professor Adamson lists some important concepts which are often held along with the *ex Deo* doctrine. Interestingly enough, even these appear in St. Paul at least in a muted form. This is especially true of the concept of "*egressus-regressus*," that is, "the theory that all which emanated from God would ultimately return to him."26 The important analogue for Milton's idea is not Plotinus or Eriugena, but St. Paul. The *International Critical Commentary* claims that this idea is behind I Corinthians 8:6: "God is the central Fount and the central Goal."27 Adamson says that the *egressus-regressus* theory holds that nothing can finally be destroyed. Such a concept seems to be behind the Colossian passage. "In him were all things created" probably indicates that the Divine Logos is the *locality* of creation, the "center of unity and harmony, in which the universe was created."28 And while creation is for the present "away" from God it will ultimately be restored—not destroyed (Col. 1:21). Paul's idea is "reconciliation," not annihilation. Creation is to be redeemed (Rom. 8:19-23). The other auxiliary concepts of God's immanence in creation, and the unknowability of God the Father

26 *Bright Essence*, p. 96.

27 See R. Driver and Alfred Plummer et al., eds., *The International Critical Commentary*, 2nd ed. (rpt. 1967; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1914), XXXIII, 168. See also *JBC* 53:114 which says that the Father is the "source" and the "goal." Adamson's statement that Plotinus was apparently the first in the Western world to advance creation *ex Deo* (Bright Essence, p. 83) needs qualification.

28 *JBC* 55:16.
Milton's emanation-of-creation ex Deo, then, if not actually Pauline, is at least suggested in Paul's language. Materiality is good; it will return to God in the final consummation, and it came out of him. Milton can build a strong case based on St. Paul. Perhaps Gregory of Nyssa and Milton were honest in their claim that Scripture is the basis of their doctrine.

3. Fallen Creation

While creation is originally good, having come out of God, and while its basic goodness remains in view of an ultimate redemption of the human body and "all things," nevertheless, the creation is not at the moment an unqualified good. The Logos-created universe went through a Fall. Both man and creation "travaileth in paine together" (Rom. 8:22) and suffer "the bondage of corruption" (Rom. 8:21), as they await the glorious redemption (Rom. 8:23). Though matter was not originally evil for Paul (cf. Milton XV,21), temporarily, or until the End Time, the whole universe is marred by some fault or weakness. Not just the mind of man, but the whole cosmos, is alienated from God. W. W. Gauld says that "For Paul there was a deep underlying unity between 'Nature red in tooth and claw' and 'the corruption of man's heart.'"30 Both have fallen

29 Thus, there are many modern studies of Paul's mysticism which emphasize Christ's immanence. See, e.g., Adolf Deissmann, "The Christ-Mystic" in The Writings of St. Paul (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1972), p. 377. It is also a fundamental thought of Paul's that one can only know God through the medium of Christ. See Sandmel, pp. 68 ff. God is not directly knowable.

30W. W. Gauld, p. 394.
and both await the restoration.

In some unexplained way, nature participated in the Fall. Seemingly it was through a kind of cosmic solidarity of all creation. Through the tragedy of Eden unqualified goodness ended for nature as well as for mankind. In the final eschatological event the primal harmony will be returned and the exile will cease—man will return to Eden and the creation to its Source.31 Until then sin reigns.

For the present, human nature and creation are so characterized by hamartia that when Paul speaks of the cosmos he sometimes ceases thinking of it as a cosmological term, and he uses it in a pejorative way to refer to "the quintessence of earthly conditions of life and earthly possibilities." It becomes an historical term denoting "the world of men" and "mankind." It also denotes the realm where the force of evil has particular sway, and thus becomes "a theological judgment"32 denoting man's "worldly-mindedness," as John Bunyan might say. The universe, then, has evil attached to it—it is not evil by virtue of its materiality. Unlike the Gnostic (and perhaps Puritan) view, evil is extraneous to, and not inherent in, creation.

While Milton was a poet of creation, while he delighted in nature, "Thy nature is perfection . . ." (III, 147),33 he fully accepted the Pauline limitations of creation. His own experience was enough to


32Bultmann, I, 254-255.

33See also Paradise Regained, II,267, where the Son dreams of "Nature's refreshment sweet."
confirm the truth of cosmic imperfection. His "perpetual enemy" was bad health (XII, 53), and he recalls in Pro Se Defensio the suffering that attended his composition of Defensio Secunda: "My health was infirm, I was mourning the recent loss of two relatives, the light had now utterly vanished from my eyes" (IX, 13-15). He endured the irrationalities of domestic and civil turmoil learning how rare justice and goodness are this side of the Parousia. He experienced imprisonment and defamation. And in 1660 the dog returned to its vomit and the sow to the mire. What further evidence, if evidence were wanting, did Milton need to confirm that creation is subject to vanity (Rom. 8:20), a veritable "Lazar-house" (Paradise Lost XI.479)?

The Pauline doctrine of the Fall is of first importance in John Milton's scheme. Barker is correct in saying that Milton's reasoning always started from the fact of the Fall. He is not "plot-ridden" in regard to the doctrine of the Fall. Its fundamental importance is developed in De Doctrina, Book I, chapter 11. In thoroughly Pauline fashion Milton explains the sin of our first parents, and demonstrates how that all mankind participated in the Fall through Adam. The sin of Adam has a Pauline signification for Milton, not the significance of the Genesis account.

The references to the poetry are to book and line numbers, not to the volume and page numbers of the Columbia Edition.


Perhaps too little attention has been given the differences between the Genesis account of the Fall and the Pauline account. See J. M. Evans, Paradise Lost and the Genesis Tradition (Oxford: Clarendon Press; 1968).
nothing so trivial as the violation of a tribal taboo, as Grierson suggests. 37 It was "a most heinous offense," a total rejection of man's creatureliness, and the entry into a state of utter rejection of man's innate dependence upon God who is the source of life and being.

We may say in summary that for both Paul and Milton that though creation is good, it is not an unqualified good. Milton's humanism did not lead him to reject a Pauline cosmos—fallen and in need of redemption.

4. The Scale of Nature

Paul's universe is hierarchal. A. O. Lovejoy's classic treatment of the scale of being, however, fails to take account of the unquestionable impact that Paul had on the development of a belief in a hierarchal universe. 38 Paul was not the source of the idea of a hierarchal cosmos, nor was he an important developer or expounder of the theory. His mention of such a concept is slight and always incidental to more important spiritual matters at hand. But Paul's significance rests in the fact that he, as a canonical writer, gave tremendous authority and credibility to the idea of a hierarchal universe.

First of all, Paul envisions a three-storied universe, with sentient beings inhabiting the three realms: "That at the Name of Jesus should every knee bowe, both of things in heaven, and things in earth,


and things under the earth" (Phil. 2:10). In addition, each of these three major categories (heaven, earth, subterranean realm) has subdivisions. Thus, Paul speaks of being caught up into the third heaven (II Cor. 12:2). When Paul speaks of the "rudiments of the world" (στοιχεία) he is using a term which can mean a hierarchal series. The term has an astrological sense denoting the hierarchy of intermediate beings in Christian Gnosticism.39

Paul's conception of a hierarchal universe is especially evident in his categories of angelic beings: thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers (Col. 1:16, Rom. 8:38). Christ rules "Farre above all principalitie, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name, that is named, not in this world only, but also in that that is to come" (Eph. 1:21). These beings dwell in "the hie places" (τούς ἐπουρανίοις Eph. 6:12), one of the lower stations in the heavens, below Paul's third heaven.40 These beings came to be by the power of Christ, but became estranged from God, and will be finally reconciled.41

The Pauline hierarchy of angelic beings was extremely important in Milton's poetry, less so in the prose although the references to the angelic categories do appear. Thus, in The Reason of Church Government


40See ἁρχαὶ in Theological Dictionary, I, 482-484.

"the Angels themselves . . . are distinguishd and quaterniond into their celestiall Princedomes and Satrapies, according as God himself has writ his imperiall decrees through the great provinces of heav'n" (III, 185).

It is commonly believed that Milton's angelic classifications derive from Pseudo-Dionysius, but in view of the fact that Milton never quotes in full the categories of the Christian monk, perhaps St. Paul is the most plausible source for Milton.42

One of the most significant indications of Paul's doctrine of a graduated universe comes from his metaphors of the body, image (eikōn) and glory. Paul envisions a progression of images, each of which is the reflection of the one above it. He also sees each lower being as the glory or the effulgence of the one above it. Paul's imagery has implications not only for a hierarchal universe, but also for his doctrine of marriage and his anti-Trinitarianism:

For a man ought not to cover his head: for as much as he is the image and glorie of God: but the woman is the glorie of the man. (I Cor. 11:7)

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is libertie. But wee all behold as in a mirour the glorie of the Lorde with open face, and are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord. . . . If our Gospel bee then hid, it is hid to them that are lost. In whome the God of this world hath blinded the minds, that is, of the infidels, that the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, which is the image of God, should not shine unto them. (II Cor. 3:17-4:4)

Who is the image of the invisible God, the first begotten of every creature. (Col. 1:15)

Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the olde man with his works, And have put on the new, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. (Col. 3:9-10)

For those which he knew before, he also did predestinate to be made like to the image of his Sonne. (Rom. 8:29)

St. Paul believes that Christ is made in God's image, man next is made in Christ's image (or God's, depending upon the passage). Woman is in turn the image of man. Thus, there is a progression of images or "off-showerings" of glory: God, Christ, man, woman. This same hierarchy is confirmed by Paul's metaphor of the body: "But I will that yee know, that Christ is the head of every man: and the man is the womans head: and God is Christ's head" (I Cor. 11:3). The parts of the universe are no more equal than are the parts of the body.

The metaphors of image, light, and the body all work together to establish something that was crucial to Milton's understanding of the universe—subordinationism is a basic fact of the cosmos. This belief had great ramifications in his understanding of all of life, but especially in marriage and theology. We need not look to Pseudo-Dionysius or the pre-Nicene Greek Fathers for Milton's subordinationist thought. It is in Paul. The woman is below the man, because Paul so teaches. The Son is below the Father because Paul so teaches.

Milton accepts St. Paul's hierarchy of being. While Lovejoy confirms the presence of the scale of nature in Milton, he does not mention its Pauline basis. Milton's heaven has orders and degrees

43Cf. Adamson, Bright Essence, pp. 53-70.
44Chain of Being, p. 164.
(Paradise Lost V.586-591). The imprint of the Pauline scale is very deeply marked on Tetrachordon and the other divorce tracts:

It might be doubted why he [the Genesis author] saith, "In the image of God created he him," not them, as well as "male and female" them; especially since that Image might be common to them both, but "male and female" could not, however the Jewes fable, and please themselves with the accidental concurrence of Plato's wit, as if man had first been created Hermaphrodite: but then it must have bin male and female created he him. So had the Image of God bin equally common to them both, it had no doubt bin said, "In the image of God created he them." But St. Paul ends the controversie, by explaining, that the woman is not primarily and immediately the image of God, but in reference to the man: "The head of the woman," saith he, 1 Cor. 11 "is the man: he the image and glory of God, she the glory of the man." (4:76)

There is an important parallel between the subordinationism of marriage and the subordinationism in Milton's doctrine of the Godhead. The Pauline hierarchy is appealed to in the discussion of Christ's subordinate position: "the head of Christ is God" (XV, 28); "the Son also himself shall be subjected unto him" (XIV, 205). The "golden dependence of headship and subjection" was a valuable principle which determined Milton's understanding of marriage, as it also aided in his understanding of the Son's relationship to the Father: "if man be the image of God, which consists in holines, and woman ought in the same respect to be the image and companion of man, in such wise to be lov'd as the Church is belov'd of Christ, and if, as God is the head of Christ, and Christ the head of man, so man is the head of woman; I cannot see by this golden dependence of headship and subjection, but that Piety and Religion is the main tye of Christian Matrimony" (IV, 79).

In several ways, then, Paul suggests a scale of nature to Milton: by speaking of a three-storied universe which is full of gradations,
speaking of a hierarchy of angels, and by his frequent employment of subordinationist metaphors.

5. Natural Theology

An important concept of nature held by Milton—that the cosmos reveals the truth of God and that man can perceive this truth through his reason—has its important parallel in St. Paul. The Pauline cosmos is God-revealing, for "God speaks in the very act of creation itself." More than any other New Testament writer he proclaimed the doctrine of "natural theology" which was to have such great importance for the later Christian tradition. Creation is good, for as we have seen it comes out of God Himself. So, quite naturally the created order tells man something of the Creator. "Forasmuch as that which may be known of God, is manifest in them: for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him, that is, his eternall power and Godhead are seen by the creation of the world, being considered in his workes, to the intent that they should be without excuse" (Rom. 1:19–20). Not only mankind, but all of God's creation bears the stamp of God. Nature speaks to man's reason, telling him of God's deity and power (Rom. 1:20) and giving him the basic moral teachings which the Jews received in the Torah (Rom. 2:15).

Paul does not offer a thorough treatment of his natural theology. Again, as is often the case, he mentions only incidentally a concept of primary importance to the later Christian tradition. His primary

purpose when he mentions God's general revelation in nature is to establish the accountability of those who did not have the Torah—they could know divine truth through "their conscience" (αὐτῶν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς ἡμέρας) and do the law "by nature" (Rom. 2:14). For when the Gentiles which have not the Law, doe by nature, the things contained in the Law, they having not a Law, are a Law unto themselves, Which shew the effect of the Law in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witnesses, and their thoughts accusing one another, or excusing" (Rom. 2:14-15).

Contrary to the later discussions of natural theology, especially among the Christian rationalists and the Deists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Paul's emphasis is always on the inadequacy of general revelation in nature and man's reason unaided by the light of special revelation (the Scriptures). Just as man's own image is defaced, and his mind is darkened (Rom. 1:21), so the cosmos is defaced and darkened. In every case, when Paul mentions the inner light of reason, he castigates his disciples for failing to heed the reason at their disposal. Thus the rhetorical question, "Doeth not nature it selfe teach you, that if a man have long haire, it is a shame unto him?" (I Cor. 11:14). Obviously they had not listened to nature.

Milton found great comfort in the Pauline doctrine of natural theology. It allowed him to argue for many beliefs which he could not have done easily otherwise. If the pagans in Paul's day could attain truth through observation of nature and the use of the mind, then Milton

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46On Paul's concept of conscience see Theological Dictionary, VII, 888-919, but especially pp. 914-917.
was surely justified in demanding that seventeenth-century questions pass the test of reason. If Paul could in his sermons quote the divine truths discovered by pagans (Acts 17:28; cf. Milton IV, 306), then Milton was not one to deny "the clearest light of human knowledge" and "the clear light of nature in us" (III, 505). Again and again Milton appeals to human reason to support his arguments—far more than St. Paul or any other biblical writer ever did. The place of reason is so great that Denis Saurat was compelled to write: "Milton thinks so highly of his reason, has such trust in his intellect, that he wants reason to be a mistress absolute in himself." But Saurat has overstated the case, for Milton is acutely aware of the limitation of human reason. There is no doubt that "the divine testimonies of God himself" (III, 505) have precedence. We have only a remnant of our original understanding which is more fully restored through spiritual regeneration: "The unwritten law is no other than that law of nature given originally to Adam, and of which a certain remnant, or imperfect illumination, still dwells in the hearts of all mankind; which, in the regenerate, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, is daily tending towards a renewal of its primitive brightness" (XVI, 101). Milton goes on to cite the classic Pauline statements about God's cosmic revelation and the ability of man's conscience to perceive. The whole passage is an abstract of Paul's statements about man's limited understanding through his conscience (Rom. 1:19, 32; 2:14, 15) and the partial restoration of his reasoning.

powers through regeneration (Rom. 1:20; 3:23; I Cor. 13:9, 12; Col. 3:10). Only the "vestiges of original excellence are visible . . . in the understanding" (XV, 209). Milton's emphasis is usually on how much we can know by our minds, while Paul's emphasis is always on the limitations of reason, to be sure. But Milton in Pauline fashion always resorts to the "as it is written." The implanted "intellectual ray" (III, 33) is insufficient to guide man to know God aright. We see through a glass darkly, and shall until the Second Advent. Therefore, Scripture is superior to unaided reason (VI, 73). The light of nature is faint beside the brightness of "the divine testimonies of God himself" (III, 505).48

6. **The Adam-Christ Antithesis**

"Adam" is important to Milton not only as the hero of his great epic, but also as a religious symbol which occasions many remarks throughout the prose tracts. The importance of Adam to Milton does not derive principally from his importance as a figure in the Pentateuch. Rather, his importance for Milton rests almost entirely upon the Pauline meaning of Adam.49

St. Paul bequeathed to the church a rather elaborate doctrine of Adam which is not to be found in the Hebrew story, the Synoptic tradition, 48There is a way in which Milton actually elevated reason above Scripture by making Scripture submit to the rational processes of the human understanding. The freedom which the regenerated and Spirit-filled Christian has with the text of Scripture will be handled in a later chapter. Milton has a concept of a two-fold Scripture—the written text and the Holy Spirit speaking within (XVI, 277). I consider this direction of the Spirit distinct from "the light of nature" that all men have to some degree.

49Evans, p. 10 et passim.
or in John's gospel. For Paul, Adam is not merely an historical figure whose record is left in the Old Testament as is Moses', Jacob's, or David's. He is Urmensch, the archetypal man. Christ is the Second Man, both the antithesis and the perfect expression of the first. Beysschlag notes some of the antitheses evident in the Adam-Christ parallel: "As in Adam the sensuous and earthly life of Adam was unfolded from him through sensuous generation and birth into a natural humanity, so the life of Christ is unfolded from him spiritual reproduction and new birth into a divine generation of men." Numerous other parallels arise: fall/redemption, old nature/new nature, old creation/new creation, ruin/restoration, exile/reunification, estrangement/reconciliation, law/grace, the present age/the age to come, mortality/life, etc.

Whereas Adam is the first racial personality, Christ is the second. Adam is the symbol of universality because, as the father and source of mankind, he contains the whole race. He is the seed of humanity. Therefore, by virtue of man's solidarity with Adam, man truly fell in Adam's fall.

7. Man as Faded Icon

The basic Adam-Christ antithesis must be one of the chief Pauline doctrines in Milton. Perhaps Romans, Chapter 5, rests at the summit of Milton's doctrinal system:

50Quoted in G. H. Gilbert, "The Scope of Paul's Doctrine of Grace," American Journal of Theology, I (1897), 693.

But God setteth out his love towards us, seeing that while we were yet sinners, Christ dyed for us.

For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Sonne, and much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

Wherefore, as by one man sinne entred into the world, and death by sinne, and so death went over all men: in whom all men have sinned.

But death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them also that sinned not after the like manner of the transgression of Adam, which was the figure of him that was to come.

For if by the offence of one, death reigned through one, much more shall they which receive that abundance of grace, and of that gift of that righteousnesse, reigne in life through one, that is, Jesus Christ.

For as by one mans disobedience many were made sinners, so by that obedience of that one shall many also bee made righteous.

vv. 8,10,12,14,17,19.

At once this passage proclaims the love of God, man's need for redemption, man's solidarity in Adam, and Christ's role of obedience to counteract disobedience. The epics hang upon this text. The two great scenes in Milton's drama of salvation are summed up in verse nineteen.

In particular Milton found in Paul's doctrine of Adam two ideas, essentially antithetical, but which operated simultaneously in his thinking. First, Adam served as a symbol of the inherent nobility of man. Adam was the very offspring of God. He received God's special care and was the subject of God's benevolent redemption. Just as the Hebrew writer says that Adam was created in God's image, St. Paul says that "man is the image and glorie of God" (I Cor. 11:7). And it is of no little importance that Christ Himself is an icon (εἰκὼν) of God also (Col. 1:15). This metaphor suggests man's inherent similarity to
the Father. Man is "like" the Father and is, in a sense, a "son of God" (Gal. 4:5-7; Rom. 8:15-21; cf. Milton IV, 92, 143; XV, 43, 369; XIV, 279, 375). The metaphor of man as God's glory indicates proximity. Man and God stand together. Man is therefore God-like in nature and position—though of course subordinate.

Surely, then, Milton reasons, man is no mean creature. Is not he created in the very image of God? Is not man "the portraiture of God" (IV, 77)? Paul's doctrine of Adam assures Milton that man must be treated with dignity. Tyrants have no right to tyrannize mankind "made after the image of God" (VII, 73). All men, Milton suggests, even those who have not had the original image restored through regeneration, are still made after his image. Thus, in speaking of episcopacy, he says that if it is of human origin "we have the same humane privilege that all men have ever had since Adam, being born free" either to retain it or remove it (III, 81). On other occasions he alludes to man's creation in God's image, a doctrine giving his Christian humanism strong support (III, 306; IV, 74). It is the basis of his argument for freedom of the press in Areopagitica: whoever destroys good books kills God's image, for reasonable creatures are the icons of God (IV, 298). Freedom is a birthright which passed from Adam: "No man who knows ought, can be so stupid to deny that all men, naturally were born free, being the image and resemblance of God himself" (V, 8). Milton's whole concept of freedom from domestic tyranny rests on the doctrine of Adam, because man is God's true image in a way that the woman is not. Therefore, the recognition of one's kinship to Adam (first-created, immediately the work of
God, God's icon) was tantamount to an admission to "the true dignity of man" (IV, 73-74). It seems as though God expects more from men than from women, based on Paul's Adamic teaching: "if unchastity in a woman whom Saint Paul terms the glory of man, be such a scandal and dishonour, then certainly in a man who is both the image and glory of God" (III, 306).

Milton's anthropological monism leads him to conclude that man's likeness to God is more than spiritual. Soul and body are in God's likeness (XV, 37). (Paul, however, is never so shockingly explicit on this point.) Milton's concept of right reason also derives in part from the doctrine of Adam. For Paul, like the Stoics, believed in the ability of the human mind, the conscience (συνείδησις) and the understanding (σοφείδησις) to perceive the self-evident truths in nature. A creature patterned after God must of necessity have great intellectual powers. Milton, therefore, does not find Paul speaking in the Puritan manner of a creature who cannot have Godly imaginings apart from God's special grace.

But in quite a contradictory way, Adam also signified for Milton something very different from the best that was in man. Adam is also the symbol of man's fallen nature and his grave need for God's redemptive action. Adam is the father of our old sinful nature. He stands for the old creation, while Christ stands for the new. The original image is defaced and the glory is fading. Adam, and therefore all mankind, have elected blindness: "when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankfull, but became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was full of darkness" (Rom. 1:21). The "God of
this world hath blinded the minds, that is, of the infidels, that the
light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, which is the image of God, should
not shine unto them" (II Cor. 4:4). Only the elect can depend upon
their reasoning for enlightenment (Eph. 1:17-18; cf. Eph. 5:14;
Gal. 5:16, 25). But even the vision of the Christian is imperfect at
best: "now we see through a glasse darkly" (I Cor. 13:12).

Through sin man has been deprived of the divine splendor of God
(Rom. 3:23), and Adam is a constant reminder of that deprivation. Adam
becomes the symbol of man's sinful state, the state of estrangement from
God. We all, by virtue of our solidarity in Adam, sinned in him (XV, 183):

And in them all their posterity; for even such as were not then
born are judged and condemned in them, Gen. iii. 16 etc. so that
without doubt they also sinned in them. Rom. v.12. "by one man
sin entered into the world." v.15. "through the offence of one
many are dead" and v.16. "the judgment was by one to condemnation";
v. 17. "by one man's offence death reigned by one"; and v.18.
"by the offence of one man judgment came upon all men to condem-
nation"; and v.19. "by one man's disobedience many were made
sinners." I Cor. xv.22 "in Adam all die"; undoubtedly therefore
all sinned in Adam. For Adam being the common parent and head of
all, it follows that, as in the covenant, that is, in receiving
the commandment of God, so also in the defection from God, he
either stood or fell for the whole human race." (XV, 183).

The fatal disease which infected the seed (Adam) passes on to the
descendants. Milton understands well the Pauline belief in the inter-
connectedness of human flesh. Therefore, the violent consequences of
man's act do not point up the arbitrariness of God. Man's disobedience
is not a trivial faux pas. It is a "most heinous offence, and a trans-
gression of the whole law" (XV, 181); it is "evil concupiscence"
(XV, 193), the assumption of God's place by man, the utter denial of
one's dependence upon God, the creature forgetting that he is not Creator.
This is Milton's understanding of man as fallen Adam and faded icon. This understanding does not come from reading Genesis, but by reading the epistles of Paul, especially Romans.

Thus, we see that Adam signifies two considerably different truths about man's nature—his Godlikeness and his depravity. Paul gave support to Milton's radical and independent spirit, for as a son of God he had the privileges commensurate with having the divine image. But at the same time, Milton admits that man comes out of "the corrupt masse of Adam" (III, 322). Man contains an "inward bed of corruption" and a "heretic disposition to evil" (III, 256). Neither St. Paul nor Milton attempts to harmonize these two views. They operate side by side, the one aspect or the other receiving emphasis as the controversial occasion demands.

8. Anthropology

In every thorough treatment of St. Paul's thought there is a section devoted to "anthropology"—his doctrine of the nature of man. Bultmann, Whiteley, Cerfaux, Davies, Bornkamm and others give considerable attention to his anthropology because it is fundamental to a proper understanding of his doctrine and ethics and also because it is considerably different from the popular dualistic anthropology which one may be tempted to read into Paul. Somewhere in his studies, perhaps in his study of Hebrew literature, Milton came to a full realization that the

52 It is significant how much the Hebrew Scriptures figure in Milton's discussion of anthropology and mortalism. See De Doctrina, Book I, chapter 13.
traditional anthropological dualism of Western Christianity was not biblical. Modern biblical scholarship stands behind Milton in this judgment.\(^{53}\) We can be sure that Milton derived at least part of his support for this notion from Paul, and not just from the Old Testament writings, for when he is arguing for his mortality (an important auxiliary theory), he cites his "stronger siding friend" as a proponent of the theory (XV, 225-227).

It was not surprising to Milton, though perhaps it is to us, that for centuries the Hellenistic view of man should have such precedence over the Jewish view that faithful Christians could consistently misread their Bibles on this point. It was, for Milton, simply another proof of man's presumption "to preferre humane Tradition before divine ordinance" (III, 30).

St. Paul did not accept anthropological dualism. Man is not a dichotomy of soul and body (cf. I Cor. 15), but a unity, an "ensouled body."\(^{54}\) Man is indivisible and whole before God, to be redeemed in his entirety. Unlike the Greeks, the Jews found it inconceivable that man in an afterlife should live on without a body. Man must always have a body, whether an earthly one (as in man's present existence) or a


\(^{54}\) Whiteley, p. 33.
pneumatic one (as in the resurrection).\textsuperscript{55} It would be as unnatural to a Hebrew for the soul to be "unclothed" (to be without a body) as it would be for the body to be exposed without clothes in this life (II Cor. 10:3 ff.). The body of flesh is not any more evil in Pauline thought than is the spirit.\textsuperscript{56} When Paul writes to the Romans to give themselves entirely to God, he speaks of man as a single psychosomatic being under the term "body" (\textit{σώμα}): "give up your bodies a living sacrifice" (Rom. 12:1). The thought is repeated frequently (e.g., Rom. 1:21; 6:12; I Cor. 13:3, etc.).

Paul's anthropology has its counterpart in Milton's thought. His thinking on this point comes out most clearly in his discussion of death in \textit{De Doctrina}, Book I, chapter 13. He rejects the possibility that the soul and the body can be separated, which was an assumption behind the traditional view of death as a separation of body and soul. "For what part of man is it that dies when this separation takes place? Is it the soul? This will not be admitted by the supporters of the above definition: Is it then the body? But how can that be said to die, which never had any life of itself? Therefore the separation of soul and body cannot be called the death of man" (XV, 217-219). He is quite aware that there is a disparity between his understanding of the biblical (and Pauline) view, and that of the orthodox church. When he rejects the "prejudice of divines" and "the schools of philosophy" (XV, 219) for "the true doctrine, as collected from numberless passages of Scripture,"

\textsuperscript{55}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 39. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{56}\textit{Ibid.}
he is not speaking idly or dishonestly. His unitary view of man is more consonant with the writings of Paul than is dualism. Dualism is comfortable with a world-denying Gnosticism but not with Paulinism. Paul's opposition to such dualism is clearly perceptible in the second chapter of Colossians.

It may be objected that Milton's language is too heavily seasoned with dualistic expression for one who is supposed to have a monistic view. And the same point can be made about Paul, for he frequently uses dualistic language and dualistic concepts. In I Thessalonians 5:23 Paul even speaks of man as a tripartite being composed of spirit, soul, and body. Dualistic language occurs in other places (Phil. 1:23-24; II Cor. 5:1-10; I Cor. 5:3; Col. 2:5; II Cor. 12:3). There is some sense in which Paul comprehends "parts" to man's being. But at the same time it must be stressed that these parts are inseparable. In the case of the Thessalonian passage, for example, Paul prays that God would sanctify the Christians wholly, throughout. The complete being belongs to God and is dedicated to Him. There have been various explanations of how Paul viewed these parts or aspects of man's being, but regardless of their precise relationship we can accept the prevailing judgment that they are inseparable.

57 Whiteley notes that theologians are increasingly opposed to seeing metaphysical or anthropological dualism in Paul (p. 33).

58 Cf. JBC 48:29 on I Thess. 5:23: "Paul uses the three nouns [spirit, soul, and body] together only here to describe man; it would therefore be improper to seek Paul's anthropology in the rhetoric of a final prayer . . . the more common opinion . . . holds that Paul does not depart from the current Jewish notion of soul and body as constituting the unity of man."
Milton uses the language of dualism like St. Paul, but the presence of such language does not argue against his Pauline anthropology in view of Paul's own practice. Milton speaks of soul and body (III, 264, 423), spirit and body (III, 239), mind and body (VIII, 11). Since these references come from earlier writings, one might conclude that in his early years he accepted the orthodox dualism of the day. However, even in De Doctrina where his language is most precise, dualistic expressions occur (XV, 37). These phrases must not be taken for a sharp dichotomy in man's nature, for there is none, as his argument for the death and the resurrection of the whole man implies. It is most interesting that John Milton and a twentieth-century Pauline scholar, Günther Bornkamm, reach similar conclusions in interpreting II Corinthians 5:1-20, which sounds dualistic. They both agree that when Paul speaks of being "away from the body" he is merely speaking of human existence as man now knows it. Milton calls it "the animal and terrestrial life of the whole man" and "this frail life" (XV, 247-249). Bornkamm calls it "man's involvement in time and history."59

9. Then Eve

In a discussion of St. Paul's doctrine of man, it is appropriate to take into consideration an important subset of the human race, the female population. Perhaps Paul's fame for being an enemy of the flesh is exceeded by his fame for being the enemy of woman. Popularly, he is a misogynistic celibate who bound on the Western world his own peculiar

59Bornkamm, p. 131.
ideas about sex. E. A. Leonard asserts that "Probably no writer in the Christian era has been more frequently quoted on the status of women than St. Paul."^60

To be sure, Paul delivered some hard sayings. "But I feare least as the serpent beguiled Even through his subtiltie, so your mindes should be corrupt from the simplicitie that is in Christ" (II Cor. 11:3).

"I permit not a woman to teach, neither to usurpe authoritie over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived, and was in transgression" (I Tim. 2:12-14). "Let your women keepe silence in the Churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speake, but they ought to be subject, as also the Lawe saith" (I Cor. 14:34).

Probably in no other area is Milton's language more suffused with Paul's phrases. Milton was deeply affected by the Pauline doctrine of woman, and though he strikes out on new paths, he is nevertheless still well-grounded in the Pauline doctrine of female subordinationism. He stretched the letter but maintained the spirit of Paul: man is primarily in God's image, but women are so only secondarily.

In Paulinism, the female is of course subordinate to the male. This premise is based once again on the Genesis account--further evidence that it is the Pauline version of Genesis and not the Hebrew account which is primary to Milton. Just as the first Adam has considerable doctrinal importance, so does the first Eve. It is interesting to note

that Eve has no importance in biblical thought, indeed is not even men-
tioned, except in Genesis and the Pauline letters. Just as human nature
rested in the first man Adam, and all share in Adam's sin of disobedience
and rejection of God, so also in a special way womankind shares a rela-
tionship with the racial mother Eve. The female is subservient to the
man for at least two reasons: 1) man existed prior to woman; 2) and
woman is somehow more culpable than man in regard to the Fall.

Adam, because he was created first, was in a sense "first-born"
and therefore entitled to certain privileges which attend that honor.
Because he has precedence in point of time, he must also have precedence
in the conjugal relationship. Just as Christ was first-born and there-
fore supreme over creation (Col. 1:15), so also was Adam first formed,
then Eve, making him supreme over woman.

But woman's secondary position does not only rest on her belated
introduction to existence. She had a special role in the Edenic fall.
I Timothy 2:12-14 and II Cor. 11:3 imply a special responsibility for
the tragedy, or at least a moral or intellectual incompetence to resist
the wiles of the Devil. Significantly, Paul records no reason for Adam's
sin. The reason for this omission is the occasion of Paul's discussion.
He is not trying to lay down concise arguments as to why Adam or Eve did
what they did; he is only trying to justify the relative position of man
and woman as it then universally existed. The racial significance of
Adam and Eve causes Paul to apply the principle of subordination to all
man- and womankind, and not just to the marital life. The woman, by her

61See πρωτότοκος in Theological Dictionary, VI, 871-881.
identification with Eve, is subordinate whether or not married.

Throughout Milton's writings, but especially in the divorce tracts, Milton conceives of the superiority of man in a genuine Pauline fashion. The woman is the glory of the man, as the man in turn is the glory of God (III, 306). Unmistakably, the female stands one position further away from God than does the man. And Milton accepts the belief that woman's creation was "occasional." Paul said: "For the man was not created for the woman's sake: but the woman for the man's sake" (I Cor. 11:9). And Milton agrees. Therefore if a wife refuses to be a true wife to her husband, she "frustrates the occasional end of her creation" (IV, 77). Just as man was created that he might serve God, woman was created that she might serve man. Milton does not interpret this "service" to be slavish, mindless obedience, but neither does Paul (Eph. 5:22-32). Since woman is created for man and not man for woman, she must not usurp his authority (III, 475).

Women do not contain the image of God to the degree that men do, for Adam was the immediate offspring of God, while Eve was only secondarily so. Commenting on the phrase from Genesis "created he him" (singular), Milton argues: "But St. Paul ends the controversy, by explaining, that the woman is not primarily and immediately the image of God, but in reference to the man. 'The head of the woman,' saith he, I Cor. 11. 'is the man: he the image and glory of God, she the glory of the man:' he not for her, but she for him, Therefore his precept is,

62On Milton's "exception" to masculine rule, see below pp. 82-83.
'Wives be subject to your husbands as is fit in the Lord,' Coloss. 3.18.

'In everything,' Eph. 5.24" (IV, 76).

The basis for female inferiority is the same in Milton as in Paul. Woman was created second, indicating a secondary position, an ancient concept lying back of primogeniture. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. Just as Esau had birthrights as the firstborn son, and just as Christ has preeminence as the firstborn and elder brother in the kingdom (Rom. 8:29), so Adam and the male population have special rank. Man has special freedom because of "his naturall birth-right, and that indeleble character of priority, which God crown'd him with" (IV, 77). But also he accepts Paul's thesis that Eve has special guilt in the Fall, which confirms her inferior position: "from her the sin first proceeded, which keeps her justly in the same proportion still beneath [man]" (IV, 77).

Just as in the case of St. Paul's doctrine of the flesh, there are probably as many misconceptions as correct understandings about Paul's doctrine of woman. There are many favorable aspects to Paul's view on women which prevent us from seeing him as a woman-hater. A misogynistic view of Paul is possible only when one reads a few passages (I Tim. 2:12-14; I Cor. 7; I Cor. 14) isolated from the rest of Paul's works and from the immediate context of his discourses. The polemical nature of his writing must be considered. In the case of I Corinthians 7 there is a strongly eschatological context which is frequently overlooked.63

63See below pp. 80-81, 104 ff.
And of course Paul's comments have an important historical context. Leonard writes that "there is conclusive evidence that women were considered inferior to men in all periods of early Jewish history."64

But even so, the positive aspects of Paul's views on women are frequently overlooked. The large number of women who were a part of Paul's work may be an indication of his feeling on the subject. The list of his female friends and fellow-laborers is impressive—Narcissus, Tryphena, Tryphosa, Lois, Eunice, Phoebe, Chloe, etc. Paul energetically accepted women converts, and Luke mentions that many of the leading Greek women were converted (Acts 17:4, 12). In Romans 16 alone, Paul calls the names of eleven women—in a church he had not even visited before. John Foster claims that certain passages (I Thess. 11:9, I Cor. 14:34; Col. 3:18, I Tim. 2:12) "were occasioned by the prevailing prominence of women within the Early Church." The teaching about veils, according to Foster, must be seen as an effort by a Christian diplomat to save the movement from what would appear as excesses in the opinion of those about them.65 Henry Chadwick allows for Paul's subordinate view of women, but at the same time says that Paul's attitude was not a Gnostic or a Manichee revulsion from the basic facts of the natural created order. Such a view breaks up on the locus classicus, I Corinthians 7, Chadwick argues.66

64Leonard, p. 313.


66Chadwick, p. 9.
One must also consider the frequent passages where Paul does not discriminate on grounds of sex. For example, I Corinthians 11:11-12 implies a strong sense of equality between husband and wife: "Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, so the man also by the woman: but all things are of God." The famous passage in Ephesians 5 compares the woman's subordination to the church's loving subordinate position beneath the bridegroom Christ. The view of the Ephesian letter can hardly allow, then, for woman to be viewed as chattel. Neither does it permit the husband to be a patriarchal tyrant, for he must love his wife as his own flesh. Paul certainly did not see the subordinate position of women as in any way degrading since Christ himself is subordinate to the Father.

When Paul treats marriage in I Corinthians 7, he does not weight matters in man's favor, but gives instructions of mutual application. Milton noticed this fact and argued that divorce is mutually applicable (IV, 21). In Pauline doctrine justification by faith is for everyone (Rom. 3:23) for there are no human preferences with God (Rom. 2:11). And in the Kingdom, sexual distinctions fade into insignificance: "There is neither Jew nor Grecian: there is neither bond nor free: there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). Only in I Corinthians 14 and in I Timothy :11-12 does Paul limit the activity of women in churches, and as Leonard points out, unusual circumstances may have demanded his comments.67 (We must recall the occasional

nature of his letters.) Corinth was infamous for its sexual laxity. "Corinthian" became synonymous with "libertine." When one reads Paul's comments about women's role in society, one must be aware of the hetairai, the temple harlots, and the priestesses of Dionysus who are in the background. Paul saw the potentially irreparable damage that would accrue if Christian behavior were confused with the licentiousness of prostitutes.

If it seems that I have belabored the positive points of Paul's view of women, then I say in defense that such emphasis is needed to correct a rather distorted view which, if accepted, would considerably damage the possible parallel between Paul and Milton. There is good reason for suspecting that Milton found his favorable views on women in Paul, just as he found his unfavorable views. Both men have been accused of being misogynists, and a better understanding of Paul's actual position may help to clarify Milton's. They are no more misogynists because they believe the female functions in a subordinate position than they are "Christ-haters" because they see Christ in a subordinate position. Wagenknecht is correct when he says that "it is surely not unreasonable to urge that the time has finally come when whoever applies the term 'misogynist' to [Milton] simply knows not whereof he speaks."68

68The parallel between the Father and the Son on the one hand and the man and the woman on the other deserves study, for the parallel may shed light on the nature of the two relationships.

Milton's positive views on women need less stress because others have noted them. Patrides sees a relationship between Ephesians 5:22-25 and Milton's positive understanding of marriage. Probably Milton has the Ephesian passage in mind when he writes that the doctrine of subordination is not an argument for female slavery: "Nevertheless, man is not to hold her a servant, but receives her into a part of that empire which God proclaims himself to, though not equally, yet largely, as his own image and glory: for it is no small glory to him, that a creature so like him, should be made subject to him" (IV, 76).

Milton's closeness to the Pauline view is evident in his careful distinction between what Paul taught and what Augustine taught. The crucial distinctions have eluded some interpreters of Milton. First, Milton believes that Paul accepted the inherent goodness of marriage, and that it was only the special circumstance of I Corinthians 7 which made Paul state reservations about marriage (which he nowhere else repeats). The \textit{Jerome Biblical Commentary} comments on the holiness of marriage in Paul's view, even marriage with unbelievers: "Unlike fornication, the marriage union is not opposed to the Christian's union with the Lord. If it were, then the children of these marriages 'would be unclean, but as it is they are holy.'"\textsuperscript{71} Marriage is not a defilement, but is sanctifying (I Cor. 7:14). Milton entirely agrees (IV, 198). In contrast to the later medieval conception, Paul never speaks of

\textsuperscript{70}Patrides, \textit{Christian Tradition}, p. 181.

\textsuperscript{71}JBC 51:39.
children being tainted with sin from conception because they are the products of sexual concupiscence. Milton, seeing the difference, contrasts his more biblical view with the traditional one: "It was for many ages that marriage lay in disgrace with most of the ancient doctors, as a work of the flesh, almost a defilement, wholly denied to priests, and the second time dissuaded to all, as he that reads Tertullian or Jerome may see at large" (III, 383). A strongly ascetic spirit set in after the Apostolic era, and Milton is correct to note the difference between the first-century view and the later view.

In regard to Paul's statement that "it is better to marrie than to burne" (I Cor. 7:9), Milton in contrast to a common view takes the passage to refer simply to "sexual desire" and not to lust. He is probably right. But Milton goes beyond Paul in making the burning the desire for female companionship: "but what might this burning mean? Certainly not the mere motion of carnall lust, not the mere goad of a sensitive desire." Rather it is "that desire which God saw it was not good that man should be left alone to burn in; the desire and longing to put off an unkindly solitarines by uniting another body" (III, 396).

In another way Milton distinguishes between Paul's marriage doctrine and a later view. Milton finds marriage to have a purpose other than procreation. Whether in fact Paul speaks of another purpose for marriage might be debated, but there can be no doubt that Paul indirectly at least supported Milton's view. Milton very conveniently applied to marriage the Pauline doctrine of peace. He saw the importance

72 Ibid.
of peace in Paul's thought and simply applies the principle to marriage. Milton specifically based his view upon Paul's instructions in I Corinthians 7:15. There, Paul says that if a troublesome unbelieving spouse departs he should not be brought back because "God hath called us in peace." Milton deduces that marriage must of necessity bring peace to those who participate in it. The Pauline mention of peace flowers into an elaborate principle for marriage: "Who but one forsak'n of all sense and civil nature, and chiefly of Christianity, will deny that peace, contrary to discord, is the calling and general end of every Christian . . .?" (IV, 253). Marriage should bring genuine conjugal fellowship and a fit conversing of souls (III, 397). Marriage is a union of peace and charity (IV, 127, 200). If St. Paul did not specifically teach that peace should be a natural ingredient of marriage, it was still a logical deduction on Milton's part based upon the prominence of peace in Paul's thought (Rom. 1:7; 5:1; 14:17; I Cor. 1:3; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 1:22; Col. 3:15; etc.). Milton honestly thinks his understanding comes from the Scriptures, and not from "som School, or som stie" (IV, 253).

If peace is as important as Paul suggests, then why can it not be "the main end of marriage"? "Discord then wee ought to fly, and to pursue peace, farre above the observance of a civil covenant, already brok'n" (IV, 253). In his exegesis of I Corinthians 7:15 Milton says that God has called us

To peace, not to bondage, not to brabbles and contentions with him who is not pleas'd to live peaceably, as mariage and christianity requires. And where strife arises from a cause hopelesse to be allayd, what better way to peace then by separating that which is ill joyn'd? It is not divorce, that first breaks the
peace of family, as som fondly comment on this place; but it is peace already brok'n, which, when other cures fail, can only be restor'd to the faultles person by a necessary divorce. And St. Paul heer warrants us to seeke peace, rather than to remain in bondage. If God hath call'd us to peace, why should we not follow him . . .? (IV, 200-201)

Milton, therefore, bases his concept of marriage upon St. Paul, and with some justification rejects Augustine's "crabbed opinion" as alien to Scripture (IV, 85). Marriage is good, in no way defiling. Marriage is designed to bring peace, not merely produce children.

One further point about Paul's and Milton's concept of marriage needs to be mentioned. The complexity of Paul's marriage teaching is partially the result of the eschatological context of that teaching. Paul recommends celibacy ("It were good for a man not to touch a woman." "For I would that all men were even as I my self am." I Cor. 7:1, 7), but "Nowhere does he speak of marriage as subspiritual because of the material aspect of it causing defilement. Nor could Paul agree that celibacy was to be the normal or even the best procedure for every Christian." Paul is neither promoting nor is he castigating the marriage stage. What is really on his mind is the imminent Advent. The world as it now is, is passing away (7:31). The time is short (7:29), and the common eschatological motif of great tribulation as a prelude to the Parousia is on Paul's mind (7:26). He is expecting great tribulation to descend upon the Corinthians, so his advice is to be read in the framework of "the present necessitie" (τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ανάγκην) (7:26).

73 See below pp. 104 ff.

His worry is that marriage will only increase the suffering of young Christians. The goodness of marriage is not on his mind. Furthermore, the details of marriage may obscure one's hope for the imminent return. "The sole leitmotiv and criterion in Paul's counsel is the believer's relationship to the coming Lord."75 "Paul's overriding concern was with death and resurrection, not sexuality."76 In vain, then, does one extract from I Corinthians 7 negative prescriptions about marriage. For those, it is best to turn to the third and fourth centuries and to the middle ages.

Milton, having read carefully his text of Paul, does not succumb to a misogynistic reading of the Corinthian passage. Using his more rational hermeneutic he interprets the passage contextually. He says that Paul's words "are not to be so strictly wrung, as to command without regard to the most natural and miserable necessities of mankind" (IV, 85). Milton then continues to note the qualifying framework of "the present necessity": "Therefore the Apostle adds a limitation in the 26 v. of the chap. for the present necessity it is good; which he gives us doubtlesse as a pattern how to reconcile other places by the generall rule of charity." It is not clear whether Milton sees the real cast of Paul's qualification or whether he merely takes the qualification to be a reference to times of persecution. Probably, it would have created too many problems for Milton's concept of Scripture to think that Paul could have incorrectly believed that the Parousia was at hand.

75Bornkamm, p. 208.

76Rubenstein, p. 64.
Nevertheless, he notes the qualification of the passage and correctly rejects it as Paul's normative marriage teaching.\textsuperscript{77}

Some conclusions about Milton's marriage views are in order. In several respects Milton's concepts are quite similar to Paul's. Both men hold a subordinationist view of women, and the theological basis of this belief is the account of Eve. Man functions in a superior position, is more directly the image and glory of God. The woman's creation was for the benefit of the man.

But neither Milton nor Paul believes that the woman is to be degraded to some subhuman or less spiritual level of existence. Both see great possibilities in women. They accept the essential goodness of marriage and reject an ascetic denial of marriage. Milton certainly and Paul possibly see the end of marriage to include more than procreation.

Milton goes beyond Paul in defining the function of marriage to include the conversation between like minds which issues in genuine peace. But if Milton goes beyond Paul on this point, he does so by relying on Pauline concepts which are merely taken over and applied to marriage. It has been suggested that Milton's liberalism in regard to marriage is

\textsuperscript{77} The question of Paul's marital status often arises in a discussion of his marriage teaching, just as does Milton's in discussions of his tracts. The prevailing view is that he was a bachelor, although tempting arguments have been offered in favor of his being a widower or a married man. Because Paul is silent about having a wife and because he states that no wife travels with him in contrast to other apostles (I Cor. 9:5), and because he implies he is unmarried (I Cor. 7:8)—the majority view is that Paul was a bachelor. But if Paul were a member of the Sanhedrin, then it is likely that he was married (see C. T. Craig, "The Conversion of Paul" in Contemporary Thinking about Paul, ed. Thomas S. Kepler, New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950, p. 135).
reflected in his claim that in unusual circumstances the wife may rule the home. But in fact the important qualification, that such a circumstance is only possible if the husband "contendly yeeld" (IV, 77), shows that Milton has not broken with Paul. Generally speaking, we can say that Milton's views of women and marriage, both negative and positive, are Pauline.

A rabbinical teacher would have felt obliged to marry early in accordance with the Talmud. Perhaps more important is Clement of Alexandria's interpretation of Phil. 4:3 to refer to Paul's wife. Luther also thought that Paul was a widower. See JBC 51:38.
CHAPTER THREE

THE NEW CREATION AND THE SECOND ADAM

We have seen in the previous chapter that John Milton and St. Paul held to some similar concepts concerning man and woman as typified in Adam and Eve, and that their views of creation were similar. But the teachings about the old creation and the first Adam were secondary for Milton and Paul—secondary to the exceedingly important doctrines of the "new Creation" and the "Second Adam." The older order passes away and the new one takes its place in Pauline thought:

For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by that obedience of that one shall many also be made righteous. (Rom. 5:19)

For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (Rom. 15:20-21)

Therefore if any man be in Christ, let him be a new creature. Olde things are passed away: beholde all things are become newe. (II Cor. 5:17)

Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the olde man with his works, And have put on the new, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. (Col. 3:9-10)

"In Adam" man is alienated from God and totally without peace or security. Weakness, sin, and death characterize his life. "In Christ" mankind is reunited with God and he experiences the peace that exceeds understanding. The Pauline kerygma proclaims that it is impossible for the old man, unregenerate man, to pass from his old existence and to
become a part of a new order of existence in and under Christ (cf. De Doctrina, Book I, chapter 18). Through faith, the believer is "united" with Christ in baptism, where a spiritual death, burial, and resurrection occur (Rom. 6:3-11; Col. 2:11-13; cf. Milton in De Doctrina, Book I, chapters 18, 21, and 28). This process which restores man in God's sight we call "atonement." While Christians since Paul's era have universally believed that Christianity effects an atonement, there have been various explanations of how it occurs, or what makes it possible.

Since the Reformation a particular interpretation of Paul's doctrine of atonement, or his soteriology, has held sway. Paul, everyone is supposed to know, first and foremost taught a concept of justification by faith and the expiation of guilt through a blood sacrifice—through the sacrifice of the very Son of God. While this is certainly a part of Paul's doctrine of atonement, it is manifestly not the whole story of Paul's doctrine of salvation.

In attempting to understand Milton's soteriology some honest attempts must be made to discover what Paul actually said. But this is exceedingly hard to do for several reasons. First, we nowhere have a clear or complete presentation of the Pauline kerygma. The letters we read were written to believers who had already received the essential doctrines, and the letters build on a foundation already laid. Second, Paul, being no systematic theologian, said different things in different places as occasion arose. We hear of redemption, liberation, justification, reconciliation, propitiation, and forgiveness. These terms convey different concepts, and they are not neatly harmonized by Paul.
Third, Paul's ideas are not necessarily homogeneous. We now know that Paul did not dream up the doctrine of Christ's death as a vicarious sacrifice. It was a legacy of the already-established Christian community which Paul merely adopted into his system.\(^1\) The Suffering Servant (ebed Yahweh) motif was a familiar Jewish notion which goes back to Isaiah 53. The church applied the idea of vicarious suffering from Deutero-Isaiah to the crucified Lord. Oscar Cullmann says that Paul in I Corinthians 15:3 is merely quoting from the earliest Christian creed which he received at conversion: "First of all, I delivered unto you that which I received, how that Christ died for our sinnes, according to the Scriptures."\(^2\) Paul the intellectual and independent builder started with the church's kerygma and continued to develop the thought. Consequently, it is difficult to ascertain any solid finished theology of atonement. Last, and perhaps most annoying, the interference of intervening commentary, debate, theorizing, and dogmatizing makes it hard to hear Paul for himself. Too often, the voices of Augustine, Anselm, Luther or other interpreters mingle with Paul's. But, nevertheless, in recent years, Pauline scholars have been able to distinguish with increasing skill between Paul and the later tradition.

\(^1\)Cerfaux, pp. 143-144.

1. **Justification by faith**

C. A. Patrides, in an enlightening article "Milton and the Protestant Theory of the Atonement," helps us understand some of the possible explanations of how atonement is possible in the Christian system. He outlines four principal theories. The first one, which he calls the earliest, is the Pauline belief that "Christ recapitulated in His Person the entire human race and that He achieved our redemption as a representative of mankind. As St. Paul has it, when the Son of God entered history, there gathered 'together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth' (Eph. 1:10)."

Second, he names the "ransom" theory, in which the Son gave his life as a ransom or payment for mankind. He says that this view "had its origins in Irenaeus," although he cites Mark 10:45 and Matthew 20:28 as earlier expressions of the theory. He omits an important Pauline source also (I Tim. 2:6). The third theory, the "satisfaction" theory, holds that Christ renders reparation for the dishonor caused God by man. This is the Anselmic theory. Fourth, and last, is the Reformation doctrine of a juridical substitutionary atonement:

But on the whole a new theory emerges to befit the spirit of the times. The Atonement is now seen as a legal transaction, as a debt paid to the Supreme Judge which is at once His satisfaction and just punishment for our sins. Jesus "substituted" for us, according to the Reformers, and in a just payment of our sins drew upon Himself the just wrath of God.

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3PMLA, 74(1959), 7-13.

4Ibid., p. 7.

5Ibid., p. 9.
While Patrides allows to some extent for biblical origin (I Pet. 2:24; Matt. 8:17; II Cor. 5:21), Luther, Calvin and the other Reformers are considered the chief architects of this doctrine of forensic atonement. This juridical concept of salvation Patrides finds permeating Milton's epic. It is chief among the theories in Milton's system.6

Professor Patrides has correctly enumerated the principal theories of atonement, I believe. Furthermore, he is correct in stressing the place of forensic atonement in the Reformation, for there can be no doubt that it was chief. Furthermore, he is correct about its importance in Milton's doctrinal system, as a cursory reading of chapters 16 and 22, De Doctrina, Book I, will show. However, Professor Patrides has left a considerable false impression which is in need of correction. While all these theories find their great exponents and interpreters and refiners in later church dogmatists, nevertheless, as Patrides' own limited Scripture citations indicate, these theories have their origin in the New Testament. Patrides implies that only the "recapitulation" theory, which he calls the earliest, has its basis in Paul. But if Cullmann and others are correct that the ebed Yahweh theme of Christ's vicarious offering ("but he was wounded for our transgressions . . . and with his stripes we are healed," Isaiah 53:5) existed prior to Paul's conversion, then the "recapitulation" theory could not have been first. Also, I object to the suggestion that forensic atonement is the creation of the Reformation. That is not possible when Paul's letters are filled

6Ibid., p. 10.
with juridical concepts. The Reformation exalted forensic salvation, to be sure, to a position it never had in Paul's thought. The Reformers more clearly defined the doctrine. But even so, Paul believes that man must appear before the Judgment of God, where the charges will be read against the guilty. Only the elect will be exonerated in the Court of God: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods chosen? it is God that justifieth, Who shall condemne? it is Christ which is dead, yea or rather which is risen again, who is also at the right hand of God, and maketh request also for us" (Rom. 8:33).

The justification by faith doctrine which became supreme in Lutheran and Reformed dogmatics was based upon the thesis statement of the Roman epistle: "For by it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith unto faith: as it is written: the just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17). He elaborates on the legal aspects of salvation:

To wit, the righteousness of God by the faith of Jesus Christ [was made manifest] unto all, and upon all that beleev. For there is no difference: for all have sinned, and are deprive of the glory of God, And are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Whom God hath set foorth to be a reconciliation through faith in his blood to declare his righteousness, by the forgiveness of sinnes that are passed, through the pacience of God to shew at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and a justifier of him which is of the faith of Jesus . . . . Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith, without the workes of the Lawe. (Rom. 3:22-28)

Here we find in St. Paul the forensic doctrine of atonement. Righteousness, justification, Lawe, workes, reconciliation (ιλαστηριου 'propitiation')--in short the language of forensic atonement.

Forensic language goes back even to the Old Testament, where God is portrayed as a contender involved in a lawsuit with his rebellious people (Isaiah 1:18, 3:13, 41:1; 43:26; Hosea 4:1; 12:2; Micah 6:2, etc.). See JBC 79:37.
Paul certainly thinks of salvation in legal terms. The word justification and its cognates occur thirty-eight times in the Pauline epistles.

At the same time it is true that the church in the later ages after Paul forgot the context of Paul's teaching on justification, Jewish legalism. Paul's polemic was an effort to establish the supremacy of Christ's Gospel over the Torah. The Latin West, where law was a sacred cultural tradition, forgot the original context of Paul's teaching and made the juridical concept all-important. Salvation in the West, according to Wayne Meeks, is chiefly the process by which the guilty man is acquitted before the Supreme Judge. Since man has nothing favorable to plead in his favor, the Son of the Judge stands in court with the condemned man and pays the death penalty for man. But if this is not Paul's primary doctrine, it is at least a significant aspect of it. The presence of forensic atonement is unmistakable in Paul; the only debate concerns its centrality.

Milton's juridical concept of atonement is evident in all his works. Patrides says that "The forensic theory of the Atonement

8The Writings of St. Paul, p. 215.

9In the nineteenth century the preeminence of forensic righteousness in Paulinism began to be questioned. This changing view is well expressed in Matthew Arnold's criticism of Luther and Calvin for shutting Paul up into "the two scholastic doctrines of election and justification," St. Paul and Protestantism (New York: Macmillan Co., 1902), p. 34. However, the new interpretation of Paul may have erred in the opposite direction. Dibelius and Kümmel say that it is accurate to see the justification doctrine as central in Pauline thought: "There can, however, be no doubt that it is here that the heart of Paul the thinker beats most vigorously, and that it is here that we have to look for the core of his message," Martin Dibelius, Paul, ed. and completed by Werner George Kümmel, trans. Frank Clarke (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1957), pp. 114-115.
The clearest definition, however, comes in *De Doctrina*. The juridical framework of Paul's soteriology prompts Grierson to complain that God's ways are too purely legal. Salvation as a legal process in some sense is Pauline as we have established, but surely Milton's proximity to the Reformation caused him to give it the emphasis that he does:

> The satisfaction of Christ is the complete reparation made by him in his twofold capacity of God and man, by the fulfillment of the law, and the payment of the required price for all mankind. (XV, 315)

> Justification is the gratuitous purpose of God, whereby those who are regenerated and ingrafted in Christ are absolved from sin and death through his most perfect satisfaction, and accounted just in the sight of God, not by the works of the law, but through faith. (XVI, 25)

> The humiliation of Christ is that state in which under his character of God-man he voluntarily submitted himself to the divine justice, as well in life as in death, for the purpose of undergoing all things requisite to accomplish our redemption. (XV, 303)

Since Milton's forensic doctrine accords with the Reformed doctrine, we may correctly assume that he has been influenced by the theology of the Reformation, but we cannot at the same time overlook the Pauline argument which flows through Milton's expression. Perhaps the selection and emphasis is that of the Reformation, but there can be little doubt that Paulinism is vitally a part of Milton's soteriology. When he outlines his justification doctrine, he cites Paul profusely because Paul was truly the father of justification doctrine.


11Grierson, p. 96.
Justification by faith introduces us to the difficult question of salvation by "faith alone." That Milton was not completely moved by the great Reformed doctrine of "faith alone" may be seen in his equivocation on the subject. Paul himself is not very precise on this point. He says in Romans 1:17 that salvation is "from faith unto faith" (ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν), thus suggesting that salvation is on the basis of faith alone, in contradistinction to the works of the law. Similarly in Romans 11:6 he contrasts grace and works in a way as to suggest that there is no middle ground: "And if it bee of grace, it is no more of workes: or else were grace no more grace: but if it be of workes, it is no more grace: or else were worke no more worke." Here, Paul stresses salvation as being the result of God's work, not man's. Milton also in some sense believes that salvation is on the basis of "faith alone": "God justified believers, and believers only, inasmuch as it is faith alone that justifieth" (XIV, 123).

But neither Paul nor Milton stresses salvation by faith alone in the Lutheran fashion. Paul's lengthy hortatory sections can only be comprehended in view of his belief in the necessity of a life of good works. Almost paradoxically he tells Christians that they are saved through faith "Not workes," but then he goes on to say "For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good workes, which God ordained that we should walke in them" (Eph. 2:8-11). Milton does his best to bring these two Pauline themes, faith and works, into some kind of a meaningful harmony. Salvation is "By faith not void of workes" (Paradise Lost, XII.427):
For St. Paul does not say simply that a man is justified without works, but "without the works of the law:" nor yet by faith alone, but "by faith which worketh by love," Gal. v.6. Faith has its own works, which may be different from the works of the law. We are justified therefore by faith, but by a living, not a dead faith; and that faith alone which acts is counted living. Hence we are justified by faith without the works of the law, but not without the works of faith. (XVI, 39)

In conclusion, we may say that for Milton, as for Paul, salvation is at least symbolically a legal process by which man is imputed righteousness before the Judgment Seat of God, and this legal justification comes about through faith—"faith alone" as opposed to salvation by the works of the law, but not "faith alone" if one means a faith that does not issue into obedient living.

2. Sacrifice and the Cross

It has been often noted that the Passion narrative never seemed to appeal to Milton, for he never gives it anything like a thorough treatment (see "The Passion" and Paradise Lost, XII.11-20). On the other hand, the crucified Lord is central to the Pauline kerygma: "But wee preach Christ crucified: unto the Jewes even a stumbling blocks, and unto the Grecians, foolishnesse" (I Cor. 1:23). "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us, (for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.)" (Gal. 3:13). One may be led by this apparent disparity to conclude that for some reason, perhaps because of his humanistic temperament, Milton decided to de-emphasize this biblical theme. Wagenknecht supposes Milton gives the crucifixion slight treatment either because of his stress on reason, his temperamental optimism, or his tendency to shy away from physical
horror. But another possibility ought to receive consideration. Following the example of Paul, Milton accepted the great theological significance of the cross as a doctrinal abstraction, but he declined to employ language to reduce it to flesh and blood reality. For both men, the crucifixion is primarily a soteriological truth, and less an event to be portrayed in sentimental detail.

In the early days of nascent Christianity a central question facing the new community was: How does the death of Christ effect salvation? Before Paul was even converted, the sacerdotal language of the Old Testament was applied to the death. Christ is our paschal lamb, a propitiatory sacrifice for sin (I Cor. 15:3). Milton entirely agrees: "The fact that Christ became a sacrifice both in his divine and human nature, is denied by none; and as it was requisite that the whole of the sacrifice should be slain, Christ, who was the sacrificial lamb, must be considered as slain in the whole of his nature" (XV, 309).

The vicarious suffering motif of the Second Isaiah was adopted by Paul and fully accepted by Milton. His temperamental optimism did not prevent Milton from accepting the crucifixion as a soteriological fact—He was wounded for our transgressions and with His stripes we are healed.

The sacrificial language is used in certain passages which Cerfaut calls his "discourses of the cross." Beginning in I Corinthians Paul's thought turns to the meaning of the cross (in contrast to

12 Wagenknecht, p. 137.
the earlier letter to Thessalonica where the cross and crucifixion are not even mentioned). The crucifixion takes on deep meaning for Paul by the time that he writes the Corinthians: "We take part in the immola-
tion of the paschal lamb and celebrate a perpetual passover (I Cor. 5:7-8)." 14

But the death of Christ not only effects redemption (I Cor. 15:3). It also reveals a basic principle about God's operation in the universe which was to have immense influence upon Milton: God chooses to reveal his will in ways inimical to the wisdom of the world. He chooses the "scandal" (σκάνδαλον, I Cor. 1:23) of the cross to reveal his divine power. He elects the weak and foolish things to demonstrate his strength and wisdom. This divine truth did not end with the cross—it continues to be manifested in the lives of devout servants of God. Paul and Mil-
ton find God demonstrating his power in their own lives as living proof of this principle. They, too, are God's Suffering Servants in an alien world.

In evaluating Paul's position on the crucifixion, two points must be made. First, the cross and blood are not the sum of Paul's soteriology. It is dangerous to read Paul as if he were a nineteenth-
century revivalist. It was not St. Paul, but William Cowper, who wrote:

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

"We have to put the discourse of the cross into its historical context, and it is not the whole of Paul's message. The whole message is Christ

14Ibid., p. 157.
in his death, resurrection and second coming: . . . If the discourse of
the cross was the summit of Paul's theology, his later letters would
confirm the fact by being strongly impregnated with it. But in fact,
they are not, as the letters to the Philippians and Colossians will
show. 15 Cerfaux finds several themes in the later letters which exceed
the cross in importance: the Parousia, the resurrection, participation
in suffering, the Christian's mystical death and resurrection in Christ,
etc. The discourse of the cross is not, according to Cerfaux, the
ultimate theme in Paul. 16 The second point about Paul's position on the
crucifixion is that in all of his discussion of the cross, he never ven­
tures into the historical details of the event nor offers the slightest
depiction of it. It is a great spiritual event, a metaphysical fact,
but not a scene to be discussed.

Milton's acceptance of the soteriological importance of the
crucifixion but simultaneous rejection of it as a scene appropriate for
prose or poetic depiction, therefore, is consonant with Paul. If Milton
seldom refers to the crucifixion (see III, 243, 258; XIV, 239; XV, 181)
and never describes it, perhaps he is saying with Paul: "yea though wee
had knownen Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth knowes we him no
more." It is the Risen Lord, not the crucified Jesus of Nazareth who
is most important. To be sure, the crucifixion was the crisis in the
cosmic drama of salvation, but now that the crisis has passed it is the
Risen Lord who has proven Himself the true Suffering Servant who catches
Paul's and Milton's attention.

15 Ibid., p. 159. 16 Ibid., p. 158.
The theme one hears in Paul and Milton is not a legalistic Old Testament sacrifice to placate an angry God. Rather, it is God's love. It was God who after all initiated the saving work. God's love is pre-eminent in Paul,\(^{17}\) just as it is in Milton: "for charity is truest religion" (IV, 215). Christ dissolved the "whole law into charity" (IV, 76).

It is the cosmic Christ—the universal demonstration of God's abundant love—who is to be found in Pauline and Miltonic thought. Denis Saurat's observation that "the historical life of Jesus is not very important for Milton"\(^{18}\) is striking because precisely the same observation has been made by scholars about Paul. He has been criticized for never quoting Jesus or referring to his life on earth. Tillyard notes the similarities between Paul's Christ and Milton's: "It is remarkable how closely Milton follows St. Paul and how little weight he gives to the Gospels, in writing of Christ. The Crucifixion is hardly mentioned, most of the events in Christ's life are passed over in silence. Far from being in danger of making Christ mere man he tends to make him divine indeed, though less than God, but a divine abstraction; a tendency which apparently grew into the dimness of Paradise Regained."\(^{19}\) Tillyard is correct. Paul's Christ, like Milton's, is not a very human


figure who thirsts, eats, drinks, and bleeds (as in the Gospels); he tend toward being a divine, though very real, abstraction.

3. Two States of Being

We have already spoken of the Adam-Christ antithesis, but we have not spoken of the doctrine of atonement which is implicit in this antithesis. C. A. Patrides calls this Pauline atonement the recapitulation theory, but because his purpose was to treat the forensic theory, he does not refer to Milton's dependence upon this Pauline doctrine. Nevertheless, it is very much a part of Milton's theology.

In Pauline thought, unregenerate man is "in Adam." He has the nature of the old man Adam. He has denied his creatureliness in deciding to be himself. Thus, his mind becomes deluded and his understanding imperfect. Just as the woman of Genesis said "The serpent deceived me" (Gen. 3:13), so also the unregenerate man of Romans 7:11 says "Sin deceived me." Through man's identification with Adam, that is, by virtue of man's solidarity with the old man Adam, individual man constantly experiences the Fall, for he is "in Adam." This belief in corporate sinfulness is the basis of so-called original sin.

Redemption for Paul and also for Milton is the removal from the domain of Adam to the domain of Christ. Thus, Paul speaks of a kind of mystical existence "in Christ" or "in the Lord" over one hundred and

20 See above pp. 59-60.

21 Longenecker is my source for this parallel between Genesis 3 and Romans 7, pp. 92-93.

22 For discussion of original sin, see above pp. 49-51, 63-65.
fifty times. "As yee have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walke in him, Rooted and built in him" (Col. 2:6-7). And Milton speaks of the Pauline mystical union with Christ: "Believers are said to be ingrafted in Christ, when they are planted in Christ by God the Father, that is, are made partakers of Christ, and meet for becoming one with him" (XVI, 3). This union with Christ is signified by immersion (XVI, 169). Once in Christ, the "intellectual ray" returns to man. There is a daily renewal of the inner man (II Cor. 4:16); Christ is formed within (Gal. 4:19); God gives "the spirit of wisedome, and revelation" and "knowledge" (Eph. 1:17; Col. 4:10). Eventually the point is reached that one can say that he has "the mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:16). The incorporation into Christ becomes so complete that Paul can say "I am crucified with Christ, but I live, yet not I any more, but Christ liveth in mee: and in that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith in the Sonne of God" (Gal. 2:20).

As we shall see later, such Pauline teachings gave considerable encouragement to Milton's quest for liberty, just as they did to other seventeenth-century nonconformists. If one is in the domain of Christ, incorporated into his body, if spiritual knowledge is open to the regenerate man, then why must he answer to the Christian tradition? How dare the ecclesiastical courts judge a man who has the mind of Christ? Such presumption is "too high for any mortal; since every true Christian, able to give a reason of his faith, hath the word of God before him, the promised Holy Spirit, and the minde of Christ within him, I Cor. 2:16; a much better and safer guide of conscience, which as far as concerns
himself he may far more certainly know then any outward rule impos'd upon him by other, whom he inwardly neither knows nor can know; at least knows nothing of them more sure then this one thing, that they cannot be his judges in religion. I Cor. 2:15. 'the spiritual man judgeth all things, but he himself is judged of no man'" (VI, 7-8).

Before leaving the recapitulation theory one last point ought to be made. Implicit in the theory is a theme which is very important in Milton—the theme of obedience. The removal from man's state in Adam to existence in Christ is possible only through Christ's extraordinary obedience (Rom. 5:19; Phil. 2:5-10). Milton's attraction to this theme is certain because of its place in the epics. But it also may be found in his prose. In De Doctrina Milton explains that God placed man in the garden of Eden and commanded him to "refrain from eating of the single tree" as "a test of his obedience" (XV, 113). The tree in Eden is a "memorial of obedience" (XV, 115). The primal sin was a casting off of man's obedience to God (XV, 181). Atonement, then, occurred when the Second Man entered the domain of humanity and turned over the primal act of disobedience by his superhuman obedience.

4. The Nature of Sin

Life in Adam means of course a life of sin. One clue that Milton was a more devoted student of Paul than he was of Calvin arises from his more Pauline understanding of the concept of sin. Paul taught a concept of "original sin," but it was somewhat different from the total depravity of the Calvinistic system. C. H. Dodd explains Paul's concept of sin in this manner:
"sin" is not for Paul identical with actual moral transgression of which the individual is fully conscious and for which he is fully responsible. That is the sense in which the word has been generally used by subsequent writers; but if it is taken in that sense, then Paul is inevitably misunderstood. The actual Greek word used (hamartia), like its equivalent in the Hebrew of the Old Testament, originally meant "missing the mark," or as we might say, "going wrong". There is a racial, a corporate, a social wrongness of which we are made in some sense partakers by the mere fact of our being born into human society. That is the meaning of "original sin," as the theologians call it. It is not the figment of inherited guilt; how could anything so individual as guilty responsibility be inherited? It is corporate wrongness in which we are involved by being born men in this world.

Interestingly enough, Milton's concept is much closer to Dodd's explanation of Paul's doctrine of sin than it is to that of Calvinistic total depravity.

First of all, the concept of corporate wrongness is very much a part of Milton's thought. His chapter "Of the Fall of Our First Parents, and of Sin" (De Doctrina, Book I, chapter 11) is largely devoted to arguing for the Pauline doctrine of human solidarity—a concept which is fundamental to a correct understanding of Paul's hamartiology. We all sinned "in Adam" for he stood for the whole human race (XV, 183, 207). "Undoubtedly therefore all sinned in Adam. For Adam being the common parent and head of all, it follows that . . . he either stood or fell for the whole human race" (XV, 183). Wisdom, purity, and justice are lost in Adam (IV, 74; cf. IV, 98, 170). In his tract Of Education Milton implies that the loss sustained by our racial parents still operates upon man, so that the object of education is "to repair the ruins of

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our first Parents by regaining to know God aright" (IV, 277).

A second point of similarity is the refusal to extend the concept of original sin to the point of infant guilt or responsibility.

Paul nowhere discusses the state of infants, and his one condition of salvation, faith, would necessarily preclude infants. Milton sharply distinguishes between original sin, which all men have because they are in Adam, and guiltiness: "Some contend that this original sin is specially guiltiness; but guiltiness is not so properly sin, as the imputation of sin, which is also called the 'judgment of God'" (XV, 197).

In his discussion of the killing of infants in the Old Testament, although he sees these Old Testament deaths as support for solidarity, he refuses to believe that the infants were guilty: "The difficulty is solved with respect to infants, by the consideration that all souls belong to God; that these, though guiltless of actual sin were the offspring of sinful parents, and that God foresaw that, if suffered to live, they would grow up similar to their parents. With respect to others, it is obviated by the consideration, that no one perishes, except he himself sin" (XV, 187).

One may wish to dismiss Milton's justification of the Old Testament morality as specious reasoning, but his distinction between children's solidarity with their parents (which he accepts), and infant guiltiness (which he rejects) is exactly the distinction Whiteley finds in St. Paul.25

24Whiteley writes: "He does not mention the case of children who die too young to be aware of the law, but clearly they would be in the same position as the generations of men who lived between Adam and Moses [i.e., guilty of wrongdoing, but not sinning culpably]" (p. 51).

25Ibid., p. 51.
There is a further Pauline view of sin which Milton accepts, and that is the difference between "sins," individual acts of disobedience, and "Sin," the state of rebellion against God which includes all men. Sin is the "corporate wrongness" which man is powerless to overcome apart from the divine initiative. Only God's grace can overcome Sin. But there are also individual acts which we commit against God, "sins," because we dwell in "Sin." This Pauline distinction seems to be expressed in De Doctrina: "Sin is distinguished into that which is common to all men, and the personal sin of each individual" (XV, 181). The former, Milton defines as the Pauline "corporate wrongness": "The sin which is common to all men is that which our first parents, and in them all their posterity committed, when, casting off their obedience to God, they tasted the fruit of the forbidden tree" (XV, 181). The latter, individual sins, Milton defines as: "The personal sin of each individual is that which each in his own person has committed, independently of the sin which is common to all" (XV, 193).26

We may conclude this section by saying that Pauline original sin is accepted by Milton. Both men's writings contain a "pessimistic vision."

26Another concept of sin which we shall pass over, since it is more germane to the poetry, is the Pauline concept of sin as some kind of seduction. Paul writes, "For I am jealous over you with Godly jealousie: for I have prepared you for one husband, to present you as a pure virgine to Christ: But I feare least as the serpent beguiled Eve through subteltie, so your minde should be corrupt from the simplicitie that is in Christ" (II Cor. 11:2-3). This notion of fidelity to God in marital or sexual terms is commonplace in the Old Testament (Hosea 2:21 et passim; Isaiah 54:4-6; 62:5; Jere. 3:1). See JBC 52:36 on this point. The theme of sin as seduction does appear in the prose of Milton also (III, 94).
Man is helpless to save himself apart from God's grace. But a proper perspective must be maintained. Paul's acceptance of natural theology prevented him from concluding that man is totally without redeeming qualities. He did not say with Jonathan Edwards: "When I look into my heart, and take a view of my wickedness, it looks like an abyss infinitely deeper than hell." Pauline theologians generally reject the view that Paul's mind was a tormented Puritan one like Bunyan's or Cowper's.

5. The Nature of the Reign of God

It is perhaps unwise to relegate Paul's views on eschatology to such a late position in a discussion of Pauline theology, for scholars find his doctrine of "Last Things" to be essential to an understanding of the whole of his theology. We have already seen how that Pauline eschatology conditions our understanding of his marriage teaching. The same is true of his other teachings.

In several respects Milton's thought is similar to, and almost surely conditioned by, Pauline eschatology. First of all, they share a similarity in their expectation of the imminent Reign of God. Paul believed, at least for a time, in the imminent return of the Lord ("the time is short"); "the fashion of this world goeth away," I Cor. 7:29, 31.


28There is considerable debate over whether or not Paul is the prototype of the Western introspective conscience. The debate largely hinges upon whether or not Romans 7 is to be read as autobiography. Phil. 3:4–6 should prevent us from seeing Paul as a guilt-ridden Jew who is converted to Christianity in the manner typical of an evangelical revival.
The Parousia, the Messianic Reign of God, the Resurrection, and the Judgment were frequently on Paul's mind. The whole of life was interpreted from the perspective of the End Time (the Eschaton). Life here is an intermediate state, a temporary waiting. Our commonwealth is not below, but in heaven (Phil. 3:20). Earthly connections recede in importance, and the regnum Christi becomes all-important. While Paul continues to expect the Parousia even in his later writings, some scholars have noted a waning of belief in its imminence (e.g., Philippians and Colossians). Dodd writes: "It is noteworthy that as his interest in the speedy advent of Christ declines, as it demonstrably does after the time when he wrote I Corinthians, the 'futurist eschatology' of his earlier phase is replaced by his 'Christ mysticism.' The hope of glory yet to come remains as a background of thought, but the foreground is more and more occupied by the contemplation of all the riches of divine grace enjoyed here and now by those who are in Christ Jesus."29 The belief in the Eschaton, therefore, remains in his thinking, but it ceases to be foremost.

For a time, Milton himself seems to have been swept up by the chiliastic fervor of his own age.30 In his conclusion to Of Reformation he interjects a reference to his millenial hope as he anticipates the


coming Messiah: "thou the Eternall and shortly-expected King shalt open the Clouds to judge the severall Kingdomes of the World" (III, 78). But Milton did not continue to accept an imminent Eschaton. He did maintain an eschatological outlook, for in De Doctrina he speaks of the future "glorious reign of Christ on earth with his saints, so often promised in Scripture, even until his enemies shall be subdued" (XVI, 359). But the rash expectation of an immediate Advent has passed. Michael Fixler says that Milton progressively experienced reaction to the millenarian claims of the saints.\textsuperscript{31} Though Milton continues to expect an End Time when Christ will gloriously intervene in the affairs of the world, he seems to relinquish any hope that it will be immediate. As with Paul, the eschatological motif moves to the background.

The concept of God's kingdom is very complex in New Testament thought. "The kingdom" can refer to more than one idea. One of the most basic assumptions of Pauline (and New Testament) eschatology is the belief that the kingdom is simultaneously a present reality and a future event. The Eschaton, the End Time, the Age to Come has come and is yet to come. Throughout the Pauline letters one sees a pervasive tension between the now ("realized eschatology") and the not yet ("futurist eschatology").\textsuperscript{32} Sometimes he speaks of the kingdom as a present reality (Col. 1:13) in which man's redemption has already been effected. On other occasions, redemption-fulfillment-consummation is yet in the future (I Cor. 15). Cullman says that this tension between present and

\textsuperscript{31}Fixler, p. 219.

\textsuperscript{32}Rubenstein, p. 115; Longenecker, p. 176; Rigaux, p. 164.
future redemption is a key to understanding the entire New Testament. Redemptive life in the Messianic Fellowship is now going on; the age of fulfillment dawned with Christ's redemptive work. But there is still a future hope (Phil. 3:10; Rom. 8:17 ff.).

The dual eschatology of the New Testament had a considerable influence upon seventeenth-century Protestant thought. It resulted in various interpretations of the Reign of God. Michael Fixler's study of the concept of kingdom in Milton enumerates four specific concepts of the kingdom which are useful for our study: 1) The kingdom is the Reign of Christ which will be established by Christ Himself at the Parousia (futurist eschatology). 2) The kingdom is inward and spiritual and subjective; this view stresses the inward experience of justification (realized eschatology). 3) The kingdom is the church, the community of the faithful, whether expressed in a visible society of outward fellowship or whether expressed in an invisible fellowship of the truly elect (realized eschatology). 4) Last, the kingdom is a society transformed in its institutions and spirit by piety, righteousness, virtue, and charity (futurist eschatology). It is a kingdom the reformers hoped to realize very soon.

An important question which needs attention is: Are any of these concepts of the kingdom Pauline? With the exception of the last

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34 Dodd, Apostolic Preaching, p. 57.
35 Fixler, pp. 77-78.
one, we may say that they are. The decisive problem for later interpreters of Paul was to decide the exact nature of his doctrine of the Eschaton. Was it present or future? Was it inward and spiritual, the church, a Utopian society, or a future order to be revealed by Christ? Except for the fourth definition Paul viewed the kingdom in the ways outlined above.

In discarding the kingdom as a transformed political order, perhaps one qualification is in order. Paul, as we shall see in chapter five, consciously sees himself as fulfilling the role of an Old Testament prophet, and the Old Testament prophet was called to reform the Jewish theocratic society. Inasmuch as Paul is a "prophet," then, he symbolically is a reformer of society. But the society Paul sought to reform was not a provincial Aramaic society, rather the whole world.

The very spiritual nature of Paul's eschatology precluded a regnum Christer which would be a Christian version of the regnum Caesar. He does not think of perfecting the Roman state. On the contrary he expects it to pass away. He nowhere envisions a Christian theocracy, a civil government composed of Christians who would somehow constitute a "Kingdom of Christ." Our commonwealth or polity (πολιτευμα, Phil. 3:20) is in the heavens, not on earthly soil. His own experience of being viewed as a criminal by the state and of operating a clandestine sect probably prevented him from thinking of the kingdom in political terms. It is an eschatological order, not "of" this world. It is quite detached from the actual world of Caesar's kingdom. 36

36 Bornkamm, p. 55.
While Paul rejects this politico-Christian kingdom, he accepts an inward spiritual kingdom (definition two). The call to the Messianic order requires the mystical experience of dying and rising with Christ. Paul is truly the proponent of personal inward religion. The Eschaton is realized in the life of the Christian through union with Christ, that is, by dying and rising with him in baptism (II Cor. 4:10; Rom. 6:3 ff.; Eph. 4:15; Col. 2:20, Phil. 3:10-11). Such an inward experience cannot be mechanically administered by pronouncement. It must occur privately for the believer. The call to the kingdom in this life necessitates a radical break with the outer visible world. To experience the kingdom within, one must experience what Bultmann calls *Entweltlichung*, inward divorce from the world.  

Paul goes so far as to say that in Christ we are dead to the world, that is to say, to the historical order, and that God has raised us together with Christ, and made us to reside with Him in the heavenly places. True, this new life is a secret. On the empirical plane we still live the earthly life; but though we live "in the flesh," we no longer live "after the flesh." "You are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3). Thus no conception of Christianity as a religion is fully true to the New Testament which does not recognize that the "Christian Era," as we call it, marks an abrupt break in the relation in which the people of God, and indeed, the whole human race, stands to the historical order.

Paul's kingdom is more pneumatic than political or even ecclesiastical. It is a New Israel as different from the first as the New Adam is different from the first.


Paul also views the kingdom as in some sense synonymous with the church, the body of Christ on earth which Christ now rules (definition three) (Col. 1:13; Eph. 1:20-23). And we have already mentioned Paul's futurist eschatology in which he expects the kingdom to be revealed at the Parousia (definition one) (II Tim. 4:18; I Cor. 15; II Cor. 5:1-10; Rom. 8:18-25). Thus, as we have noted, of the four concepts of kingdom enumerated by Fixler, three of them have their basis in Paul. The kingdom is a future event; it is the church; it is the inward experience of faith. But it is not a transformed political order.

When we turn to Milton we see that all four of the concepts are present. The kingdom is very much a future eschatological event to be revealed by Christ at the Parousia. This future Reign of Christ Milton calls the "kingdom of glory" which contrasts with the present eschatological order which he calls the "kingdom of heaven" or the "kingdom of grace" (XVI, 359). The future kingdom will begin with the Last Judgment: "Coincident, as appears, with the time of this last judgment... and extending a little beyond its conclusion, will take place that glorious reign of Christ on earth with his saints, so often promised in Scripture, even until all his enemies shall be subdued" (XVI, 359). Even when he has given up on an immediate Parousia, he continues to believe in the future and eventual Eschaton.

The kingdom in its realized state is called the "kingdom of heaven" or the "kingdom of grace" (XVI, 359). It roughly corresponds to the church. From our union with Christ "arises the mutual fellowship of the members of Christ's body among themselves, called in the Apostles'
Creed 'The Communion of the Saints'" (XVI, 59). This fellowship of saints which is also a communion with the Father and Son is called "the mystical body" (XVI, 61). But just as Paul wrote to individual groups of Christians in Corinth, Rome, and Philippi, so Milton speaks of "the visible church" (XVI, 219). It is probably correct that in emphasis Paul is more ecclesiastical than Milton. His vocation as a missionary required constant contact with the concrete fellowship of the saints. But the church of Paul's day was probably less rigidly structured, less "institutional," than it was in Milton's day. Milton had seen the hundreds of years of cumbersome ecclesiasticism which differed from the more pneumatic Pauline order. Perhaps this fact explains the difference in emphasis.

In his earlier years Milton seems to have espoused a concept of the kingdom as a transformed English society which would be ushered in when the work of reformation was done. His prose tracts are efforts to help realize the kingdom of God in the British Isles. Through a process of radical reformation the English society will eventually be the kingdom on earth. Christian eschatology and English patriotism merge in the mind of the prophet. His expectation of this English kingdom is evident in the opening to Of Reformation:

Amidst those deep and retired thoughts, which with every man Christianity instructed, ought to be most frequent, of God, and of his miraculous ways, and works, amongst men, and of our Religion and Worship, to be perform'd to him; after the story of our Saviour Christ, suffering to the lowest bent of weaknesse in the Flesh, and presently triumphing to the highest pitch of glory, in the Spirit, which drew up his body also, till we in both be united to him in the Revelation of his Kingdom: I do not know anything more worthy to take up the whole passion of pitty, on the one side, and joy on the other: then to consider
first, the foule and sudden corruption, and then after many a tedious age, the long-deferr'd, but much more wonderfull and happy reformation of the Church in these latter dayes. (III, 1)

The implication is clear: just as Christ's body suffered "the lowest bent of weakness in the flesh," so the church has fallen into disrepute. The kingdom has been lost through "foul and sudden corruption." But now, in "these latter days," the kingdom will be restored.

Because the church was integrally tied to the state, Milton at first sees the reformation and the coming kingdom in societal terms.

God becomes, in essence, the God of the English, just as he was once the God of the Israelites. England is the "Nation chos'n before any other" (IV, 340). She is selected to trumpet reform (IV, 344). Briefly, she is the New Israel, the counterpart to David's Zion (IV, 340). God oversees her with providential care: God "hath yet ever had this Island under the speciall indulgent eye of his providence; and pittyng us the first of all other Nations, after he had decreed to purifie and renew his Church that lay wallowing in Idolatrous pollutions, sent first to us a healing messenger to touch softly our sores, and carry a gentle hand over our wounds" (III, 145). As Milton's thoughts dwell on the special graciousness of God, he sings in eloquent prose of the approaching kingdom: "but thy Kingdome is now at hand, and thou standing at the dore. Come forth out of thy Royal Chambers, O Prince of all the Kings of the earth, put on the visible roabes of thy imperiall Majesty, take up that unlimited Scepter which thy Almighty Father hath bequeth'd thee; for now the voice of thy Bride calls thee, and all creatures sigh to bee renew'd" (III, 148).
But Milton's concept of the kingdom as a transformed English society was to be discarded eventually. His hope for such a kingdom this side of heaven was shattered by the realities of political and ecclesiastical life. Very significant for our study of Pauline parallels, Milton ultimately rejects the non-Pauline concept of the kingdom—the holy society was not to be realized Milton learns. In fact, Milton moves increasingly in his later years toward the Pauline kingdom that is private and invisible. The true union with Christ is not even apparent to the historical order ("for you are hid in Christ," Col. 3:3). The kingdom is within. This judgment may have partially resulted from Milton's own experience. He saw both the futility and the danger of tyranny inherent in the Puritan holy society.

But he also may have come to such a realization through his increased understanding of Paul's doctrine. An outer corporal kingdom does not set well with the Pauline antitheses: spirit vs. letter, tables of stone vs. heart, shadow vs. substance, the constricting law vs. the liberating gospel. An earthly kingdom is as out of place as is the Law of Moses. A holy society such as the English Puritans wanted to institute simply meant establishing a Christian version of the Jewish Israel. But Milton's reading of the Pauline gospel caused him to reject utterly the Jewish state as a model, for the law had been abrogated (Col. 2:14-15).


40The internal nature of the kingdom was not by any means a late discovery for Milton. In Prolusion VII he speaks of the learned enjoying "a kingdom in themselves" (XII, 269). And in Of Reformation he says that Christ's kingdom is not of this world (III, 42). But only later did Milton fully see that the kingdom could not be chiefly external and physical.
By the time that Milton writes *A Treatise of Civil Power* and *The Likeliest Means to Remove Hirelings*, he has fully imbibed the Pauline doctrine of freedom from judaizing restrictions. The language of Paul fills Milton's polemic. We are free men in Christ, but the Puritan holy society with its rules and regulations means bondage. "You are called to liberty." "Be not made the servants of men." "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Over and over Milton resorts to Paul to disprove the concept of an external Christian society which operates like a civil kingdom, for it is synonymous with bondage and law.41

The kingdom, then, for Milton and Paul is the personal union of the regenerate man with God, the fellowship with other believers in the church, and the future Reign of Christ. The concept of the kingdom as a transformed society is for a time held by Milton, but it is ultimately discarded.

6. The State of the Dead

One aspect of eschatology is the doctrine of the "afterlife" of the elect of God. What happens to the Christian when he dies? It is profitable to compare Paul's and Milton's answers to this question. A famous "heresy" of Milton's, mortalism, has usually been explained by the presence of similar doctrines among the "sectaries" of Milton's own era. In view of Milton's own claim for the biblical basis of his

41 On the place of Pauline freedom in Milton's thought, see chapter 5 below.
doctrine, a closer look at the biblical statements about the state of
the dead is warranted. It should be of no small interest to Milton
scholars that some eminent New Testament scholars claim that St. Paul
himself believed a doctrine similar to Milton's mortalist heresy.

A natural question arose in the Corinthian church as its members
awaited the imminent return of the Lord. What happens to those who die
in the interim—in the period between their death on earth and the
Parousia? Where do the dead go? Do their spirits rise to paradise
while their bodies decay? Their Hellenistic heritage suggests this as
a likely possibility. But Paul's reply is an emphatic no. The error
in Corinth was not the belief that there is no immortality of the soul.
The Corinthians lived in a culture which accepted such a notion. Paul
was not mocked by the Athenians for preaching the immortality of the
soul, but for preaching the bodily resurrection of the dead (Acts 17:32).
The heresy in Corinth was the denial of a bodily resurrection. And
since we have seen that Paul's anthropology ties body and soul together,
it is easy to see that to deny a bodily resurrection is for Paul tantamount
to denying life after death.

Paul's monistic view of man, then, does not permit a Greek view
of an intermediate state in which body and soul are separated. What
then is the alternative? W. D. Davies and Oscar Cullmann along with
other authorities on the New Testament say that the dead are "asleep" in
Jesus awaiting the Parousia. Davies says that "there is no room in
Paul's theology for an intermediate state of the dead."42 Oscar Cullman

42Davies, p. 318.
in a concise manner treats the essential differences between Paul's view of death and the Hellenistic view which was borrowed by the later church.\(^3\) He asserts that the church has sacrificed I Corinthians 15 for Plato's *Phaedo*.\(^4\) Paul says that the dead in Christ arise, not the living (I Cor. 15:29, 42). The second coming is not the matching up of loose spirits with newly transformed bodies, but rather the genuine resurrection of dead beings (soul and body). If Cullmann and Davies are correct, then Milton has in Paulinism a good case for his belief. Bernard Weiss also supports Davies and Cullmann. He even suggests that in II Corinthians 5 Paul hopes the Parousia will come so that he can avoid the intermediate state of non-being or death.\(^4\)

In the thirteenth chapter of *De Doctrina*, Book I, Milton expresses his belief that the whole man dies, body and soul. It is significant that Milton begins his argument from I Corinthians 15, the very passage that Cullman chiefly refers to. I Corinthians 15:21 instructs Milton that just as death (physical and spiritual) entered by man (Adam), so also the resurrection of the dead (physical and spiritual) comes through the Second Man (Christ) (XV, 215-219). He then proceeds to dismiss the


\(^4\)Ibid., p. 7.

\(^4\)Weiss' position is summarized by Schweitzer, p. 70. Not everyone, to be sure, agrees with Weiss, Cullmann, and Davies. But even those who disagree (e.g., Whiteley, p. 262) find their arguments cogent and respectable. I personally find Cullmann's interpretation highly plausible. One possible explanation as to why there is uncertainty on this point is that Paul himself may have wavered. Some suggest that Paul at first (I Cor. 15) accepted the death of the soul, but later changed his mind (II Cor. 5:1-10 and Phil. 1:23).
traditional definition of death as separation of body and soul, for he knows that such a definition does not rest on Scripture so much as it rests on "the schools of philosophy" and in the "prejudice of the divines" (XV, 219). In his exposition of I Corinthians 15 which follows, Milton anticipates the present-day proponents of Paul's mortalism:

[Concerning I Cor. 15:17-19] it appears there were only two alternatives, one of which must ensue; either they must rise again or perish: for "if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable"; which again indicates that we must either believe in the resurrection, or have our hope in this life only. v. 29, 30. "if the dead rise not at all, why stand we in jeopardy every hour?" v. 32. "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die"; that is, die altogether, for otherwise the argument would have no force. In the verses which follow, from v. 42. to v. 50. the reasoning proceeds on the supposition that there are only two states, the mortal and the immortal, death and resurrection; not a word is said of any intermediate condition. Nay, Paul himself affirms that the crown of righteousness which was laid up for him was not to be received before that last day . . . . If a crown were "laid up" for the apostle, it follows that it was not to be received immediately after death. At what time then was it to be received? At the same time when it was to be conferred on the rest of the saints, that is, not till the appearance of Christ in glory. (XV, 225-227).

We will not give further discussion of Milton's mortalism, since detailed discussion may be found elsewhere. But it seems to me that in view of what New Testament scholars are saying about Paul's own doctrine, it is at last the time to cease making impressive lists of contemporaries who shared views with Milton, and turn to a critical study of his primary source—the Scriptures themselves.

7. The Second Adam

Throughout this and the preceding chapter we have spoken of various aspects of Paul's Christology. We have spoken of Christ as the Creative Logos, Risen Lord, and the Second Adam who created the world and who recreates man and places him in a new order. But in this last section we shall center specifically upon a question which has burned for centuries within the church, namely, what is the nature of Jesus Christ? The question has particular ramifications in our study of Milton, for Milton's Christology has been the source of considerable debate, first when De Doctrina appeared in the nineteenth century, and again when William B. Hunter's article "Milton's Arianism Reconsidered" appeared in the Harvard Theological Review for 1959. Perhaps some of the controversy could have been minimized had the issue been studied from a pre-Nicene perspective which Milton was trying to reflect by being as "biblical" as possible. Hunter and Patrides are correct, I think, in discarding the apellation "Arian," for it speaks of a post-biblical phenomenon which was as unfounded as the Trinitarian formulation. I shall not cover the ground that Hunter, Patrides, and Kelley have already gone over, but I do wish to look at the issue from the Pauline perspective—one which antedates the Arian controversy.


48 Bright Essence contains articles by Hunter, Adamson, and Patrides who disagree with Kelley. They say he is a "subordinationist" but not Arian.
After the resurrection and ascension the inevitable question arose: "Who was this Jesus of Nazareth?" But perhaps a more precise formulation of the question for the New Testament church was: "What does Jesus of Nazareth do for the Christian?" Many answers were provided: Some were later deemed orthodox, some heretical. The New Testament itself is largely an attempt to answer the question about Christ's function (primarily) and his nature (secondarily). Paul especially sought to clarify who Jesus was.

But in the days preceding the Greek theology of the church (e.g., Nicea), the debate was on different terms. Paul would not have understood the Nicene struggle without much difficulty because neither side handled the topic in his terms. Furthermore, Paul would have likely been judged heretical, for Dean Inge says that "Paul grazes more than one heresy, or what the Church afterward calls heresy."^49 Paul's primary emphasis is Christ's function.50 He, like the other New Testament writers, connects Christ's person and work, while the church Fathers and the Trinitarian controversialists "subordinated the person and work of Christ to the question of 'natures.' In any case, their emphases, compared with those of the New Testament, were misplaced."51

In order to reveal the nature and function of Christ Paul relied on certain Christological titles, most of which were current in Judaism.

^49Quoted by Samuel Sandmei, p. 159.

^50Cullmann, Christology of the NT, pp. 3-4.

^51Ibid., p. 4.
Cullmann's *The Christology of the New Testament* gives a thorough treatment of them.

What is impressive about Milton's Christology when it is compared with St. Paul's is not how different, but rather how similar it is. Milton accepts all of the Christological titles assigned to Jesus by Paul and the other New Testament writers. He is perfectly in agreement with Paul and the New Testament in regard to the function of Christ. And while Milton demonstrates his post-Nicene perspective by the attention he gives the nature of Christ, he nevertheless offers a respectable approximation of Pauline thought on Christ's nature.

For Paul, Jesus is *Lord* (*κύριον*). He is Lord over all the earth and the heavens, though his power as Lord derives from God the Father (Eph. 1:17-23). Christ will remain Lord until he delivers the kingdom to God (1 Cor. 15:24; Rom. 15:16; Phil. 2:6-11). Jesus is Lord for Milton also (III, 244; XIV, 249; VI, 30). The title "Lord" was an ancient and familiar designation of God the Father, and its use by Paul to refer to Jesus is a certain clue that He is in some sense divine. Milton's study of the Bible would likely have made him sensitive to this point. He, in fact, seems to prefer the title of Lord for God the Father (III, 440; XIV, 29, etc.). Perhaps this is further evidence that Patrides and Hunter are correct in their assertion that the "substructure" of Milton's Christ is indeed divine.

Jesus is also *Messiah* (or Christ, the Anointed One). He is the source of the Christian's eschatological hope, for he ushers in the Eschaton. We now live in the last age, and his final appearing will
conclude salvation history. So also Jesus is Messiah for Milton (III, 432; VI, 133; XV, 281). Jesus is the Son. Bultmann tells us that the designation "Son of God" was equivalent to saying "messiah." And it was employed by Paul (Rom. 1:3), though it was in use before his time.

Among the Gentile converts he says the title ceased to have its messianic significance and instead became equivalent for "the divinity of Christ." This title was unquestionably one of Milton's favorites. Perhaps it established the subordinate role of Jesus, since a son is not above or equal to the father. It indicates proximity, likeness in nature (VII, 279), but at the same time distinguishes individual being.

Jesus is divine Power or Pneuma or Spirit. Johann Weiss says "it is certainly a fundamental condition of his speculation that Christ, in some way, is identical with the 'Spirit of God.'" Paul says: "Now the Lord is the Spirit" (II Cor. 3:17). He frequently interchanges the formulas "in Christ" and "in the Spirit" (cf. Rom. 8:9 ff.). Although Milton conceives of the separateness of the Son and the Spirit, he also at times recognizes their closeness. Saurat says that Milton thinks that the Holy Spirit might be Christ. "The Son is the Spirit of God manifested in the Cosmos."

52Theology of the NT, I, 49.
53Ibid.
54Ibid., pp. 128-129.
57Ibid., p. 111.
Jesus is the Logos (Word) and Wisdom of God. The Greek title of Logos corresponds to the Jewish hypostatized Wisdom.58 This concept lies back of several passages in Paul (cf. I Cor. 1:18-21; Col. 1:15-20). The Logos-Wisdom of God is the creative agent, and the divine reason of God which permeates the cosmos and causes it to operate and cohere. He is the Logos-Wisdom for Milton also (XVIII, 343, XIV, 107, 253, 367, 404, etc.).59

Jesus is the heavenly heroic Second Man who overturns the tragedy of the earthly frail first man. This aspect of Christ has been mentioned already,60 but we have not stressed the heroic nature of this Christological designation. He is the Second Man who comes from heaven (I Cor. 15:22) to rescue humanity. He is neither God nor man, but a special order,61 "the God-man," as Milton calls him (XV, 307). He heroically "redeems" man by leading him out of the domain of darkness into the secure kingdom of light (Col. 1:13). He is the representative and


59 Although it is outside the domain of this paper, I must note the possible relevance of this section to Milton's invocation in Book III of Paradise Lost. The opening of the invocation certainly reminds one of the Son who is the effulgence of the Father ("the radiant image of his glory" I. 63). But by the time one reaches 11. 51 and ff., the description sounds much more like the inspiring Spirit who enlightens the mind of the regenerate. Perhaps Milton is combining them in Pauline fashion: "the Lord is the Spirit" (II Cor. 3:17).

60 See above pp. 59-60; 98-100.

embodiment of a new kind of humanity—free from sin. He represents an entire order of creation as "the second man." Wilfred L. Knox demonstrates the parallels between Paul's concept of Christ and certain pagan beliefs about divine figures: "It is the hellenistic conception of the redeemer who attains to his godhead that made it possible for St. Paul and the writer to the Hebrews to insist on the absolute humanity of Jesus, tempted at all points like as we are, yet without sin, and preserved for the Church the faith that the victory over sin and death was won not by a divine epiphany but by a life of service and suffering unto death, even the death of the cross." Milton of course accepts the doctrine of Christ as Second Man, and he does not overlook the implicit doctrine about Christ's human nature in it, that Christ is "very man" (XV, 275, 273). As the divine heavenly man, Jesus is both God and man. This doctrine Milton fully accepts (De Doctrina, Book I, chapter 14).

Now that we have seen something of Christ's function by discussing the Christological titles which St. Paul and Milton accept, it is appropriate to take up the difficult problem of Christ's nature and his relationship to the Father. Since I am attempting to find out Milton's position as it relates to Paul, and not to measure Milton by standards of Christian orthodoxy, I can say at the outset that Paul likely would have accepted Milton as faithful at the same time the orthodox church


would have rejected him as a heretic. For Paul did not see Christ as God in the Trinitarian manner.

When Milton rejected the Trinitarian formula he was standing much closer to Paul, the "Apostle and interpreter of Christ" (XIV, 201), than the orthodox dogmatists of Milton's day knew. Cullmann writes that such Christological titles could designate Jesus as "God," but Jesus was "God" only in the sense of being the only revelation of God to man. "This is the only dimension which the Old and New Testaments consider, but it does not exhaust the nature of God the Father." He further attributes the confusion of the Father and the Son to the later Catholic development. God is in Christ, but they are not coessential. Christ was "God" to Paul in the sense that He was the only manifestation or channel of Deity known to man. This is exactly Milton's concept also. Thus, in his comment on I Timothy 3:16 he writes: "'God was manifest in the flesh,' that is, in the incarnate Son, his own image" (XV, 261), but that is not to say Father and Son are one and the same. Man has access to the Father through Christ. Christ is the manifestation of divine power on earth.

But Paul nowhere asserts that Christ is coessential with the Father; in Trinitarian fashion. Thus, Schweitzer claims: "The Pauline Christ, however, even though he is called the Son of God, is not God but only a heavenly Being." Christ is Lord, but not God. Christ has

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64 Cullmann, Christology of the NT, p. 306.
66 Sandmel, pp. 68 ff.
67 Schweitzer, p. 223.
68 Whiteley, p. 106.
divine power and divine character, but he is not God Himself. "Christ
is Lord because he is God's vice-regent, exercising a sovereignty that
belongs to God."69 As a Jew Paul would have had trouble with the later
Athanasian Creed. Paul "was too good a Jew to have meant that Jesus was
God—God—though in the Septuagint, the Greek Old Testament, the word
Lord—Lord—which Paul used of Jesus, is habitually used to represent
Jahweh."70 Rall finds it significant that no Jewish opponent of Paul's
ever accused him of being false to monotheism, as he would have, inevita-
bly, if Paul had espoused Trinitarianism; the "three coordinate beings"
of the later Athanasian creed would have been incomprehensible to
Paul.71

In view of the judgment of undogmatic biblical scholars that the
New Testament is non-Trinitarian, it is rather perplexing that Miltonists
have ranged over so many sources and analogues without resorting to
Scripture. Even C. A. Patrides cites two theologians, Kenneth E. Kirk
and Emil Brunner, who say that biblical Christianity is non-Trinitarian,
but he fails to follow up on the implications of their statements.72
I wonder why Patrides, Hunter, and Adamson are reluctant to introduce the
witness of the New Testament into the discussion, when Milton claims that
his doctrines are based upon a "most careful perusal and meditation of

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69 Cerfau, p. 466.

70 Kirsoop Lake, Paul: His Heritage and Legacy (New York: Oxford

71 Harris F. Rall, "How Paul Thought of Christ" in Contemporary
Thinking About Paul, p. 280.

72 Patrides, Bright Essence, p. 70.
the Holy Scriptures" (XIV, 5). If Milton were to read the controversy concerning his doctrine of the Godhead he might well ask why no one bothers to look up the Scriptures he so profusely cites or why no one reads the critical comments of twentieth-century biblical scholars. I hasten to add that Milton was no perfect interpreter. His interpretation was often influenced by the controversy and assertions that had gone before. But Milton's assertion that his doctrines have their foundation in Scripture was not a guise to keep his readers from discovering his true sources in the pre-Nicene Apologists and the Cambridge Platonists. It seems to me that it is a patronizing view of Milton to dismiss the Bible as a source because "he twists the meaning of verses to suit his own preconceptions" and then to turn elsewhere for a comparative study. In spite of Milton's incorrect exegesis, and biased eisegesis, he is more honest than some would give him credit.

Milton's rejection of Trinitarianism is biblically inspired, just as he claims. Paul's Christ is not perfectly identifiable with the Father. He is subordinate to the Father. As Rall says, "Paul holds clearly, as does the whole New Testament, to the subordination of Christ and the dependence of the Son upon the Father." We may recall I Corinthians 11:3 and its subordinationist implications: "and God is Christ's head." The same church tradition which accepted the verses' teachings about the inferiority of the woman ought, in the interest of

73Ibid., p. 5.
74Hunter, Bright Essence, p. 32.
75Rall, Contemporary Thinking, p. 280.
consistency, to have accepted the inferiority of Christ. Hunter, Patrides, and Adamson are correct, I believe, in asserting that Milton is a subordinationist; I fault them only for their failure to see the real basis of his subordinationism in the New Testament.

Hunter's summation of Milton's Christology agrees remarkably well with Pauline Christology: "the Son is different from the Father, inferior to him, generated at the beginning of creation, but of the divine substance." Paul does not confuse the Father and the Son; the Son is below the Father (I Cor. 11:3; Phil. 2:5 ff.; Col. 1:15, etc.); first-born of creation (Col. 1:15), and of the divine nature (Col. 2:9; I Tim. 3:16). Milton, like Paul, does not deny the divinity of the Son (XIV, 251, 253, 265, etc.).

Paul's concepts of image and glory probably make him an "emanationist," that is to say, he believed the Son proceeded from the Father. Hunter says that there were three classic metaphors of the emanationist view, and two of them are found in Paul. The concept of archetype and image is one emanationist metaphor found in Paul (II Cor. 4:4 and Col. 1:15), and the metaphor of light shining off from its Divine source runs

76 [Bright Essence, p. 32.]

77 Romans 9:5 is a crux in this matter, and a problem which must be resolved by the textual critics. I accept the decision of most biblical scholars and the preferred reading of the Revised Standard Version that deity is ascribed to the Father and not to the Son.

78 [Phil. 2:5-11 cannot be used as a proof-text for a Trinitarian Christology. See F. W. Beare, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippian (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), pp. 73-88.]

79 [Bright Essence, p. 54.]
through II Corinthians 3 and 4. Paul nearly always connects the metaphors of image and glory. One learns in I Corinthians 11:3 and 7 that just as woman is the glory of man, and man is the glory of God, so Christ is the glory of God. Milton's emanationist doctrine may have come only indirectly from Paul—we cannot say—but he does express the concept: "For to Adam God stood less in the relation of Father, than of Creator, having only formed him from the dust of the Earth; whereas he was properly the Father of the Son made of his own substance" (XIV, 187).

Concerning Milton's Christology we may conclude by saying that Milton is antitrinitarian, a subordinationist, an emanationist. And so is St. Paul. If we are to criticize Milton for anything in his Christology, it is the tendency, which has always marked Christian interpreters, to go beyond the New Testament in defining one's doctrines. In this respect he commits the same error that the Nicene fathers did. There is in Milton as in the other theologians with whom he disagrees an entirely foreign element of precision in his interpretation of the person of Christ. Milton speaks of "substance," "essence," and "hypostasis," but Paul does not. But on the whole we say on this matter that he is a Paulinist.

8. Conclusion

While I have not argued for a new interpretation of Milton's theology in this and the preceding chapter, I have shown that Milton's claim that his ideas have a biblical basis is honest insofar as Paulinism

80 See Meeks, The Writings of St. Paul, p. 209, on this problem in Christological discussion.
is concerned. The answer is "yes" to Patrides' question: "Could it be that Milton's several claims [of biblical support] require reappraisal after all?"

A few deductions may be made. First, perhaps Milton is more honest than some have given him credit for being when he claims the Bible as his source. No longer can we disregard such remarks as insignificant or as rhetorical tricks to make his heresy respectable. The ultimate source of Milton's heresy often is in fact the Scriptures themselves. Second, we may conclude that Milton read his Bible with extreme care and that he correctly found concepts there which were incompatible with the tradition as received in his own day. Milton's doctrines of creation ex Deo, moralism, and Christological subordinationism have their basis, to one degree or another, in Paulinism. Third, we can say that Milton has a great allegiance to St. Paul, "the Apostle and interpreter of Christ" (XIV, 201); his deviations from Paul are the results of imperfect understanding and unavoidable preconceptions which colored his thinking—and not the result of deliberate breaks with Paul's opinion.

Last, we can say that Paulinism provides a rewarding and a valuable framework within which to study Milton's theology. An accurate understanding of Paulinism is sure to help us understand the atmosphere in which Milton's theology was generated; hence, it is sure to help us understand the source and content of Milton's thought.

81Bright Essence, p. 70.

CHAPTER FOUR

"TOUCHT WITH HALLOW'D FIRE": MILTON AS A PAULINE PROPHET

In the last two chapters we have concentrated upon Milton's affinity to Pauline theology, but this study would be quite incomplete were we to omit some other aspects of St. Paul's thought which corresponds to Milton's. Paulinism is not exclusively, perhaps not primarily, "theological." It is true that the Reformed Church made Pauline dogma supreme, but even when the Reformation was strongest, the pattern of Paul's religious experience (we might say with caution his undogmatic and "mystical" experience) had a profound effect upon Protestant thought. Narrow attention to Paul's theology obscures other aspects which deserve attention. Those other aspects to which I refer may be summed up in Paul's role as a religious prophet—his personal commitment to the apostolic call, his sense of the divine purpose in his life, his extraordinary independence, his martial spirit, his seeming egotism, his tart rhetorical manner, his sense of suffering for a divine purpose, and above all his emphasis upon liberty as the heart of the kerygma. These, and related qualities, perhaps compose the quintessence of Paulinism, more so than the theological statements enumerated in previous chapters.

The assumption that Paul (or Milton for that matter) is primarily a theologian inevitably leads to misunderstanding. Samuel Sandmel says it "is now uniformly the scholarly conclusion, that Paul was not a
theologian," for "he was not primarily a systematic thinker, not a definer of terms, and not a classifier of the views, opinions, and expressions of either contemporaries or predecessors." It is interesting that the same could be said for Milton. While there is considerable interest in Milton's dogmas insofar as they bear on his poetry and art, there is little interest in his theology in and of itself. Among theologians Milton is rather insignificant, except perhaps as a representative of seventeenth-century nonconformist thought.

While Paul has a theological aspect to him, it by no means exhausts his nature. A. S. Peake appropriately remarks: "Some would deem it a grave injustice to describe Paul as a theologian. He was rather a prophet, or even a poet, who felt deeply and had a keen insight into religious experience but was careless of logical consistency and indifferent to the creation of a system." It is, therefore, a mistake to see Paul as a laborious dogmatist who dwelt in the atmosphere of insubstantial theological speculation. So also would it be a mistake to judge Milton's intellectual contribution only on the basis of De Doctrina. While Paul gives us teachings on sin, atonement, and election, while Milton theorizes on the same subjects, they both give us much else besides.

When Milton and Paul are examined side by side, several telling similarities become evident which are hard to dismiss as mere coincidence.

1Sandmel, p. 64.

Paul, as we shall shortly see, very much thought of himself as a prophet. And, as is demonstrable, so did Milton think of himself.

To be sure, I am not the first to point out the prophetic flavor of Milton's writings. Merritt Hughes says that it is not new to see Milton as a "political prophet with something like an Old Testament seer's inspiration. ..." Sir Herbert Grierson, in Milton and Wordsworth, offers perhaps the most thorough approach to Milton as a prophet, although he views Milton as almost exclusively a secular political prophet. He does make some important observations. He points out that Hebrew prophets were also poets. He observes Milton's consciousness that a message was laid on him to deliver. And he notes that Milton, like the great Hebrew prophets, speaks authoritatively, demanding the people's obedience.

Others have commented, usually briefly, on Milton's prophetic stance. Hughes points out that Milton was more than a political prophet; there is a religious side to his prophetic nature. He correctly observes that Milton is often misunderstood because we fail to comprehend the prophetic element. Tillyard also sees Milton's poetry

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5Ibid., 25.

6Ibid., p. 48.

7Ibid., p. 105.

8Hughes, p. 247.

9Ibid., p. 248.
as a substitution for the pulpit which he never acquired, a fact which is significant in that the prophet is very much a preacher or teacher entrusted with a message he must deliver to the people of God. In a sense, the prose tracts become Milton's oracles to a wayward people.

Michael Fixler says that there is in Milton a blending of poetry, prophecy, and politics. Louis Martz cites Paradise Lost, III, 1-26, as evidence of Milton's "hopes for a place in the great tradition of bard and prophet." James Holly Hanford sees Milton arising to the task of being God's prophetic spokesman: "In manhood his devotion was to what he believed to be the peculiar purposes for which God had elected England among other nations. He regarded himself as uniquely endowed to understand and interpret these purposes. When he saw them politically defeated, he assumed the rôle of a poet-prophet, proclaiming divine truth to aftertimes in a form that men would not willingly let die." In his view of history in which human events were witnesses to God's constant intervention in the affairs of men, Milton is an heir of the Hebrew prophets according to Patrides. Arthur Barker speaks of Milton's conviction of the dignity of all Christian believers because they are prophets, priests, and kings--"an idea intimately connected with the

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11 Fixler, p. 9.
14 Milton and the Christian Tradition, p. 257.
Protestant view of the direct relationship between the individual soul and God.\textsuperscript{15} The influence of a specific Old Testament prophet has been noted by Baldwin; he observes a similarity between Ezekiel 34:2-10 and Lycidas.\textsuperscript{16}

My own study of Milton compels me to agree with this consensus among the critics that Milton was prophetic in some sense of the word. He feels a special call to justify God's ways to man, to interpret the mind of God to the Englishmen of his day. Like the Old Testament prophets (Jer. 1:9; Isa. 6:7; Ezek. 2:8-3:3; Dan. 10:16), his lips are cleansed, "toucht with hallow'd fire."\textsuperscript{17}

But the precise nature of Milton's prophetic office needs defining. Certainly Milton was sensitive to the ancient association of the prophet and bard of Yahweh. But at the same time Milton's manner is quite removed from that of the pre-exilic prophets of Israel. He lives an urban life in a cultured society, not a rustic existence in the desert. In this respect, Milton is much nearer the more urbane St. Paul, a man who also thought of himself as a prophet of God—but a prophet in a new sense. He did not minister to a provincial Israelite people, but to the whole Hellenistic world. Milton is a prophet, but more specifically, he is a Pauline prophet. Most of the observers of Milton's prophetism, have spoken in the most general terms, and none has noticed his considerable affinity to the Pauline order of prophet. Samuel Sandmel says

\textsuperscript{15}Milton and the Puritan Dilemma, p. 297.
\textsuperscript{17}"On the Morning of Christ's Nativity," line 28.
that Paul was "the prophet par excellence; his experience of God was like that of the pre-exilic prophets; he preached and taught to the end that his hearers should become, if they could, prophet-like too. They also were to commune directly with God, for a supreme and recent revelation of God had come through him. He could assure them, as he did, that what they needed was not the Law of Moses, but the Holy Spirit."\(^\text{18}\)

It is my purpose in this chapter to demonstrate that Milton did exactly as Paul expected.

1. **The Nature of the Prophetic Office**

What does it mean to say that Paul or Milton is a prophet? What, after all, is a prophet? By "prophetic" we do not at all mean the ability to foretell the future: "By prophecy we understand not specifically or even principally the forecasting of the future—a fairly late conception of what is essential to prophecy—but rather the mediation and interpretation of the divine will and mind."\(^\text{19}\) The Greek word \(\text{προφητίας}\) does not suggest a fortune-teller, but rather "one who speaks for another" or "interpreter." The prophet is specially commissioned by God, often outside of the priestly order; indeed, he is often in sharp opposition to the clerical order, having to call it to repentance.\(^\text{20}\)

Sandmel says that the prophet in biblical tradition is one to whom Deity appears:\(^\text{21}\) "He is someone who believes, or is believed by

\(^{18}\text{Sandmel, pp. 118-119.}\) \(^{19}\text{JBC, 12:4.}\) \(^{20}\text{Ibid., 12:5. It is apparent that Milton's anticlericalism is parallel to this characteristic of the prophets.}\) \(^{21}\text{Sandmel, p. 105.}\)
others, that he communes with God."\(^{22}\) The prophets are "highly individualistic thinkers whose separate personalities were many diverse instruments through which the Word of the Lord was given."\(^{23}\) They were "not moralists, statesmen, or politicians; they were prophets. Their function was to reveal the mind of God."\(^{24}\)

In Paulinism, the prophet does not wear sackcloth and ashes, nor does he dwell in the desert like John the Baptist. Paul saw his call to the ministry to the church and the urban Hellenistic culture to be his apostolate and prophetic mission. In many respects the qualities of the apostolic office are the same as those of the Pauline prophet, for he connects the two very closely in his thinking: "Closely and almost indissolubly bound together with the apostle is the figure of the prophet, and this pair of officeholders is frequently enlarged, by the addition of the teacher, to a triad."\(^{25}\) Therefore, I will not try to distinguish sharply between the Pauline prophet and apostle.

Although Milton was deeply impressed with the Old Testament, and therefore likely influenced by the Hebrew concept of prophetism, it is the New Testament and the Christian usage of the concept which is of first importance. Paul views himself as a prophet in terms characteristic of the Old Testament servants of God.\(^{26}\) Like Amos, Jeremiah, and

\(^{22}\)Ibid., p. 78.  
\(^{23}\)JBC, 12:10.  
\(^{24}\)Ibid., 12:21.  
Isaiah, Paul does not choose to be God's spokesman, but God chooses him. He speaks of his prophetic call (Gal. 1:15-16) in terms of Jeremiah's and Isaiah's calls (Jer. 1:5 and Isa. 49:1). Rigaux shows that Paul's quotation of the messianic passage from Isaiah 49:8 in II Corinthians 6:2 is further proof of his awareness of his prophetic office: "Paul claimed that he was sent to the Corinthians in the place of Christ, and thereby he applied to himself the text from Isaiah." In several other passages Paul either quotes or alludes to Isaiah (Rom. 14:11; Gal. 2:2; Phil. 2:16; I Thess. 3:5). Paul "understood that Christ entrusted him with a task in accord with the prophecies of Isaiah." But his ministry under the Gospel is different from Isaiah's ministry to the old carnal Israel; he ministers to a new spiritual Israel. Paul's office is not a juridical or priestly order, but a pneumatic one, coming directly from God. He has been sent out to deliver the good news. He is an apostle (οπόστολος, i.e., "one sent out," an "emissary") with a prophetic message which he received by private revelation. He is God's lonely suffering servant who is cast out by the supposed people of God just as the Old Testament prophets were traditionally rejected. He is the δοξαλος (Rom. 1:1) in the service of the great Taskmaster. Sandmel sees a close parallel between Moses, God's mediator and receiver of the Old Law, and Paul, God's mediator and receiver of the New Law. Paul is the minister

27Ibid.
28Ibid.
29Schmithals, p. 31.
30Sandmel, p. 30. It is also interesting that just as Sandmel sees Paul fashioning his prophetic office after Moses, so also J. H. Hanford sees Milton fashioning his prophetic conception of inspiration after Moses; "'That Shepherd, Who First Taught the Chosen Seed': A Note on Milton's Mosaic Inspiration," UTQ, 8(1939), 403-419.
of the New Covenant (II Cor. 3), in contradistinction to Moses' ministry to the Old.

In order to be God's spokesman it was requisite that one be moved by the spirit of God. The prophet could speak only when he was in touch with the mind of God, and this was possible only by the power of the Spirit (Mic. 3:8). Thus, Paul stresses the role of the Spirit in the function of the prophetic office (I Thess. 5:19-21). The office of the pneumatic prophet was not confined to Paul alone but was held by others in the apostolic church (Rom. 12:6; Eph. 2:20; 4:11).

The characteristics of the Pauline prophet briefly described above have their parallels in Milton. Milton was not merely a prophet; he was truly a Pauline one. Both in the way he views his office and in his understanding of the content of the prophetic kerygma, Milton is Pauline.

2. The Call

The Pauline prophet, like the pre-exilic prophets, must be "called." That is to say, God's initiative in the prophet's life is essential. God elects, not man. The Pauline concept of predestination is just this: from his birth Paul was set aside for a divine purpose—to bear God's message to His people. While Paul was "elect" from the beginning, there is a certain point in adulthood when he fully understands the message he is to deliver. It is perhaps misleadingly referred to as his "conversion." Schmithals correctly remarks: "for Paul the call to become an apostle (and thus the manifestation of Christ) is to be equated with the reception of the message. Calling and conversion
are consequently a single event." Schmithals goes on to quote Martin Dibelius: "Neither Paul nor the book of Acts speaks of his 'conversion,' but only of the call." A great compelling force comes upon Paul on the Damascus Road, and from that point he is absolutely certain that God has reached out to him through the Christophany. He is independent of all institutions and traditions since God has touched him directly:

Now I certifie you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me, was not after men. For neither received I it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my conversion in time past, in the Jewish religion, how that I persecuted the Church of God extremely, and wasted it, And profited in the Jewish religion above many of my companions of mine own nation, and was much more zealous of the traditions of my Fathers. But when it pleased God (which had separated me from my mothers wombe, and called me by his grace.) To reveale his Sonne in mee that I should preach him among the Gentiles. . . . (Gal. 1:11-16)

We learn several important facts about the Pauline call from this passage. First, Paul in no way thinks it is his message, that the kerygma is his own devising. In spite of its clearly "Pauline" character, he firmly believes it is Christ's own message. Second, the message is not "after men," that is, his kerygma was not the tradition of Christ handed down by the Jerusalem establishment or the Apostolic institution. Third, ecstaticism, as in Old Testament prophetism, characterized Paul. He is, in some sense, "inspired." Just as Isaiah saw the heavenly vision in which his lips were symbolically cleansed by the fire, thus inaugurating his work, so Paul's prophetic office is inaugurated by the initial vision (Acts 9; II Cor. 12:3-5). Fourth, his prophetic call demanded at once a renunciation and a fulfillment of his Jewish heritage. He was

31 Schmithals, p. 30  
32 Ibid.
required to break with Jewish orthodoxy, but at the same time, as Romans 11 and Galatians 4 show, he saw himself fulfilling his true heritage as a son of Abraham by following the Messiah of faith. Fifth, his "conversion" was not an evangelical Protestant one, in which the town reprobate receives grace at the altar. Paul, in fact, lived a highly ethical life, completely devoted to Yahweh. He was always a servant of God. Klausner says that Paul was a Jewish apostle before he was a Christian apostle.33 His conversion, then, was the reception of the message and the commission to teach the Gentiles. But even though he received the call in adulthood, he knows that from his mother's womb he was destined to fulfill God's designs. Sixth, Paul accepts a providential view of life. By definition, the prophet believes in God's intervention in the affairs of men. He is an eschatological figure who recognizes the cosmic significance of those events going on about him.34 But not only does he warn of the impending catastrophe in the coming Eschaton, he very much believes in God's special intervention in his own life. The grace of God is demonstrated in God's reaching down to redeem him through His great love. This leads to our last point about Paul's call—the gracious intervention came "late." He is called late in the day to serve in the vineyard. He was the belated Apostle, last to be honored by an appearance: "After that, he was seen of James: then of all the Apostles. And last of all he was seen also of me, as of one born out of due time (τὸ ἐκτρώματι, I Cor. 15:7-8). This belatedness


34Schmithals, p. 44.
had a special significance for Paul. It reminded him of his unworthiness—he was the chief of sinners. But it also set him apart. He was a unique apostle. Again, he saw the demonstration of that principle of God's strength coming through the weak things of the world. He becomes the unique apostle who received God's grace in a special way—long after the original apostles received Christ's blessing. This fact probably accounts for his remarkable independence.

When we turn to Milton we discover some rather interesting parallels. Milton, like the Puritans of his day, took Paul at his word. If Paul were called by God, and if the Christians of his day were called (Rom. 1:7; Col. 3:12; I Cor. 7:20; I Cor. 1:2), then surely they were too. Milton believes in the concept of calling. There is the general call to all mankind (XV, 347), but also the particular call of special people: "God's special calling is that whereby he, at the time which he thinks proper, invites particular individuals, elect as well as reprobate, more frequently, and with a more marked call than others," (XV, 349-351). This calling effects some kind of alteration, although the free agency of man is not overruled. Like Paul, he stresses the activity of God in this action: "Inasmuch as this change is from God, those in whom it takes place are said to be enlightened, and to be endued with power to will what is good" (XV, 355). It becomes apparent from many statements that Milton felt that he was one of the specially called.

In The Reason of Church Government Milton characterizes himself as one called to deliver the truth of God. He sees, in the tradition of Paul and the Old Testament prophets, the call as a burden—though a divine and a welcome one:
How happy were it for this frail, and as it may be truly call'd, mortall life of man, since all earthly things which have the name of good and convenient in our daily use, are withall so cumbersome and full of trouble if knowledge yet which is the best and lightsomest possession of the mind, were as the common saying is, no burden, and that what it wanted of being a load to any part of the body, it did not with a heevie advantage overlay upon the spirit. (III, 229)

He contrasts the lower wisdom "of naturall causes and dimensions" with the divine truth that he has perceived "remembring also that God even to a strictnesse requires the improvement of these his entrusted gifts, cannot but sustain a sorer burden of mind, and more pressing, then any supportable toil, or waight, which the body can labour under; how and in what manner he shall dispose and employ those summes of knowledge and illumination, which God hath sent him to this world to trade with" (III, 229). He continues, recalling that the ancient prophets called truth a burden (III, 230).

In the manner of the prophet, Milton understands that the burden is considerably complicated by those he must affront with the divine message, those who have a vested interest in deceiving the people, the Demetriuses of the world. The Pharisees, the Gnostics, the Judaizers were alive and well in the seventeenth century—men who trafficked in fleshly doctrines. He feels the hatred and contempt of the false teachers, but with the past prophets of divine truth, he must speak the mind of God: "yet needs must it sit heavily upon their spirits, that being in Gods prime intention and their own, selected heralds of peace, and dispensers of treasure inestimable without price to them that have no pence, they finde in the discharge of their commission, that they are made the greatest variance and offence, a very sword and fire
both in house and city over the whole earth" (III, 230). Then Milton recalls the burden of the prophetic call (in the same fashion that Paul did, I Cor. 9:6): "And although divine inspiration must certainly have been sweet to those ancient profets, yet the irksomeness of that truth which they brought was so unpleasant to them that every where they call it a burden" (III, 230). He then reviews the burdens of the past profets of St. John and even the pagan Sophocles, concluding: "But when God commands to take the trumpet and blow a dolorous or jarring blast, it lies not in man's will what he shall say or what he shall conceal [my emphasis]" (III, 231). Jeremiah then comes to his mind, a prophet who could not remain silent in spite of the derision of the people: "his word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, I was weary with forbearing, and could not stay" (III, 231).

To this point, Milton has spoken of his prophetic office in the objective voice of the third person, but he shifts to the first person and his emotion rises as he contemplates the evils of the English church:

For me I have determin'd to lay up as the best treasure, and solace of a good old age, if God voutsafe it me, the honest liberty of free speech from my youth, where I shall think it available in so dear a concernment as the Churches good. . . . but this I foresee, that should the Church be brought under heavy oppression, and God have given me ability the while to reason against that man that should be the author of so foul a deed, or should she, by blessing from above on the industry and courage of faithfull men change this her distracted estate into better daies without the lest furtherance or contribution of those few talents which God at that present had lent me, I foresee what stories I should heare within my selfe, all my life after, of discourague and reproach. (III, 232)

Here Milton confesses to his divine calling: he is to deliver the people of God from oppression. The Lord has anointed him to proclaim release to
the captives (Isa. 61:1). He knows too the danger of being an unfaithful steward.

This lengthy passage may be viewed as an account of Milton's call. He feels the divine imperative in his life. He knows the weight and the responsibility of the call. He knows that he has been entrusted with the talent to speak for God. He knows that he will not be popular for his message.

The Pauline motif found in I Corinthians 9:16 is very much a part of Milton's understanding of his call. In a situation similar to Milton's, Paul addresses the wayward Corinthians in a highly charged and polemical letter: "For though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to rejoice of: for necessity (ἀνάγκη) is laid upon me, and woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel." Paul must justify his call, for his motives have come under attack. He preaches out of necessity: God has "laid hold of" (κατελήφθην, Phil. 3:12) him. The compulsion is divine prompting, not greed or pride. So also, Milton's elaboration of his call is a justification or an apology for his entry into ecclesiastical matters. He hopes that "by what hath been said I may deserve of charitable readers to be credited, that neither envy nor gall hath enterd me upon this controversy, but the enforcement of conscience only, and a preventive fear lest the omitting of this duty should be against me when I would store up to my self the good provision of peacefull hours" (III, 233-234).

The thought that the man of God must speak from the inner promptings of God was to be a theme in his later writings as well. In The Likeliest Means to Remove Hirelings Milton attacks the "fond error,
though too much beleevd among us, to think that the universitie makes a minister of the gospel" (VI, 93). Recalling Romans 10:15 and Luke's account of Paul's words in Acts 20:28, he concludes that the minister is sent from God only. And turning to I Corinthians 9:16, he argues that the spokesman for God must preach from an inner command of God, not by some commission from a university or a church. Again echoing Paul and the Old Testament prophets, Milton explains his motives for engaging in arguing for a free commonwealth on the very eve of the Restoration: "Thus much I should perhaps have said though I was sure I should have spoken only to trees and stones; and had none to cry to, but with the prophet, 'O earth, earth, earth!' to tell the very soil itself, what her perverse inhabitants are deaf to" (VI, 148). In Animadversions he insists that a minister is made by the inward calling of God (III, 156). When Milton writes to Jean de Labadie, he makes clear the special calling of God in the Frenchman's life and at the same time suggests God's direction in his own life: "O happy man thou! whom God, from among so many thousands, otherwise knowing and learned, has snatched singly from the very gates and jaws of Hell, and called to such an illustrious and intrepid profession of his Gospel! And at this moment I have cause for thinking that it has happened by the singular providence of God that I did not reply to you sooner" (XII, 107). He feels God's providence in his experience with blindness; God's leading is eyesight enough for him (XII, 71).

As a prophet, Milton considered himself no doubt a true minister of God who had received the inward call. The message he proclaimed was
not his own—he insists that it is divine truth. His message does not please the powers that be, but he is unshaken, knowing that the prophet is certain to disrupt and anger. He is an individualistic prophet like Paul. He moves about free of the entanglements of the institution, demanding a return to the true traditions.

Milton, at some point, received his call to speak in behalf of the Reformed Church, thus postponing for twenty years his major poetry. But probably Milton saw the whole of his life as a prophetic one in which his prose and poetry were offered to God. Because our records of Milton's early years are so faint we cannot be sure of an exact time Milton was sure that he was to trumpet the blast for God. In view of the prophetic motif of the call from the womb, William Haller's comment is striking: "we are not told in Milton's spiritual autobiography the precise moment when he first felt the conviction of grace. The sense of personal election seems to have been his from the start." From his earliest remembrance, it seems, he sensed that he had been entrusted with burdensome gifts and large "summes of knowledge and illumination" (III, 229) and that he must give an account. He fathoms his duty to God, even before he knows what that duty requires: "and indeed from youth upwards I had been fired with a zeal which kept urging me, if not to do great deeds, at least to celebrate them" (VII, 9). He, too, seems to have been "destin'd from the womb" (Samson Agonistes, 634). In Defensio Secunda he recognizes a certain fatality in his birth, a "two-fold

destiny" of blindness and duty (VIII, 69). Klausner's remark that Paul was always an apostle, even before his call, may have an application to Milton. He always knew he was God's instrument, but not until about 1640 did he receive his message and commission.

Milton's service was not to be fulfilled in the Anglican ministry; however, his sense of ministry is no less real. He was a devotee to Truth from his earliest days (XII, 195), but it was after a period of meditation and preparation that he knew the exact form of his ministry. He recalls in Defensio Secunda his place in the struggle for liberty:

Meanwhile, as the parliament acted with great vigour, the pride of the bishops began to lose its swell... Some complained of their personal vices, others of the vice of the order itself. It was wrong, they said, that they alone should differ from all other reformed churches; that it was expedient the church should be governed by the example of the brethren, and above all by the word of God. I became perfectly awake to these things; and perceiving that men were in the right way to liberty; that if discipline originating in religion continued its course to the establishment of real liberty; that the foundation was laying for morals and institutions of the commonwealth, they were proceeding in a direct line from such beginnings, from such steps, to the deliverance of the whole life of mortal man from slavery—moreover, as I had endeavored from my youth, before all things, not to be ignorant of what was law, whether divine or human; as I had considered, whether I could ever be of use, should I now be wanting to my country, to the church, and to such multitudes of the brethren who were exposing themselves to danger for the gospel's sake—I resolved... to transfer to these the whole force of my mind and industry. (VIII, 129)

Milton's office was not legal or traditional, but charismatic, as was Paul's.36 He does not speak by the authority of the church, but by God's command: "this office goes not by age or youth, but to whomsoever God

36 Chadwich, p. 17.
shall give apparently the will, the Spirit, and the utterance" (III, 289). He is echoing the Pauline belief that the prophet's knowledge is charismatic in nature (I Cor. 1:5; II Cor. 8:7; Eph. 6:19; Col. 4:3).

When he writes the introduction to The Judgment of Martin Bucer, he is perhaps more sensitive to his prophetic function than anywhere else. The mysterious harmony between his earlier divorce writings with the then unknown works of Martin Bucer causes him to see in his own life "the secret purpose of divine appointment" (IV, 7). Milton sees God's hand in selecting Bucer to speak the truth in a former age and concludes that he is God's spokesman in this age:

If therefore God in the former age found out a servant, and by whom he had converted and reform'd many a citie, by him thought good to restore the most needfull doctrine of divorce from rigorous and harmfull mistakes on the right hand, it can be no strange thing, if in this age he stirre up by whatsoever means whom it pleases him, to take in hand & maintain the same assertion. Certainly if it be in mans discerning to sever providence from change, I could allege many instances, wherein there would appear cause to esteem me of no other then a passive instrument under some power and counsel higher and better than can be human, working to a general good in the whole cours of this matter [my emphasis]. (IV, 11)

How is it possible that Milton and Bucer could come to similar conclusions, independently of each other, except by the hand of God? Milton sees God's role in his tract-writing: "For God, it seems, intended to prove me, whether I durst alone take up a rightful cause against a world of disesteem, & found I stood" (IV, 11-13). His exhilaration is readily apparent at the opening of The Judgment of Martin Bucer. There can be no doubt. So, like the true Pauline prophet, he bravely "resolv'd at
length to put off into this wild and calumnious world" (IV, 11).\(^37\)

While Milton was always God's apostle, he did not always know how his great Taskmaster would employ his servant. There is, therefore, the long incubation, the "season of growth in seclusion" (XII, 248), the period of "growing wings and meditating flight" (XII, 27). He experiences a certain impatience as he awaits his task: "the howres of the night passe on (for so I call my life as yet obscure, and unserviceable to mankind)" (XII, 320). He senses a belatedness in himself (XII, 322). Like Paul, he is a latecomer. Like Paul, he spends a considerable part of his life in a silent period, before he storms full force into the arena of controversy.\(^38\)

But when he does enter the arena, he speaks his message with candor and certitude. When he speaks, the "Lord has spoken." This is the certitude of Paulinism: "For now preach I mans doctrine, or Gods? or goe I about to please men? for if I should yet please men, I were not the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10). He speaks "by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12). He boldly proclaims, "Be ye imitators of me" and demands obedience to "my gospel" (Rom. 2:16). He is absolutely certain of his gospel: "But though that wee, or an Angel from heaven preach unto you otherwise, then that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8). This certainty is characteristic of

\(^37\)St. Paul, like his descendant Milton, was challenged concerning his message. And like Milton in The Judgment of Martin Bucer, Paul argues that his message is valid because he received it independently (Gal. 1:11; 1:16; 7:6), and yet it agrees with the essentials of the Apostles' teaching.

\(^38\)On Paul's and Milton's feelings of being outsiders and late-comers, see below, pp. 160-168.
the prophet, and it is to be found in Milton. To call Milton "arrogant" without reference to his prophetic nature is to misunderstand. The religious prophet knows what he speaks: "I knowe whom I have believed." Barker writes: "Throughout the revolution he possessed an assurance of divine guidance which kept him ever in his Great Taskmaster's eye and issued directly from his sense of inspiration as a poet."\(^{39}\) One might amend the last word to "poet-prophet." As with the prophets of old "the same Might and Inspiration" is with him (VII, 557). And when he recalls his former writing on divorce, he classifies his work as actual fact and not interpretation: "for what I wrote was not my opinion, but my knowledge" (IV, 19). Lowell speaks the truth when he says: "Since Dante, no one has stood on these visiting terms with heaven."\(^{40}\) Such claims, though, are shocking only to those unfamiliar with the prophetic manner. The prophet knows the mind of God; he therefore speaks as one having authority. In this respect Milton is in the tradition of Isaiah, Moses, Jeremiah, and Paul.

3. **Inspiration**

We have seen in chapters two and three that Paul argues for a recreated humanity in which the original image is partially restored. Christ is formed within, and the spiritual man lives in communion with God's spirit. The centrality of the Holy Spirit, who dwells within all Christians, is inescapable in Pauline thought. Just as the Spirit moved

\(^{39}\) Barker, xvii.

the prophets of old, in the messianic age all have access to this divine power (Isa. 11:1-2; Ezek. 36:26-27; Jer. 31:33; Isa. 44:2). Since "inspiration" in its simplest meaning suggests the divine nature breathing into mortal man, we can say that Paul taught a kind of "inspiration" of all Christians, although not everyone had the same charism, or to the same degree: "The teaching that the Spirit has been given to all Christians as such can be regarded as the fundamental teaching upon which all St. Paul's other utterances concerning the Spirit are based." Of course there are grave dangers to tradition and to ecclesiastical stability in such a concept. Sandmel says that Paul's central insistence on personal inspiration "amounts to an invitation to dissidence." The Protestant movement in Milton's day accepted the invitation. While the orthodox church was able to disarm this Pauline notion after Paul's death, such a concept has repeatedly cropped up, to the consternation of the orthodox.

Milton believes that God's Spirit illuminates the canon of Scripture, making his interpretation of it authoritative. Thus, as we noted earlier, his reading of the biblical marriage doctrine is not his theory, but certain fact. This spiritual illumination is "common to all Christians" (XIV, 179; VI, 6). The claim to spiritual illumination, however, does not guarantee infallibility because the interpreter cannot know at all times if he has this divine illumination or not (VI, 6). The Bible is easy to interpret with an "extraordinary effusion of Gods Spirit" (III, 33). One may receive "the dictat of a divine Spirit"

41 Whiteley, p. 125. 42 Sandmel, p. 159.
Milton sees his own work as "inspired" of God, though not in the Protestant fundamentalist sense of the term. Thus, in speaking of the ill-favor he received as a result of writing *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, he writes of himself in the third person: "till meeting with the envy of men ignorant in their own undertak'n calling, God directed him to the forgott'n Writings of this faithfull Evangelist [Bucer], to be his defence and warrant against the gross imputation of broaching license" (IV, 17). The amazing fact that Milton had used the same arguments as Bucer "without the lest sight or knowledge of what was done before" is proof of God's direction. He says with effective understatement: "something of lesse note were attributed to the ordering of a heav'ny power" (IV, 16). His divorce teachings are the doing of God: "God doth now again create the same doctrin in another unwritt'n table [Milton's heart; cf. II Cor. 3:3], and raises it up immediately out of his pure oracle to the convincem'nt of a pervers age" (IV, 14). Milton is sure of it; God has made him a collateral teacher with Bucer: "So as I may justly gratulat mine own mind, with due acknowledgement of assistance from above, which led me, not as a lerner, but as a collateral teacher, to a sympathy of judgement with no lesse a man then Martin Bucer" (IV, 13-14).

Milton is convinced of the truth of his message; he has the inner serenity of the prophet who knows the mind of God. Thus, after his *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* meets with opposition he is unshaken: "I felt no difference within me from that peace & firmness of mind, which is of neerest kin to patience and contentment: both for
that I knew I had divulg'd a truth linkt inseparably with the most fundamental rules of Christianity, to stand or fall together. . . . Yet at length it hath pleas'd God, who had already giv'n me satisfaction in myself, to afford me now a means whereby I may be fully justify'd also in the eyes of men" (IV, 13). Milton definitely sees himself as inspired in some sense; he senses "some diviner monitor within" (VIII, 69).

He is God's "passive instrument" (IV, 11). His inspiration, then, is not confined to the poetic kind (cf. Paradise Lost, IX, 23). He prays to "that eternall Spirit who can enrich all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his Seraphim with the hollow'd fire of his Altar to touch and purify the lips of whom He pleases" (III, 241). He trusts that his word is correct "through the help of that illuminating Spirit which hath favor'd me" (III, 493). There can be no doubt that Milton understands himself to be the recipient of divine influence.

Milton's understanding of inspiration included the activity of illuminating the written Scriptures, but it was by no means confined to that activity. When Milton prayed for "all utterance and knowledge" at the beginning of The Reason of Church Government, he was asking for more than the plain sense of Scripture. Milton was freed from the text of Scripture to a surprising degree. He arrived at a great deal of information that does not in fact rest in Scripture, but he did not feel he was contradicting or going beyond Scripture. His theory of

43In one sense, the direction of the Spirit in the whole life of the Christian is "inspiration." "Christ writes the inward law of God by his Spirit on the hearts of believers, and leads them as willing followers" (XVI, 151).
hermeneutics was so liberal that it actually released him from the literal sense of the text, and his support for this theory was certainly Paul. He harshly attacked the literalists, "the crabbed textuists" (III, 378) and the slaves to "the verbal straightness of a text" (IV, 135):

Let the statutes of God be turn'd over, be scann'd a new, and consider'd; not altogether by the narrow intellectuals of quotationists and common placers, but (as was the ancient right of councils) by men of what liberall profession soever, of eminent spirit and breeding joyn'd with a diffuse and various knowledge of divine and human things; able to ballance and define good and evill, right and wrong, throughout every state of life; able to show us the waies of the Lord strait and faithfull as they are, not full of cranks and contradictions, and pitfalling dispenses, but with divine insight and benignity measur'd out to the proportion of each mind and spirit, each temper and disposition, created so different each from other, and yet by the skill of wise conducting, all become uniform in vertue. (III, 375-376)

What Milton is calling for is a prophet, not an exegete. He wants a prophet who can show us the straight ways of the Lord, one who has divine insight and who can direct the people of God.

Milton could have derived his sense of freedom from the established order (whether the canon or the church) from the Old Testament prophets who discarded the sacrificial system, even claiming in their hyperbolical way that God never demanded sacrifices. 44

But it was St. Paul's free use of Scripture and his instructions on Law and Gospel which had the most to do with Milton's break with Calvinistic scripturism. Milton perceived the spiritual-allegorical use Paul made of the Hebrew Scriptures, and he was impressed with "the

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44 Jer. 7:21-23; Isa. 1:12-17; Amos 5:21-27; Hos. 6:6.
pattern of Paul's reasoning." Paul's own practice justified Milton's free exegesis of the Bible. Thus in Colasterion Milton draws an analogy. Paul, who argues that the minister has the right to receive financial support from his congregants, turns to Moses who says that the laboring ox must not be muzzled. As the ox is free to derive his sustenance from his work, Paul reasons, so is the minister. Milton deduces that he can use the Scriptures in a similar manner. For example, in Areopagitica he bases his argument for the free "diet" of the mind on the account of the enlargement of man's diet of the body: "I conceive therefore, that when God did enlarge the universal diet of mans body, saving ever the rules of temperance, he then also, as before, left arbitrary the dyeting and repasting of our minds" (IV, 309).

Milton's freedom from the text was also supported by Paul's famous distinctions between Law and Gospel, and the letter and the spirit. The Gospel means a state of grace, freedom, faith, and manhood, while the Law means a state of rigor, bondage, works, and childhood (VI, 25). The Law was written on cold slabs of stone, but the Gospel is written on hearts and is interpreted by "the divine softning breath of charity" (IV, 96). Milton's thought is permeated by Pauline thought. Charity is supreme, not a cold literalism. The whole rigid law is dissolved into charity (IV, 76). Milton knows he is standing on solid ground on this point, for Paul said that charity is the fulfilling of the Law (III, 403). To understand the spiritual nature of the Gospel is to

45This kind of hermeneutic is practiced by Paul in Gal. 4:24-31 and I Cor. 10:1-14.
recognize the end to the tyranny of literalism: "Under the law he gave them tithes; under the gospel, having left all things in his church to charity and Christian freedom, he hath given them only what is justly given them" (VI, 50-51). He rejects "the leaden daggers" of literal decrees for the freedom of the Pauline Gospel (III, 485).

Paul alone among the biblical writers spoke of the liberating spirit as opposed to the constricting letter. Paul argues that the basis of his ministry is not legalism, "not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life" (II Cor. 3:6). This theme becomes one of the most prominent in the prose tracts. Christ has come to set us free, whether from the tyranny of a bad prelate, a bad wife, a bad king, or a literalist exegesis of the Scriptures. In fact, Christian liberty is the very "drift and scope" of the New Testament.

In view of the Christian's freedom from the text, it is exceedingly important that one have the "inner Scripture" of the Spirit's direction. "Under the gospel we possess, as it were, a twofold Scripture; one external, which is the written word, and the other internal, which is the Holy Spirit, written in the hearts of believers, according to the promise of God, and with the intent that it should by no means be neglected" (XVI, 273). While Milton believes that the written word is "highly important" (XVI, 275), there can be no doubt that the possession of the Spirit itself is far superior. The internal scripture is more reliable since it is not subject to textual corruption. Milton decides that Providence had a purpose in allowing textual uncertainty
to mar the New Testament. We are taught "by this very circumstance that the Spirit which is given to us is a more certain guide than Scripture, whom therefore it is our duty to follow" (XVI, 279). Here, Milton no longer sees the "inspiration" of the Spirit as confined to the exegesis of the text. The Spirit is a guide detached from the text, guiding the Christian to truth he could not know from the corrupted text itself.

Like Paul, Milton believes that he and all true Christians are endowed with certain charisms. These charisms not only enable him to interpret the Holy Scriptures, but they lead him into truth, for he is endowed with "the mind of Christ" (VI, 7; cf. I Cor. 6:16). Milton is not disturbed by the fact that his message does not coincide with sixteen hundred years of Christian tradition, for he speaks by the power of the Spirit, not after the traditions of men.

The matter of Milton's concept of inspiration leads to a question deserving attention: Was Milton, then, a mystic? Some critics have denied anything approaching the mystical in Milton. Thus, Saurat says that there was nothing of the mystic about him since his was a cold, reasonable, precise mind. To such critics, Milton is a cold dialectician, a proponent of Reformed dogma, but not a man of genuine religious feeling. Such a view is far from the truth.

We grant that Milton was not a mystic, if by that term one means an esoteric recluse who abandons the ethical and active sides of life and who spends his life in expectations of visions and voices. But that is not the sense in which we use the term "mystic." By this term we

mean the belief that the divine and the human meet, that the divine can draw in the man, or the man can draw in the divine nature. It is the belief that one can realize "the presence of the living God in the soul and in nature, or more generally, ... the attempt to realise in thought and feeling, the immanence of the temporal in the eternal, and of the eternal in the temporal." St. Paul, as has often been pointed out, was very much a mystic, and no true Pauline follower could fail to be one also.

It is a false assumption that rational discourse or theological preoccupation is somehow antithetical to the mystic mind—it certainly was not in the case of Paul. He lived a very active life and intellectual toughness was characteristic of him. He could dwell in the rare atmosphere of Jewish speculative thought and also speak of union with Christ in his mystical body.

Wagenknecht has correctly, I think, objected to the denial of Milton's capacity for mystical experience: "He always insists that religion is direct experience, and he thought of Christians as living 'in the most intimate union with Christ.'" Louis Martz has also intimated that Milton had a mystic side when he speaks of his "inward


49 Wagenknecht, p. 155.
speaking of the meditative mind." Milton's mysticism cannot be doubted, if defined in Pauline terms. It is his fundamental assumption that Christ becomes incarnate in man, that the Spirit very much is immanent in the regenerated man: "Believers are said 'to be ingrafted in Christ,' when they are planted in Christ by God the Father, that is, are made partakers of Christ, and meet for becoming one with him" (XVI, 3). These thoughts are not those of an unfeeling theologian, but of a believer in personal religion. The whole chapter "Of Being Ingrafted in Christ, and Its Effects" reflects an acquaintance with genuine religious experience.

I hope that this discussion of Milton's mysticism does not seem too far afield from the topic of Milton as a Pauline prophet, for the issue is crucial to the question of Milton's prophetism. Milton ought to be read as a prophet and not judged by the standards of a theologian. He entered the "troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes" because he had an inner motivation that sustained him through adversity. The motivation was not a perverse belligerence, but a prophetic commitment. He felt an intimacy with the Divine, and he spoke out of that conviction. He objected to the pomp of the Anglican faith only because it contradicted the Pauline ideal of inward religion. Samuel Sandmel, in an enlightening discussion of Paul's spiritual religion, speaks of the prophetic and Pauline disregard for the externals of worship as relatively "unimportant and dispensable." He asserts that Paul is in line with

50Paradise Within, p. 191.
51Sandmel, p. 77.
the pre-exilic prophets of Israel and that his position can ultimately be traced to the Quakers. Milton falls into the same tradition. Outward forms Milton allows for, but his enthusiasm is for inner faith. His attack on the church's liturgy and priestly accoutrements is a result of this stress on inwardness.

It is inconceivable that Milton could have sustained his enthusiasm for the Cause, especially in a work like De Doctrina in which there was no opportunity for personal gain, unless he had some deep and abiding religious fervor. He surely believed that he was God's servant, the bearer of his truth, the mouthpiece of heaven, the justifier of God's ways to man. In some fashion, he heard the voice of God, and he was called to speak it in a world of disesteem, and so he did.

4. The Exiled Layman

A very important motif in the Pauline prophet is the sense of being an exile or an outcast. Paul was estranged from his native Judaism by his commitment to Christianity, but what is perhaps less well known but more significant was his estrangement from a considerable portion of the Christian church. Klausner lists Paul's principal enemies in three categories: 1) the Gentiles, 2) the Jews, and 3) the Jewish Nazarenes, or "Judaizers," Christians who were also committed to the Torah. Paul was both greatly loved and greatly hated. But he always seemed to be outside the original coterie of Jesus' disciples based in Jerusalem. When he tried to join them, they rejected him (Acts 9:26).

52Klausner, p. 393.
He was exiled from the Jerusalem institution. Like the pre-exilic prophets, there is a loneliness in Paul's prophetic office. He stands alone in opposing heresy, which was even espoused by Jesus' brother and closest disciple, James and Peter. He is indeed the "sole advocate of a discount'nanc't truth" (III, 369). Paul challenges singlehandedly Peter and the Mother Church on the issue of Jewish restrictions regarding table fellowship with Gentiles. Though he is a latecomer and an outsider, he charges them with harboring "false brethren":

To wit, for the false brethren which were craftily sent in and crept in privily to spie out our libertie, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us unto bondage. To whom we gave not place by subjection for an houre, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you. But by them which seemed to bee great, I was not taught ( whatsoever they were in time passed, I am nothing the better, God accepteth no man's person) for they that are the chief, did adde nothing to me above that I had... And when Peter was come to Antiochia, I withstood him to his face: for hee was to be condemned. For before that certaine [men] came from James, hee ate with the Gentiles: but when they were come, hee withdrew and separated himselfe, fearing them which were of the Circumcision. And the other Jewes played the hypocrites likewise with him, in so much that Barnabas was led away with them by their hypocrisie. (Gal. 2:4-13)

From its inception, the church was troubled with problems between Hellenist and Hebrew factions (Acts 6:1-6). Paul's role in the dispute was considerable, for he was the most prominent figure to argue for a Christianity severed from Judaism. The Jerusalem Church simply saw their Christianity as a fuller and more accurate expression of their Judaism. They were in reality a Jewish sect. They continued to worship at the temple and observe the rituals of Judaism. But the question

arose as Jewish proselytes and Gentiles received the Gospel: Is Judaism a prerequisite to Christianity? Pharisaic Christians said "yes." But Paul firmly countered them. He became the chief spokesman of the controversial and liberal view that the church was not an appendage of Judaism. Paul's Gospel is a gospel of liberty. Man is free from the rigid demands of the Law (Romans, passim). The Law means bondage, but Grace means freedom. Most of Paul's life as a missionary was spent in arguing for a free church. Everywhere he went he confronted the Judaizers who held the opposite view. So, in almost every letter he devotes a section to arguing for his non-Jewish Gospel. Especially in Galatians does he attack his Judaizing opponents: "Stand fast therefore in the libertie wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not intangled againe with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing. . . . Ye are abolished from Christ: whosoever are justified by the Lawe, ye are fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:1-4). He attacks similar false teachers in Colossae (Col. 2).

Because of Paul's extraordinary call to the apostolate, his office frequently was attacked by his opponents. In many of his letters, but especially in the Corinthian correspondence, he defended his authority to speak. He spent the last years of his life struggling to maintain his view. He was a minority figure, both as a member of an unpopular illegal sect in the Roman empire, but also as an unpopular figure in the Christian movement. His danger came not only from without; a considerable source of trouble came from the "false brethren" within (II Cor. 11:26).
We may surmise that his viewpoint was not a popular one, for even in the churches he founded and nurtured he had considerable difficulty weeding out his rivals who challenged his authority. New Testament scholars believe that the turmoil was much greater than one sees in the ironic portrait of the church in the Lukan account. Bornkamm finds it amazing that the church's unity did not break down.54

In respect to the controversy it faced, the Pauline church was much like the seventeenth-century English church. Milton, by his frequent allusion to Paul's struggle for Gospel liberty, sees the parallel. He believes that his enemies on the right are the same Judaizing legalists who gave Paul so much trouble.55 In judging Paul, one must be careful not to see him through the eyes of an adoring Reformation, but as he was in his own lifetime—a minority figure and a heretic to a sizable portion of the church. Perhaps this is why heretics like Milton have felt an attraction to Paul:

Men whose Life, Learning, Faith and pure intent
Would have been held in high esteem with Paul
Must now be nam'd and printed Hereticks.
("On the New Forcers of Conscience," 11. 9-11)

In Paul's lifetime the pro-Jerusalem version of Christianity may have endangered Paul's position in the church. Some scholars think that at his death his view was by no means the ascendant one, and that Luke's influential work rehabilitated Paulinism by harmonizing Peter and Paul. But it was centuries before the Judaistic version of Christianity passed

54 Bornkamm, p. 31.

55 See below, pp. 216-228.
from the scene. The Ebionites were a large sect which may have descended directly from the Jerusalem church. In the Ebionite writing Kerygymata Petrou (3rd century), the author records a defaming account of Paul as one who perverts the gospel, challenges Peter unlawfully, and bases his office on an unverifiable vision.\(^56\) One can gather from his letters that Paul was charged with moral anarchy as a result of his antinomian teaching (Rom. 6:1 ff.). He was charged with being inconsistent and hypocritical (II Cor. 10:10-11). Even his ailment was used against him, as if it were a judgment of God (II Cor. 12:5-10).

Because Paul’s ministry came directly from God, and independent of the established ecclesiastical organization, there is a sense in which he was a "layman." And like a "lay" preacher, he continued to support himself from a secular income. He did not answer to the established church. The message he taught came from God, and so the Jerusalem clergy could add nothing to his message (Gal. 2:6). Klausner believes that Paul even feels some hostility—we might call it "anticlericalism"—toward the Jerusalem church authorities. He sees veiled irony in Paul’s reference to "the very chiefe Apostles"—meaning James, Peter, and their associates.\(^57\) Paul attains his office, not through priestly channels: "But it was the Risen Christ who had made Paul an 'apostle' by a unique privilege equivalent to the mission of the other apostles. He regarded the Church in Jerusalem as the first economy of salvation, and those who labored there as the first persons to be inheritors of the messianic promises. Independently, in view of his own vision, he

\(^{56}\)Meeks, p. 180. \(^{57}\)Klausner, p. 366.
regarded himself as having been appointed immediately by Christ (Gal. 1:1, cf. Rom. 1:1), as they had been, to proclaim what he had seen.⁵⁸

This ecclesiastical and priestly independence was also characteristic of the Old Testament prophets: "The Israelite priesthood was hereditary and hierarchal whereas prophecy was charismatic; prophets like Ezekiel and Jeremiah might also be priests, but there is no indication that such a man as Amos was a priest---indeed many indications are against it."⁵⁹ Although priest and prophet were not in principle opposed, in actual fact they often were.⁶₀ Paul, like Amos, functions independently, even calling Peter to account. According to Sandmel, Paul says in effect "I am 'The Apostle."⁶¹

I have stressed Paul's independence because it has a significant parallel in Milton. As a Pauline prophet, Milton feels independent of ecclesiastical tradition. Like the Old Testament prophets and Paul, he feels that "Many things are . . . better reveal'd to single persons" (III, 30). Perhaps the prophet motif best accounts for Milton's attraction to the theme of the "one just man alive." Milton seems to see himself in category of great single followers of God: Enoch, Noah, Job, Moses, Christ, and Paul—figures who seem to be

The only righteous in a world perverse
And therefore hated, therefore so beset
With Foes for daring single to be just,
And utter odious Truth. (Paradise Lost, II. 701-704)

If Milton sees himself as the sole voice of God, then he is only doing

⁵⁸Rigaux, pp. 61-62. ⁵⁹JBC, 12:5.
what countless prophets have done before him. If he takes greater security in the truth revealed to himself privately than in decisions of councils, then he is doing nothing more than St. Paul did. If he does not look to an Anglican priesthood for his religious faith, then he is practicing the inward religion of Pauline Christianity in which every Christian is his own priest. If such an independent approach earns for Milton the charge of "sectary," Milton cannot be too much disturbed, for men of truest religion, including Paul, have always been known as such (V, 73).

Milton, like Paul, is an outsider, a layman, who has the right to speak on religious matters. He seems to have been sensitive to his unordained position in ecclesiastical controversy. Having been "church-outed" by the Prelates, he asserts his right to speak anyway, for in his mind ordination signifies precious little. In De Doctrina he asserts every Christian's right to function as a minister. There are "ordinary ministers": "Any believer is competent to act as an ordinary minister, according as convenience may require, supposing him to be endowed with the necessary gifts" (XVI, 241). He gives Jesus and Paul as examples in that as laymen, being neither priests nor Levites, they were permitted to speak in the Jewish assembly. All faithful Christians, including Milton, are "ordinary ministers" for God. But there is also a second class of ministers, which includes special servants of God (including prophets, apostles, and evangelists): "Extraordinary ministers are persons inspired and sent on a special mission by God, for the purpose of planting the church where it did not exist [cf. Paul], or of reforming
its corruptions \([\text{cf. Milton}]\), either through the medium of preaching or writing\(^a\) (XVI, 239). One can function in either capacity of minister without being a clergyman in the usual sense of the term. In fact, in his treatise on English clericalism, \textit{The Likeliest Means to Remove Hirelings Out of the Church}, he objects to the professional clergy as it then existed. St. Paul gave Milton a powerful argument against the professional clergy because the Apostle supported himself through his own labor, rather than through rigidly imposed tithes. Milton sees Paul's occupation as a tradesman an example worthy of imitation:

This is the breeding of S. Paul, though born of no mean parents, a free citizen of the Roman empire: so little did his trade debase him, that it rather enabled him to use that magnanimity of preaching the gospel through Asia and Europe at his own charges. (VI, 80)

Milton disdains the clergy-laity distinction:

\[\text{Heretofore in the first evangelic times (and it were happy for Christendom if it were so again) ministers of the gospel were by nothing els distinguished from other Christians, but by thir spiritual knowledge and sanctity of life, for which the church elected them to be her teachers and overseers, though not thereby to separate them from whatever calling she then found them following besides, as the example of S. Paul declares, and the first times of Christianitie. (VI, 98)}\]

This view of the ministry is typical of such anticlerical prophets as Amos, Jesus, and Paul. It was sufficient warrant for Milton the layman to speak out on religious matters and to call the clerics to account. Consequently, at the opening to \textit{The Judgment of Martin Bucer}, Milton quotes John 3:10: "Art thou a teacher of Israel, and knowest not these things?" Milton fashions himself as the prophet who must instruct the professional clergyman.
Milton, therefore, like Paul before him sees himself as the outsider and the layman. He is a speaker for God, but his office is charismatic, not ecclesiastical. He recognizes himself as a minority figure. He is "a pioneer of truth and rejoices in his isolation."62 God reveals his truth best to single persons; and true spokesmen for God have always been charged with heresy. He is independent of ecclesiasticism, for as a prophet he has come to judge the institution. Therefore, he cannot derive his authority from it. He is a prophet "not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father which hath raised him from the dead" (Gal. 1:1). His loyalty to Christ is greater than his loyalty to organic union.63 If his ministry means exile, then it is not surprising, for since Adam human existence has been profoundly exilic.64 Besides, as a prophet he has no choice but to speak what he has heard. And if this means isolation and loneliness, then he can rejoice that he, like the former prophets, can expect his fame in heaven, where true fame is.

5. Champions of God

The Pauline prophet is a struggler for God. It seems very likely that the title to his drama Samson Agonistes owes something to the popular Pauline concept of struggle summed up in the verb ἀγωνίζομαι.


"Know ye not, that they which runne in a race, runne all, yet one receiveth the price? so runne that ye may obtaine. And every man that proveth masteries (ἀγωνίζομαι, "strives" or "agonizes"), abstaineth from all things: and they doe it to obteine a corruptible crowne: but wee for an uncorruptible" (I Cor. 9:24-25). "Whereunto I also labour and strive, according to his working which worketh in mee mightily" (Col. 1:29). "Also brethren, I beseech you for our Lord Jesus Christes sake, and for the love of the spirit, that ye would strive with me (συναγωνίζομαι) by prayers to God for me" (Rom. 15:30). "Only let your conversation bee, as it becommeth the Gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you, or else bee absent, I may heare of your matters that yee continue in one Spirit, and in one minde, fighting together (συναθλοῦντες) through the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1:27). The Christian life is a struggle.

It is Christian warfare. Some of the most familiar metaphors in the Pauline epistles are those relating to warfare. The "agonizing" cited above depicts the energetic striving of the soldier. Ephesians 6:11-20 is a rather elaborate description of the Christian soldier. The Christian is involved in a cosmic war. He does not battle with mere flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers. In fact, all of the hostile forces in the universe are directed against him. In this cosmic conflict ordinary weapons are ineffective; only spiritual ones will enable one to be victorious. Each Christian is commissioned to take up "the whole armour of God, that yee may be able to resist the evil day" (v. 13). The enemy forces are not merely metaphorical or
theoretical for Paul. As a prophet, he engages the enemy daily. Each
day brings a new skirmish, and each enemy is God's foe: "Nevertheless,
though we walk in the flesh, yet we do not warre after the flesh.
(For the weapons of our warrefare are not carnall, but mightie through
God to cast down holdes.) Casting down the imaginations, and every high
thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into
captivitie every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:3-5).
Timothy is instructed to "fight a good fight" (I Tim. 1:18); "Fight the
good fight of faith: lay hold of eternall life" (I Tim. 6:12). And he
sees the end of his own life as the conclusion to his part in the cosmic
battle: "I have fought a good fight (τὸν ἄγωνα), and have finished my
course; I have kept the faith" (II Tim. 4:7).

John Milton also has a martial zeal for the True Cause. Students
of Milton are sure to misunderstand if they are insensitive to the well-
established tradition going back to Paul which calls for a polemical
defense of the Gospel. Merritt Y. Hughes' point that Milton is misjudged
if his prophetic element is not observed is especially true in reference
to his polemical quality. Douglas Bush is surely correct in attribut-
ing the attitude of warfare in Milton's religious writings at least
partially to Paul. Milton's polemical style was not so much the result
of an acrimonious nature as it was the incorporation of the manner of
the Pauline prophet. The prophet of God is involved in a cosmic war,

65 Hughes, p. 248.

not a college debate. The stakes of the battle are of eternal significance, and Milton enters the field of battle only because as a true soldier of God he cannot do otherwise.

Milton frequently echoes the martial language of St. Paul. For example, in The Reason of Church Government his eloquence richly embellishes the passage from II Corinthians 10:3-5 (quoted above, p. 38) in which he contrasts the fleshly ostentation of prelacy with the hidden power of Christ:

If we let the Angell of the Gospell ride on his own way, he does his proper businesse, conquering the high thoughts, and the proud reasonings of the flesh, and brings them under to give obedience to Christ with the salvation of many souls. But if ye turn him out of his rode, and in a manner force him to expresse his irresistible power by a doctrine of carnall might, as Prelaty is, he will use that fleshly strength, which ye put into his hands to subdue your spirits by a servile and blind superstition, and that againe shall hold such dominion over your captive minds, as returning with an insatiat greediness and force upon your worldly wealth and power, wherewith to deck and magnifie her self, and her false worships, she shall spoil and havoc your estates, disturbe your ease, diminish your honor, enthrail your liberty under the swelling mood of a proud Clergy. . . . (III, 269)

This lengthy sentence is paradigmatic of Milton's use of Pauline thought and expression. Milton's sentence follows Paul's. It contains concepts of conquering, carnal versus spiritual might, subduing, and captivity. But it is also quite evident that Milton has considerably embellished Paul’s thought, and has applied the biblical thought to a new and different context. While Paul only speaks of "casting down" and "bringing into captivity," Milton speaks of "conquering," "bringing them under to give obedience," "subduing," "holding dominion," "spoil and havoc," "disturb," "diminish," and "enthrall." He has considerably amplified the Pauline text for his own polemical purposes.
Elsewhere, Milton's language is characterized by the Pauline concept of struggle. In *Defensio Secunda*, he feels victorious "in the noblest far of all contests" (VIII, 193). In *Eikonoklastes* he admonishes Charles I: "Let him cast from him, as in a Christian warrfare, that secular encumbrance which either distracts, or overloads him" (V, 263). He charges the Remonstrant in *Animadversions*, "You are not arm'd ... you are not dieted, nor your loynes girt, for spirituall valour, and Christian warfare, the luggage is too great that follows your Camp; your hearts are there, you march heavily. How shall we think you have not carnall fear, while we see you so subject to carnall desires?" (III, 110). At the conclusion to *An Apology for Smectymnuus* Milton contrasts the prelates' carnal vestments with the Pauline habit: "ye shall soon discerne that Turbant of pride which they weare upon their heads to be no helmet of salvation, but the meere metal and horn-work of Papall jurisdiction" (III, 366).

While Milton frequently resorts to the Pauline metaphor of battle, he is also sure to note that Pauline warfare is spiritual, not carnal. This point is especially important in *A Treatise of Civil Power* in which he argues for religious freedom from ecclesiastical and civil restrictions. After quoting II Corinthians 10:3-6, where Paul claims that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal," Milton says: "It is evident by the first and second verses of this chapter, that the apostle here speaks of that spiritual power by which Christ governs his church, how allsufficient it is ..." (VI, 22).
Of all the passages on the Christian as a Pauline agonist, the most famous comes from Areopagitica:

He that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasures, and yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true warfaring Christian. I cannot praise a fugitive and cloister'd virtue unexercis'd & unbreath'd, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortall garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat. (IV, 311)

Milton is stating a theory, based upon the Pauline thesis that the Christian life is a cosmic struggle. In order for the forces of good to advance, they must ceaselessly engage their opposite. Thus, Paul spends his life engaging the enemy in his own territory. He encounters the evil, but is not contaminated by it. His divorce from evil is not external, but internal. A Christian faith that does not require struggle is neither Pauline nor Miltonic.

Not only is Pauline life characterized by warfare—it is also seen as a great athletic contest, specifically a footrace such as was practiced in ancient Greece. The Christian is an athlete who contends in the Isthmian games, who practices rigid self-discipline in order to receive the crown (I Cor. 9:24-27). A similar theme is developed elsewhere. In Galatians 2:2 Paul recalls the time that he told the

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67I follow the Yale Edition which reads "warfaring" rather than "wayfaring." See Complete Prose Works of John Milton, ed. Ernest Sirluck (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), II, 515, n. 102. If Pauline thought is back of the passage, as I maintain, then it is further evidence that the correct word is "warfaring."

68On the concept of inward divorce from the world, see above p. 109.

69JBC, 51:61.
reputed Jerusalem leaders of his missionary work "lest by any means I
should runne, or had runne in vaine" (cf. Phil. 2:16). He interrogates
the wayward Galatians: "Ye did runne well: who did let you, that ye
did not obey the trueth?" (Gal. 5:7). He sees the Christian as the
great athlete, the public contender for God: "And if any man also strive
for a Masterie (άθλος, i.e. "contend in the games"), hee is not crowned,
except as hee strive as hee ought to doe" (II Tim. 2:5; cf. Phil. 1:27).

Milton is also moved by the Pauline imagery of the Christian
race. He is engaged "in the noblest far of all contests" (VIII, 193).
He says that Christ had "a far other race to run" (VII, 149). In An
Apology for Smectymnuus he charges his opponent, after "having once
begun his race," with flying out "beyond all truth and shame" (III, 306).
Thus, he is guilty of the same scandal as the Galatians—the shame of
not completing the race. The passage from Areopagitica which we cited
above for its military imagery, however, gives us Milton's most artistic
use of the Pauline theme of the race. It is perhaps the most telling
influence of Paul because Milton combines together into one picture the
images of the agonist as athlete and soldier—just as Paul does in
II Timothy 4:7 ("I have fought a good fight, and have finished my course").
So also Milton envisions the true warfaring Christian as one who does
not slink out of the race which crowns him with the immortal garland.
The Pauline agonist is both a soldier and an athlete.

Of course Milton is not unique in his use of Pauline imagery.
No doubt many writers on sacred and secular topics could be cited in the
same tradition. Nor can we prove that Milton was exclusively impressed
with Paul's use of athletic and martial imagery. But his very close parallelizing of his metaphorical language with Paul's, and his unmistakable allusions to specific Pauline passages, convince us that he was impressed by Paul's metaphors of struggle.

6. Ascetics for God

The Pauline prophet is ascetic—but only according to a very specific sense of the word. The word "ascetic" is derived from the Greek word used in athletics to refer to one in training. The ascetic in one sense, then, is the "athlete" of virtue, the spiritual athlete. He is one who believes in temperance and discipline of the body for some ultimate purpose, just as the soldier and the athlete suffer in training, not as an exercise of self-abnegation, but as a means to win the battle or the laurel. This conception of self-denial, "disciplinary asceticism," is fundamental Paulinism. He sees the Christian life as a kind of training. Prayer, fasting, continence, all of these things may be practiced as training for the moral life. Paul strives, "beats down" his body "and brings it into subjection" (I Cor. 9:27), not because he is motivated to self-torture like the medieval flagellant. Rather, he knows that if he is to fulfill his prophetic call, then he must live a disciplined, even an austere, life.71


71 William Barclay comments on the passage from I Corinthians 9: "if that passage be read in its context, its meaning is that throughout the long, weary and hard years he had taught and disciplined himself to do without the luxuries and refinements, the indulgences and softnesses, which he might well have had and enjoyed." The Mind of St. Paul
Paul, though, was not ascetic if by the term one means "dualistic asceticism" which distrusts the body altogether and which sees the function of asceticism, not as training, but as the destruction of the body or the negation of its importance. He never sees his self-denial as designed to denigrate the flesh so that the soul may be free (cf. Plato's *Timaeus*). Such a concept would utterly contradict Paul's anthropology (man is *soma*; therefore, the body is not to be ignored).\(^\text{72}\) Paul does not practice asceticism as a means of "world-flight." Rather, he practices self-denial only so that the evangel may go through all the world and thereby enable its inhabitants to be saved. But he does not dualistically eschew the material things of life. On the contrary, he knows how to abound (that is, enjoy the rich blessings of this life) as well as suffer want (Phil. 4:11-12). The true Oriental ascetic would not agree with Paul's doctrine that the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof.

The church in Paul's day was being confronted with Oriental asceticism. The Colossian heretics were making severe treatment of the body a requirement of faith (Col. 2:23), and Paul strongly reprimands them. After Paul's era, the church was flooded with the spirit of

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dualistic asceticism. Marcion and Tatian demanded sexual asceticism, and they tried to base their teachings on St. Paul, although, as Wayne Meeks has pointed out, they could not do so without some juggling of the texts. Although heretical extremes were officially anathematized, the orthodox church succumbed to the zeitgeist. Thus, C. S. Lewis affirms that world-denial characterized the pre-medieval and early medieval ages, both pagans and Christians. It was not, however, the exclusive concoction of Paul or the New Testament.

Milton, who sharply distinguished between biblical Christianity and the "crabbed opinions" of later interpreters, was ascetic in the Pauline sense, but not ascetic in the Oriental dualistic sense. He, too, sees life as a kind of martial and athletic discipline. He practices Pauline austerity not because he thinks harsh treatment of the flesh produces righteousness, but because self-denial brings Christian benefits, namely, strength to ordain wisely in this world of evil wherein God has placed us. Milton's argument in Areopagitica is closely related to the Pauline thesis that the soldier and the athlete of God must engage the enemy and strive on the course. How else can one attain victory, except he engage opposition? And how will one be strong if he has not trained rigidly, austerely, ascetically? 

73Meeks, p. 193.

74The Discarded Image (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970). Lewis rejects the popular view that in the "seminal period" of medievalism (3rd-5th centuries) the pagans of the day were "carefree sensualists" and all Christians were "savage ascetics" (p. 46). World-denial and an ascetic spirit were present among pagans and Christians alike: "It was the spirit of the age" (p. 47).
several points has a strongly Pauline cast to it. In fact, as has been pointed out, the very title may be an allusion to Paul's speech to the Greeks on Areopagus. Paul symbolized the ideal of Christian deportment for Milton. The Apostle was the athlete of God who was not afraid to contact the world for fear of contamination: "Not to insist upon the examples of Moses, Daniel, & Paul, who were skilfull in all the learning of the AEgyptians, Chaldeans, and Greeks, which could not probably be without reading their books of all sorts, in Paul especially, who thought it no defilement to insert into holy Scripture the sentences of three Greek Poets, and one of them a Tragedian" (IV, 306).

The Pauline prophet must try things to see whether they are good, recognizing the potential danger. Milton sees support for his free press in this Pauline principle: "Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good." The Berean disciples are told to search and to examine for themselves (Acts 17:11), and Milton applies the Pauline exhortation to his own age (VI, 6). By engaging the false, the true is strengthened. Thus, Paul almost seems to invite opposition (I Cor. 16:9). Milton continues to quote the Apostle: "'To the pure, all things are pure;' not only meats and drinks, but all kind of knowledge, whether of good or evil: the knowledge cannot defile, nor consequently the books, if the will and conscience be not defil'd" (IV, 308). Milton is following the Pauline tactic of engaging the enemy while maintaining the sanctification of the inner man (cf. I Cor. 5:9-13). The Pauline ascetic

does not practice complete abstention, but temperance, self-restraint, continence (ἐγκρατεύεται, I Cor. 9:25). Thus, in Areopagitica man's diet (whether food or knowledge) is increased to include all things, with the only qualification being "the rules of temperance" (IV, 309). Pleasures rightly tempered "are the very ingredients of virtu" (IV, 319). The true Pauline ascetic spends his life in a world struggling for truth where good and evil are inextricably entwined. He must exercise and know the dust and heat of battle. The Pauline prophet can have no doubt about the ultimate triumph of truth: "Let her [truth] and Falshood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter" (IV, 347). Milton's asceticism is like the Christian Apostle's. It is the self-denial that results from a commitment to an all-consuming higher purpose. He does not get entangled in mundane affairs: "No man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affaires of this life, because hee would please him that hath chosen him to bee a soldier" (II Tim. 2:4). Thus, Milton on several occasions alludes to his "severe industry" and his self-examination as he performs his calling (IV, 11). He accomplishes his task with tireless energy: "my genius is such that no delay, no rest, no care or thought almost of anything, holds me aside until I reach the end I am making for" (XII, 19).

Milton's rejection of the pageantry of the Anglican faith is at least partially the result of his understanding of Pauline asceticism. The Christian is called to be a servant. "Christ our Lord took upon him the form of a servant." How then can the prelate "take upon him the form of a Lord?" (III, 244). Milton reminds his readers that "we
may be well assured, that he who disdain not to be laid in a manger, disdains not to be preachd in a barn" (VI, 79).

7. Milton as Suffering Servant

The Pauline prophet is very much a "martyr" for God in the older Greek sense of the word meaning a suffering "witness" for God. Great suffering characterized the lives of St. Paul and John Milton. That, in itself, is scarcely significant. But what is considerably significant is the religious and Pauline interpretation that Milton gives the suffering he endures.

Paul was a man who knew intense suffering. It is not a peripheral issue, but central to his experience in Christ. Suffering is a Christian mystery that attains great meaning in view of Christ's own experience as the Suffering Servant (ebed Yahweh). Schmithals writes: "It belongs to the nature of the apostolate that the apostle must suffer. Suffering is naturally decreed for the whole congregation of Christ."76 "The Christian who takes upon himself his sufferings experiences therein the certainty of communion with Christ. To this extent suffering is necessary for salvation. This is the basic idea in the Pauline theology of suffering."77 But the apostle or prophet of God endures a special measure of suffering which comes through his unusual service to God; these are the professional or "vocational sufferings."78 We have mentioned earlier the notion of Christ as the archetypal Suffering Servant,

76Schmithals, p. 47. 77Ibid.
78Ibid., p. 48.
the Paschal Lamb, who profoundly suffers. By virtue of his solidarity in Christ, and his dying and rising with the Suffering Servant, the Christian participates in Christ's sufferings. What the Christian suffers is not isolated and haphazard infliction of pain, but the normal trials that result from being in Christ, the archetypal sufferer (cf. Col. 1:24): "Apparently from the outset, with the intuition of a religious genius, like the second Isaiah, [Paul] grasped the remedial, salutary, and vicarious effect of suffering."79

Pain and weakness characterize the Christian message and the community of believers. Christ's sacrificial death at the hands of a screaming mob and a godless government is the "scandal" by which God's perfection and power are revealed. It is a divine principle which Paul saw operating in the life of Christ, in the church, and above all in his own experience: God demonstrates his might through the weak things of this world. Hence, Paul speaks a message that is "foolishness" according to the wisdom of the Greeks. Paul's speech is weak and unimpressive beside the rich eloquence of Hellenistic rhetoric (I Cor. 2:1-4; II Cor. 11:6). His appearance was not at all impressive (II Cor. 10:10, 11). And he might even have been despised for his bodily ailment (Gal. 4:14). The Christian Apostle was not afraid to suffer for his faith; "he never retreated, he was even willing to suffer martyrdom for his opinions."80 In fact, he could say "I die daily" (I Cor. 15:31).


80Klausner, p. 424.
He could rejoice in his weakness: "I am strong just when I am weak."

About this passage C. H. Dodd writes, "That is not mere 'paradox.'

It has profound psychological truth. So long as he chafed against unavoidable disabilities and reverses which wounded his prestige, he was losing the spiritual liberty and power which came from the abandonment of personal claims. But, when he accepted his limitations [cf. Milton's goal of being "lowly wise"], he was liberated afresh."81 The discourse of the cross was not morbid recollection but a meditation upon "the remedial, salutary, and vicarious" effect of suffering. The thorn in the flesh was not an isolated aberration in the nature of things, any more than was Christ's crucifixion; rather, it proclaimed the nature of earthly existence.

Others have noted the motif of suffering in John Milton's works.82 Sewell cites two passages, possibly late additions to De Doctrina: "God however assigns a limit to chastisement, lest we should be overwhelmed, and supplies strength for our support" (XV, 389). "Hence arises consolation to the afflicted, 2 Cor i.4. 'who comforteth us in all our tribulation. . . .'" (XV, 391). Sewell then writes: "These surely were passages from Scripture with which Milton consoled himself in his own time of tribulation."83


Milton's hardships were great, and like Paul he took a providential view of them. His constitution was never extremely healthy (VIII, 11). Bad health was his "perpetual enemy" (XII, 53). We need not rehearse the well-known trials of his unhappy marriage. Sometimes Milton was as despondent as Paul was (cf. II Cor. 1). In Pro Se Defensio he recalls his misfortune when writing Defensio Secunda: "My health was infirm, I was mourning the recent loss of two relatives, the light had utterly vanished from my eyes" (IX, 13-15). He experienced real danger when Charles II was restored to the throne, including imprisonment. It seems inconceivable that during those days of imprisonment for the Cause that Milton could have overlooked the similarity between his experience and that of Paul, the prisoner for Jesus Christ.

It is quite natural that Milton would see the Pauline pattern in his own experience. We have already noted in the poem "On the Late Forcers of Conscience" that Milton as a heretic felt an attraction to Paul. In the Fourth Elegy Milton sees the pattern of exile in three great figures—Elijah, Christ, and Paul (I, 193). Milton's identification with these symbols of exile is apparent. He does find spiritual meaning in his experience. As Whiting explains, after suffering comes salvation. He entered the prophetic calling "at mine own peril and cost" (III, 241). His blindness is his "thorn in the flesh" which is the price of being used in liberty's defense.


The experience of defamation particularly caused Milton to turn to Paul for comfort since Paul had a similar experience. Like the Apostle, he resorts to the theme of strength through weakness. When Alexander More upbraids him for his blindness as a judgment of God, Milton replies in Pauline terms. He does not mind being classed with the blind, the afflicted, the sorrowful, the weak: "There is a way, and the Apostle is my authority, through weakness to the greatest strength" (VIII, 73). He can endure his misfortune "provided only in my darkness the light of the divine countenance does but the more brightly shine: for then I shall at once be the weakest and the most mighty; shall be at once blind, and of the most piercing sight. Thus through this infirmity should I be consummated, perfected; thus, through this darkness should I be enrob'd in light" (VIII, 73). Milton believes that God paradoxically triumphs through the frail things of this world. He sees his misfortune as ultimately leading to something beneficial (cf. Rom. 8:28): "Why, in truth, should I not bear gently the deprivation of sight, when I may hope that it is not so much lost as revoked and retracted inwards, for the sharpening rather than the blunting of my mental edge?" (XII, 87). Like Paul, Milton sees the closeness of God in his suffering. His darkness came by "the overshadowing of the heavenly wings" (VIII, 73). He acknowledges God's "mercy, and his paternal goodness towards me; that above all, in regard to this calamity, I acquiesce in his divine will, for it is he himself who comforts and upholds my spirit—being ever more mindful of what he shall bestow upon me than of what he shall deny me" (VIII, 71). Earlier we stated that the Pauline prophet sees God's providence in his life. So it is with Milton.
Thus, he writes to Leonard Philaras of "God's leading and providence" even in the loss of his eyesight (XII, 71).

The theme of strength through weakness was not, however, exclusively applied to his own suffering. He saw it as a principle for the life of the church. The Christian kerygma is superior to man's learning, for "the mighty weakness of the Gospel" is able to "throw down the weak mightiness of mans reasoning" (III, 246). He uses the same theme in combating the ostentation of prelacy in *The Reason of Church Government*:

It had bin a small maisters for him, to have drawn out his Legions into array, and flankt them with his thunder; therefore he sent Foolishnes to confute Wisdom, Weaknes to bind Strength, Despisednes to vanquish Pride. And this is the great mistery of the Gospel made good in Christ himself, who as he testifies came not to be minister'd to, but to minister; and must be fulfil'd in all his ministers till his second comming. To goe against these principles S. Paul so fear'd, that if he should but affect the wisdom of words in his preacheing, he thought it would be laid to his charge, that he had made the crosse of Christ to be of none effect. Whether then Prelaty do not make of none effect the crosse of Christ by the principles it hath so contrary to these, nullifying the power and end of the Gospel, it shall not want due proof, if it want not due belief. (III, 243-244)

Again, in the third chapter of the second book of *Church Government*, Milton argues that prelacy violates the Pauline principle that the "power and excellence of the Gospel" is set forth by "things weak" (III, 249). The mighty things of the world are to be subdued by the weak things of the Gospel. Yet the prelates "band themselves with the prevalent things of this world to overrun the weak thing things which Christ hath made choise to work by" (III, 249).

Milton uses this Pauline principle to support the thesis that the kingdom of God is internal and spiritual. In *A Treatise of Civil*
Power he quotes I Corinthians 1:27 and then says: "Then surely he hath not chosen the force of this world to subdue conscience and conscientious men, who in this world are counted weakest; but rather conscience, as being weakest, to subdue and regulate force, his adversaries, not his aid or instrument in governing the church" (VI, 22).

Milton's understanding of the Pauline Gospel leads him to reject the pomp and pride of the established church. God has chosen the weak things, but the pride of men promotes the gospel of pride and ostentation. God has called us to be servants, not masters and rulers. Milton sees himself as a true follower of God, preaching the true message. Like Paul, he was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision (Acts 26:19). He struggled for God and encountered the consequent physical suffering, defamation, and exile. When the disintegration of the Cause seemed so apparent at the Restoration, he only placed more faith in the inner nature of the kingdom, and more trust in the ultimate triumph of the weak things of the world.

8. Prophetic Temperament

It was pointed out in the first chapter that Milton and Paul were comparable in ways other than their theologies, for even their personalities have an affinity. As prophets they have a similarity of temperament. It is worth noting that both men have been misunderstood and intensely disliked. Knox points out a popular misreading of Paul which views him as a fanatic incapable of feeling or eliciting affection.86

Often readers see only his combative spirit as seen in Galatians and II Corinthians. Paul's considerable pride is also frequently charged against him. Klausner sees him "lacking in humility, exceedingly confident in himself" and "boastfully condescending."\(^87\) "Only a blind reader of Paul's epistles could miss the signs of egoism and pride that are back of this indignation \([\text{in the Corinthian correspondence}]\)."\(^88\)

In view of the well-established tradition of Paul's prideful character it is surprising that Milton's similarity to Paul in the matter has not been expounded. It is commonplace to speak of Milton's pride, his "egotistical sublime," his "honest haughtiness" (III, 304), etc. Not a few readers have been put off by his certainty that he spoke for God. T. S. Eliot says: "Either from the moralist's point of view, or from the theologian's point of view, or from the psychologist's point of view, or from the political philosopher's, or judging by the ordinary standards of likeableness in human beings, Milton is unsatisfactory."\(^89\)

Ezra Pound also enumerates Milton's intolerable qualities: "asinine bigotry, his beastly hebraism, and the coarseness of his mentality."\(^90\)

There can be no doubt that Milton and Paul were proud men. But their arrogance is of a certain type, and it is not unmixed with a quality of humility also. A great deal of their seeming pride can be

\(^87\)Klausner, p. 424. Cf. I Cor. 4:4; II Cor. 1:14; 11:21-30.

\(^88\)Knox, p. 99.


attributed to one all-important point: The Pauline prophet is one who fuses himself inextricably with the message he proclaims. In Paulinism and Miltonism it is impossible to sever the men from their proclamations. Milton and Paul, therefore, did not avenge attacks on their personalities only out of a sense of pride, rather, out of a devotion to God whom they saw as ultimately blasphemed.

Paul very definitely attaches himself to his message: "What we would like to emphasize," writes Rigaux, "is the profound union of the man with his message. . . . Paul's work cannot be separated from his person, and both are inscribed in an experience which began at Damascus and was to end only with his martyrdom."91 John Knox says that Paul was a personal symbol of the position he defended.92 When one reads his letters, one does not encounter an impersonal catechism but the personal faith, one might say the spiritual autobiography, of the man: "Paul's letters are unusually revealing, even for letters, and convey his personality in an extraordinarily vivid and direct way."93 The message of Christ is Paul's own message—it is his gospel. To understand Paulinism, one must face the figure who is everywhere present in it.

There is perhaps no point of similarity where Milton is more like Paul than in the personal element of his writing. He demands that we see the proximity of his personality to his works. There are lengthy

91Rigaux, p. 66.
92Knox, p. 99
93Ibid., p. 31.
autobiographical sections in several of the tracts. In view of the personal element in his prose, it is not a violation of sound critical methods to deal with the autobiographical element. Indeed it would be unsound to ignore it. Milton's manner is subjective. He responds to the issues in a personal way. Professor Wagenknecht quotes Hanford's statement that Milton invites the world "to look at his work and life together," and then adds: "He does more than invite. He insists. The self-isolating methods of the 'New Criticism' are not for him or his work."95

Why is Milton so personal in his prose? Why does he involve himself personally in the Cause? I think one plausible reply is that he fuses himself with his message, just as Paul and other prophets before him have done. There seems to be a prophetic pattern which is evident in Milton's experience. It is interesting that critics, seemingly unaware of the Pauline manner, have come to a decision about Milton's character which corresponds to Paul's. Thus, Wagenknecht says: "Milton is self-possessed, his great theme being John Milton, and his great duty that of interpreter between him and the world."96 Douglas Bush observes that Milton identifies his defense of himself with the defense of his country.97 This is precisely the manner of Paul in II Corinthians, where an attack on Paul personally is tantamount to an attack on divine truth.

95 Wagenknecht, p. viii. 96 Ibid., p. ix.
97 Bush, Sketch, p. 113.
On several occasions Milton feels forced to defend himself personally for such is necessary to the success of God's Cause. Thus, he takes time to answer personal charges in *An Apology for Smectymnuus*, *Tetrachordon*, *The Judgment of Martin Bucer*, *Defensio Secunda*, and *Pro Se Defensio*. Such defenses are justified by Paul because he said that Christians are letters from God to be known and read by all men (II Cor. 3:1-2).

As careful readers of Paul and Milton know, these men were not purely egoists. Paradoxically, there is a humility about them. They always sense their calling as servants; they admit their lowliness in His presence. Henry Chadwick reminds us of the context of Paul's prideful statements. His seemingly acute anxiety over status may be attributed to the severe charges of his enemies (when he is absent to defend himself, we might add). One might also note Paul's great capacity for warmth and affection toward his converts (II Cor. 6:11; Philippians, passim). He is humbled by the grace of God in his life and recalls that he is the chief of sinners.

In Milton also one finds the paradoxical quality of humility intermingled with his pride. Saurat claims that "Milton always knew how to place above himself the Impersonal, the Cause." "Great as he felt himself to be he never forgot that he was first of all a great Servant. Hence a noble humility in his pride. He could sacrifice himself... personal interest and the gratification of his vanity had

98 Chadwick, pp. 17-18
Milton could not have given himself over so completely to the service of church and country had he not strongly felt a sense of stewardship. His attacks in response to personal charges were not the replies of a base-mannered or small mind. He offers them in an impersonal fashion: "I have no private malice or enmity against any man" (VIII, 85). Tillyard says that "somewhere in him there was a humility that coexisted with this overweeningness and which saved him, when disaster came." In a letter to Diodati in 1637 he wrote "Let us be lowly wise" (XII, 27). Milton was far more than a reckless iconoclast and eternal rebel. True enough, there is an antinomian strain about him. But at the same time he knew that he was a servant, and as a member of a hierarchal universe he could not forget his lawful position.

Other qualities of the Pauline prophet can be briefly noted. He is a man of intense feeling. It is common to note the intensity of Paul's feeling. Klausner observes a kind, even a sentimental, nature in Paul. Bultmann says that he was given to brooding, and that he had "a sensitive feeling for life." He knew despair. His disappointments crushed his spirit at times (I Cor. 2:3; 4:11; I Thess. 3:3-7; II Cor. 1:8-10). According to Sandmel, Paul's emotional depth made him more like a lyric poet, and less like a systematic philosopher.

100 Ibid., p. xvi.
101 Quoted in Wagenknecht, p. 83.
102 Klausner, p. 427.
104 Sandmel, p. 104.
I do not want to suggest that Milton's personality is a duplicate of Paul's. Nor do I wish to wander into psychoanalysis. However, there seem to be some readily apparent qualities of the prophetic temperament which may be found in Paul and Milton (though by no means in them exclusively). It seems to me more than coincidence that two Pauline scholars, Samuel Sandmel and A. S. Peake, have observed a poetic quality in Paul, and that Milton scholars conversely note a prophetic element in Milton. They were men of energy and feeling. They were prophet-bards. And they served their Taskmaster with their intellects, their emotions, and their personalities.

9. The Rhetoric of Prophecy

A full comparison of the prose styles of Paul and Milton would be a lengthy and a complex task. Of course the differences between them (language, literary tradition, rhetorical systems, genre, and occasion) are considerable. Paul was not a rhetorician in the classical sense, and he did not have the training of an educated Greek, Roman, or Renaissance Englishman. Form critics recognize that Paul's letters are occasional profane letters. Even his enemies conceded that his letters were forceful (II Cor. 10:10). However, Paul spoke by the power of God, not by the power of fancy rhetoric. "And I was among you in weaknesse, and in feare, and in much trembling. Neither stood my word, and my

Sandmel says that there is no evidence of formal education or academic knowledge (p. 7). Bacon says that he was not schooled in Greek Learning, Contemporary Thinking About Paul, ed. Thomas S. Kepler (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950), p. 109. This is not to say, however, that Paul was illiterate, for his letters demonstrate skill and rhetorical adeptness.
preaching in entising speech of man's wisedome, but in the plaine evi-
dence of the Spirit and of power" (I Cor. 2:3-4). Here is the same
Pauline theme cropping up again—the theme of God's power made evident
in weakness—this time operating in Paul's view of his oratorical style.
Milton applies the same principle to himself, ironically, in view of his
sophisticated rhetoric, and attacks the eloquence and "sophistry" of
his enemies (IV, 70). In this respect he was quite Pauline, for though
Paul says he was rude in speech (II Cor. 11:5), in actual fact his
letters betray an understanding of many rhetorical techniques of his
day—the diatribe, pærenesis, parallelism, chiasmus, paradox, metaphor,
metonymy, meiosis—to name a few.106

The history of rhetoric, and particularly the reverberating in-
fluence of biblical rhetoric, is much too complex for me to trace from
Paul to Milton. We can be sure, however, as James H. Sims points out
in The Bible in Milton's Epics,107 that the Bible (particularly in
English translation) had a profound influence upon Milton's style. But
in one general way we can identify what seems to be a certain Pauline
influence upon Milton. The Pauline prophet writes polemic. He does not
write his ideas in the cool objectivity of academia. Rather, he hammers
out his ideas in the heat of battle. There is a militancy in the prose
of the Pauline prophet. "Zealous imprecation" (VI, 18) is entirely in
character for the soldier of God.

106 For a summary of Paul's rhetoric, see Rigaux, pp. 127-137.
Both Paul and Milton wrote into contexts that were highly controversial. The prophet seems to appear in times of great turmoil and cultural dislocation, when debate and reform are in the air. In both eras the religious establishment was marked by dissension. Paul, as we have noted, was an outsider to the Jerusalem church. He was a heretic to rigid Jewish-Christians. But also the Gentile community saw in Paul a troublesome iconoclast (cf. Acts 19). And the orthodox Jewish community saw in Paul a dangerous turncoat. So, it is rather understandable that Paul's opponents condition his literary manner. He is argumentative because the situation demands it. A. S. Peake says that he is a "master of the argumentative style."\(^{108}\) He demands that one take sides. "Once one encounters him, one is never neutral about him."\(^{109}\) According to Knox, Paul was at the center of a major controversy in the church.\(^{110}\) The interpreter who fails to take account of the polemical framework of Paul's letters is sure to misjudge him. A book like Galatians, for example, is written in an atmosphere of hot controversy. It is unfair to judge Paul too harshly without taking into consideration the extraordinary situation.

Inasmuch as Milton's own day was marked by ecclesiastical debate, his era was much like Paul's. The direction of the English church was exceedingly uncertain. There were those who wished to return the church to the Catholic fold. Others wanted it to remain essentially Catholic in spirit, though independent of Rome. The Independent extremists

\(^{108}\text{Peake, p. 285.}\)

\(^{109}\text{Sandmel, p. 35.}\)

\(^{110}\text{Knox, p. 93.}\)
clamored for radical reformation, while the Presbyterian moderates sought to chart a middle course between Papist and Independent. Into this storm, Milton tried to speak. It is perhaps difficult for those indifferent to and totally detached from the issues to comprehend the enormous feeling generated by the issues. It was impossible to speak dispassionately. In fact, for the Pauline prophet, it was not desirable to do so. The prophet saw a major battle in the great cosmic struggle. He must take sides and use the weapons of rhetoric in the cause of truth.

Milton could find much justification in St. Paul for his own "tart rhetoric." Paul defends his sharp style according to the good he expects it to accomplish ultimately (II Cor. 13:10). He resorts to invective on more than one occasion, calling his Corinthian saboteurs "false apostles," "deceitfull workers," and even implies that they are messengers of Satan masquerading as angels of light (II Cor. 11:13, 14). In Philippians, a letter generally characterized by generosity and warm-heartedness, Paul suddenly turns to his Judaizing opponents: "Beware of dogges: beware of evill workers: beware of the concision" (3:2). The full force of this invective may not be apparent. If the enemies alluded to are Jewish Christians, then he has dealt them a supreme insult by calling them "dogs," the traditional epithet Jews applied to pagans. And he greatly dishonors the rite of circumcision (περιτομή) by turning it into "mutilation" (κατατομήν) which smacks of the self-inflicted mutilations of the prophets of Baal (I Kings 18:28) or of Cybele's devotees. The same kind of invective appears in Galatians.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{111}JBC, 50:23.}\]
He pronounces anathema on those who teach a gospel different from his own (1:8, 9). He entreats the Galatians in a tone of exasperation: "O Foolish Galatians who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth . . . ?" (Gal. 3:1). Then, in the fifth chapter (verse 12) appears Paul's harshest language, which Milton calls "zealous imprecation": "Would to God they were even cut off (ἀποκόψωνται) which doe disquiet you." Paul is likely referring to the ritual emasculation as practiced by the priests of Cybele.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, 49:29.}

Milton's tart rhetorical manner surely did not come into use exclusively because Paul or other biblical writers used it. But in an age when one's "doctrine" and "discipline" were supposed to be founded on the word of God, the practice of the canonical writers could not be overvalued—and Paul was by far the most polemical writer in the New Testament. When Milton's own argumentative style was attacked by his opponents he easily turned to the Bible for support. He correctly found polemic to be a quality of the prophet. Even Christ was stirred up by "the tempting Pharises" and "answer'd them in a certain forme of indignation usual among good authors; wherby the question, or the truth is not directly answer'd, but somthing which is fitter for them, who aske, to heare" (IV, 168). In short, God's prophets do not give straight answers to tricksters, Pharisees, and sophists. God sends them delusion for their perversity (II Thess. 2:11).

Milton reminds his readers of the controversial milieu of his writings, and hopes one day to have a readership "in still time, when
there shall be no chiding; not in these noises, the adversary ye know, barking at the door' (III, 305). But for the present, in view of the "present necessitie," Milton feels compelled to resort to strong language. In *An Apology for Smectymnuus*, Milton spends considerable effort supporting his right to employ polemic by turning to biblical examples. After citing the examples of John the Baptist, Christ, St. John, and Ezekiel, he says: "Thus did the true prophets of old combat with the false" (III, 314). Although Paul is not listed here, it is logical to assume that the example of the soldier of Christ, through his zealous imprecation, also gave him support.

Like Paul, Milton heaps invective on his enemies. In *Of Reformation* Milton condemns "the painted Battlements and gaudy rottenness of Prelatie" (III, 47), and "the common sponges" at "ecclesiastical court" who are "hungry ravenous Harpies" (III, 55). In *The Reason of Church Government* his opponents are "greasy sophisters," a "College of Mountebanks" (III, 247). The invective increases in *Colasterion* where his opponents are variously called: "this puny clerk" (IV, 236), "huckster at law" (IV, 240), "conspicuous gull" (IV, 248), "dolt," "pork," "boar," "barrow," etc. One of Milton's most interesting polemical remarks comes in *Defensio Prima* in which he replies to Salmasius' satirical remark that Englishmen are often enthusiasts, inspired, and prophets: "let me, I say, be so far a prophet as to tell you that the vengeance of God and man hangs over your head for so horrid a crime [asserting the king's security over the people's]" (VII, 363). While the tone is satirical and mocking, there is underneath a suggestion that he is indeed a prophet.
Paul on several occasions resorts to irony and sarcasm to make his point, and so does Milton. Thus, after he refers to Ambrose's tyrannical treatment of Theodosius, he calls the days of such patristic writers "thrice pure times," and such action "another piece of pure Primitive Dignity" (III, 71). The harsh satiric manner only increases in the later works. In Defensio Secunda he heaps abuse on Salmasius. In both Milton and Paul one finds "grim laughter" in "austere visage" (III, 107). But they are never really humorous, except grimly so.

Paul and Milton have other stylistic similarities, however, in addition to their disputatious manner. For example, they are similar in their disdain for literary ostentation, even though they employ a sophisticated style themselves. Milton theoretically at least rejects vain wisdom and false philosophy. He repeatedly attacks his enemies' sophistry. But neither Paul nor Milton gives us much help in distinguishing true learning from false. Milton simplistically says that true eloquence is the love of truth (III, 362). Paul also rejected the false eloquence of his day (I Cor. 2:4), but he commanded the Greek language with power. It seems that in both men, false eloquence is that used by their opponents and true eloquence is that used by themselves.

The polemical nature of Paul's and Milton's writings have also caused them to be inconsistent in their statements. Critics who have not been sensitive to the polemical framework have charged them with being intellectually dishonest and unfair to their opponents. In his own day Paul was accused of being a weathercock, a pleaser of men (Gal. 1:10), a vacillating trimmer guilty of uncandid subtlety and
Milton too is open to criticism. For example, he employs the Church Fathers in a very inconsistent manner, castigating them when they disagree with his thought, and supporting himself with them when they agree. But, as Arthur Barker observes, such illogicality is not necessarily insincerity. Milton was a prophet responding to tumultuous times. He himself admits that in debate one extreme is used to counterbalance another (IV, 174). The prophet is not to be measured by objective standards but by emotional impact. He does not construct a perfectly consistent metaphysical system. Rather, he uses the emotive power of words to call an unfaithful people back to God. This is what Sandmel means when he calls Paul a lyric poet. He sings of the rapturous love of God, as in I Corinthians 13, but also he thunders reproaches on the disobedient. So it is with Milton. His prose tracts are emotional and polemical, for this is the manner of the prophet-bard.

\footnote{113}{Chadwick, p. 14.} \footnote{114}{Barker, pp. xx.}
CHAPTER FIVE

"THE HEAVENLY PROCLAMATION OF LIBERTY":
THE MESSAGE OF THE PAULINE PROPHET

Critics have had a great deal to say about Milton's theory of liberty, for in almost every criticism of his ideas, some mention is made of Milton's quest for ecclesiastical, domestic, and civil liberty. In some fashion, each one of his prose tracts is a defense of liberty. It has also been noted that Milton's concept of liberty owes something to the great Apostle of freedom, St. Paul. A. S. P. Woodhouse says in his informative monograph, "Milton, Puritanism, and Liberty," that "The doctrine of Christian liberty, grounded largely on St. Paul, came into new prominence with the Reformation revival of Pauline theology." But even though Woodhouse acknowledges Milton's and others' debt to St. Paul, like other critics he does not explore the considerable Pauline basis of Milton's theory. Rather, he is interested in the Puritan seventeenth-century context of Milton's thought.

Again, it is useful to reiterate that Milton's similarity to St. Paul is not unique. I do not claim that his interest in Pauline freedom is totally isolated from the powerful currents of contemporary Puritan thought. On the contrary, his devotion to Pauline freedom

\textsuperscript{1}Luo, 4(1935), 483. 200
surely owes something to his own age. John S. Coolidge in *The Pauline Renaissance in England* says that the whole era in which Milton lived concerned itself with the meaning of Christian liberty. Even the extraordinarily important distinction between Law and Gospel, which had so much to do with the interpretation of Christian freedom, was such an established theme that one could not be sure its use was derived directly from St. Paul or merely from a well-worn tradition. So, I do not make the claim that Milton was unique in his efforts to apprehend Pauline liberty, or that he did so without respect to the centuries of discussion on the matter. I do, however, see him as one of the principal students of Pauline thought, who, through his own personal encounter with the Pauline Gospel, became thoroughly saturated with a Pauline understanding of freedom. His depth of learning and his radically independent spirit made him uniquely qualified to reinterpret Pauline thought in his own cultural terms.

Milton, as a Pauline prophet, sees the essential message as Christian freedom. He teaches liberation from the bondage of Law, release from the restrictions of custom, freedom for the tyranny of superstition and false religion. The theme of freedom is one of the most important—perhaps the most important—message of the Pauline prophet. But liberty, like so many abstractions, meant different things to


different people. As Milton knew so well, some people mean "license" when they cry "liberty." St. Paul was an important figure in determining the real meaning of liberty, for he had faced and to his own satisfaction had worked out the problem of ascertaining true liberty as opposed to false.

It is Paul's working out of the problem which had such great meaning for Milton. In fact, one might say that the Pauline concern for true liberty is perhaps the most significant and unifying theme of Milton's prose. From the beginning of his tracts to De Doctrina Milton attempts to ascertain Christian freedom. As we shall see, he at first accepted some un-Pauline theories of liberty, but as time passed he came to a more Pauline view. "Liberty" as it is finally used by Milton is a term which can only really be understood in the context of Paulinism.

1. The Evangel of Liberty

"The idea of Christianity as the religion of freedom," observes Pauline scholar E. F. Scott, "was, in the full extent, peculiar to Paul--so much so that the church has never risen to the height of it." Paul labored hard to make sure that his disciples would understand the nature of gospel freedom, and he berates the unstable believers who fall back under the yoke of legalistic bondage. Obedience to Christ is fundamentally liberating according to the Apostle. Life out of Christ is a life of slavery, stark servitude. When a Christian, however, "dies" to the world, he is set free from his bondage to sin, death, flesh, and the Mosaic code:

4Contemporary Thinking About Paul, p. 358.
For he that is dead, is freed from sinne. Wherefore, if we bee dead with Christ, we beleeeve that we shall live also with him. . . . Being then made free from sinne, yee are made the servants of righteousness. . . . But now being freed from sinne, and made servants of God, ye have your fruit in holiness, and 'the end, everlasting life. (Rom. 6:7,8,18,20,22)

Paul sees true Christian freedom as a paradox. "Freedom" outside the restraints of Christ's Spirit is true slavery; while "slavery" to Jesus Christ is liberating. This paradox continues in I Corinthians: "For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lords free man: likewise also he that is called being free is Christs servant" (7:22).

Thus, the apparently free man is actually enslaved (cf. Milton's Satan), while the truly free man is an obedient servant of God (cf. Milton's repentant Adam). Paul, like a true prophet, asserts his personal liberty also, in the face of sharp attacks: "Am I not an Apostle? am I not free?" (I Cor. 9:1). But even in this passage, the paradox of freedom arises: "For though I am free from all men, yet have I made my selfe servant unto all men, that I might winne the more" (I Cor. 9:19). When St. Paul confronts his enemies, both the Judaizers and the Gnostics,⁵ he makes liberty the principal issue at stake. His Gospel means spiritual freedom, while the messages of his opponents, the "other gospels" (Gal. 1:6-7), mean bondage. This is apparent in Colossians where his followers have submitted to Gnostic-Jewish regulations (2:16-23). Paul tells them to throw off such restrictions (2:16). But the real declaration of freedom, which was to have such great influence in directing the church away from its Jewish heritage and which the

⁵On the opposition of Judaizers and Gnostics, see below pp. 216-228.
Reformation church revived, was the letter to the Galatians. In Galatia certain Jewish-Christians ("Judaizers") demanded the practice of circumcision and other ceremonies and regulations which the Pauline Gospel did not require (Gal. 4:9-10; 5:1-6). In very sharp language Paul declares that his evangel, or good news, is that Christ has set man free. Any other message is a deadly yoke (Gal. 5:1). Paul sees the Jewish Law as representative of the bondage man experiences outside of Christ. He recalls his defense of liberty in Jerusalem when he withstood the Mother Church (chapter 2), and reminds the Galatians that they too should stand fast for liberty. He compares their former life under the Law to a state of childhood: "Even so, wee when wee were children, were in bondage under the rudiments of the world" (4:3). But in Adam, man comes of age. He leaves his life under his guardian-pedagogue (Gal. 3:25), and experiences spiritual liberation (5:1). He ceases his life of bondage symbolized by Hagar and Mount Sinai in order to live a new existence symbolized by Sarah and Jerusalem (4:22-31). Because of the liberty attained in Christ, Paul urges his disciples to struggle to maintain their freedom—a command which Milton diligently fulfilled: "Stand fast therefore in the libertie wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not intangled againe with the yoke of bondage" (5:1). The Gospel frees man from the material observances of the Law, and its yoke of slavery (4:5, 31). But there must always be a vigil lest the Christian sink back to life under the Law. Once freedom is realized, it must be fought for.  

6 On the theme of the Christian life as struggle, see above pp. 175-180.
Milton to struggle for the cause of liberty. Coolidge's observation, which has an obvious application to Milton, is a result of the Pauline influence upon the period: "The Puritan thinks of Christian liberty less as a permission than as a command." 7

It is very important to note that the Pauline doctrine of liberty is eminently theological in its basis. Longenecker points out that Pauline freedom is theocentric. Liberty and God are integrally connected. "The Apostle simply could not conceive of a liberty which was not derived from God and which did not center in God." 8 St. Paul, therefore, was not interested in the inherent political rights of people in general. Rather, he was concerned that regenerate disciples realize the spiritual liberation of the inner man. It is a fundamental postulate of Paulinism that one can enjoy spiritual liberation whether one is "bond or free" (Gal. 3:28). Thus, Paul can be a prisoner in Rome, and yet be a free man in Christ. The liberation Paul is concerned about is pneumatic in origin. Thus, he speaks of the now-enslaved Jews who will have their freedom when they turn to the Lord: "Nevertheless, when their heart shall be turned to the Lord, the vaile shall be taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, & where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is libertie" (II Cor. 3:16-17).

It is impossible to speak of Pauline freedom, without speaking of the Jewish Law, because for Paul freedom is defined in terms of the Law. Freedom comes when the Law is removed. Paul's doctrine of the Law

7Coolidge, p. 7.  
8Longenecker, p. 158.
is quite complex, and we shall not take time to deal with the finer points of the discussion, but we can note some of the principal points. Paul has a paradoxical attitude about the Law. He finds 'value in it, but he comes perilously close to calling it an instrument of sin (Rom. 6:14; 7:5). He sees the Law as an innate principle (Rom. 2:14), but he also sees Christ's redemptive work as saving the Gentiles from the Law (Gal. 3:13-14). Paul envisions a fundamental antithesis between Law and Gospel: "for him the question concerning the acceptance of the Christian message is identical with the either/or decision between the law and Jesus Christ." Whereas the Jewish Christians accommodated Christ to the Law, Paul sees them in basic and irreconcilable opposition. Therefore, if one accepts circumcision, he is cut off from the grace of Christ (5:4). "Undisturbedly, he pushed along the straight road of freedom from the Law." In effect, the Law is abolished (Eph. 2:14; Col. 2:14; Rom. 7:4). Matthew Arnold was correct, therefore, when he wrote that "Real life for Paul begins with the mystical death which frees us from the dominion of the external shalls and shall nots of the law." Faith in Christ replaces the Torah of Israel, says Klausner.

Pauline scholars debate whether or not the Law of first-century Judaism was really as legalistic as Paul makes it out, but the discussion

9Whiteley, p. 83. On Paul's ambivalence toward the Law, see also Schweitzer, Paul and His Interpreters, p. 160.

10Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 114.

11Lietzmann, Contemporary Thinking About Paul, p. 102.

12Arnold, p. 71

13Klausner, p. 516.
is irrelevant for our purposes because the later Christian interpreters, especially the Reformationists, viewed the Law through the eyes of Paul. Since the Reformationists did not have to contend with the Jewish Law (as the church was wholly Gentile), they gave a new significance to the old Law/Gospel antithesis which met their own situation. The Law now stood for fleshly and legalistic demands of the old Roman church. Just as the Jews were the enemies of freedom in Paul's day, Luther sees the Papists as the enemies of freedom in his own.\(^{14}\) The Epistle to the Galatians became the Magna Charta of the Reformation. The Reformers, especially those on the far left of the movement, saw themselves as standing fast for liberty as Paul had instructed them. All those to the right were Gnostics, Judaizers, and Pharisees.

Milton carried on the Reformation tradition of seeing liberty as the central religious issue behind all questions of his day. He, too, defines the content of the prophetic message as freedom, "the heavenly proclamation of liberty" (VII, 145). Like Isaiah he has come to preach release to captives ( Isa. 61:1). Like Marcion and Luther, he recognizes the essential antinomianism of Paul's Gospel.\(^{15}\) But only after some years does he fully accept Paul's radical Law/Gospel antithesis to the full extent.

Milton passionately spoke out for the Gospel of freedom, but his understanding of the nature of Pauline freedom developed over a period

\(^{14}\)See Luther's "Lectures on Galatians" first published in 1535, and translated and excerpted in Wayne Meek's The Writings of St. Paul, pp. 236-250.

\(^{15}\)On Marcion's and Luther's views, see Meeks, pp. 185-193, 236-250.
of time. In his earliest tracts he was committed to freedom, primarily in a political sense, but as his thoughts and experiences underwent change, he turned to an increasingly Pauline view of freedom which is internal and spiritual. He believes in political freedom: "all men naturally were borne free" (V, 8). As an Englishman and an heir of the Greek classical spirit, he loved liberty passionately. It is "the nurse of all great wits; this is that which hath rarefy'd and enlightn'd our spirits like the influence of heav'n" (IV, 345). "Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties" (IV, 346). He sees his prophetic call as one to combat the enemies of man's freedom.

The pervasive concern Milton has for civil liberty (e.g., in Areopagitica, The Tenure of Kings, Eikonoklastes, The Ready and Easy Way, Of True Religion, Defensio Prima, and Defensio Secunda) may lead one to the inaccurate conclusion that Milton's concern is chiefly for civil liberty and that it derives chiefly from the classical and British traditions of liberty. While I do not wish to disparage the real contributions these traditions may have made, it would at the same time be foolish to overlook the profound influence of St. Paul on Milton's understanding of liberty—even civil liberty.

Milton based his arguments for civil liberty upon Paul and Christian doctrine to a great extent. As with Paul, liberty (civil as well as religious) has a theological basis. Christ "at the price of servitude for himself established for us, even civil liberty" (VII, 145-147). Milton, in fact, cannot conceive of civil liberty apart from
its religious context. Religion is merely "the best part of our libertie" (VI, 116). He asserts in An Apology for Smectymnuus that religion and "native liberty" are "two things God hath inseparably knit together, and hath disclos'd to us that they who seek to corrupt our religion are the same that would enthral our civill liberty" (III, 336). Religion and liberty are so much of one piece that Milton believes that to preserve one is to preserve the other. Thus, the sins of Charles I threaten England's religion as much as her civil liberty (V, 140, 305). Areopagitica is certain proof of the religious context and basis of civil liberty, for in that tract Milton repeatedly appeals to St. Paul to establish his civil liberty.

What but a shadow else is the abolition of 'those ordinances, that hand-writing nayl'd to the crosse,' what great purchase is this Christian liberty, which Paul so often boasts of. His doctrine is, that he who eats or eats not, regards a day, or regards it not, may doe either to the Lord. How many other things might be tolerated in peace, and left to conscience, had we but charity, and were it not the chief strong hold of our hypocrisie to be ever judging one another. I feel yet this iron yoke of outward conformity hath left a slavish print on our necks; the ghost of a linnen decency haunts us. (IV, 348)

St. Paul, however, does not agitate for civil liberty, since his view of the Eschaton, as we have already seen, is primarily inward and future. Yet, even if the disciple Milton has gone beyond the master, he has done so by clearly giving his concept of civil liberty a Pauline foundation. Man is the image of God, and therefore created noble and free.16 Paul also gave some advise which could be construed as an argument for civil liberty. He seems to counsel Christian slaves to

16See above pp. 60-63.
avail themselves of freedom, if it becomes available (I Cor. 7:21). This passage is important in Milton's argument for civil liberty (VII, 145). Milton, however, incorrectly interprets the passage to say that Paul is urging slaves to seek freedom, whereas Paul in reality is more conservative, saying "Let every man abide in the same vocation wherein he was called" (I Cor. 7:20), whether called to freedom or slavery.

But it is important to realize that Milton's freedom is theocentric, like Paul's. Paul taught that we are free men in Christ, and Milton extended the principle to the political sphere. But the doctrine clearly has its moorings in Paulinism. He postulates that there are two kinds of liberty--civil and spiritual:

The whole freedom of man consists either in spiritual or civil libertie. As for spiritual, who can be at rest, who can enjoy any thing in this world with contentment, who hath not libertie to serve God and to save his own soul, according to the best light which God hath planted in him to that purpose, by the reading of his reveal'd will and the guidance of his holy spirit. (VI, 141)17

Although Milton makes this distinction in the kinds of liberty, he nevertheless sees them as inextricably combined. Liberty, whatever kind, is a gift of God. Civil tyranny is wrong because it necessarily inhibits Christian freedom of conscience, which Pauline inward religion requires (VI, 141-142). So many of his arguments for political freedom--free press, the right of the people to depose a bad king, the right to dissolve a bad marriage--are based upon the assumption that citizens are free men in Christ.

17Earlier Milton had enumerated three species of liberty--ecclesiastic, domestic, and civil (VIII, 31), but I take these categories to be convenient designations for three phases of his career as a controversialist.
According to Sewell, *A Treatise of Civil Power* marks a change in Milton's understanding of freedom.\(^{18}\) Whereas in the early works he saw freedom in largely political terms, now he sees the more spiritual dimension of freedom—the freedom "of a will enfranchised by faith."\(^{19}\)

Liberty seems to become a quality of the inner man and less a privilege dispensed by earthly authority. In the manner of a true Paulinist he learns that real liberty is "to be sought within."\(^{20}\)

In *Civil Power* Milton argues for the freedom to practice one's religion as he chooses. In this argument Milton is most Pauline. Just as the state did not dictate the faith of Paul and of the primitive Christians, the English state cannot prescribe faith either. Even if the state could successfully impose its religion, it would be useless because God requires obedience from the heart: "no man or body of men in these times can be the infallible judges or determiners in matters of religion to any other mens consciences but their own" (VI, 6). It is remarkable how frequently Milton appeals to the Apostle in his defense of Christian liberty. In Paul he finds the principle of individual responsibility before God which precludes the outward conformity of a state church: "let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone" (VI, 6; Gal. 6:4). He turns to Paul's claim that each Spirit-filled Christian acquires the mind of Christ (I Cor. 2:16), and finds the Christ-like mind a far safer guide than civil

\(^{18}\text{Sewell, p. xii.}\) \(^{19}\text{Ibid., p. 55.}\) 

\(^{20}\text{Bush, Sketch, p. 87.}\)
authority (VI, 7). Paul's thought that "The Spiritual man judgeth all things, but he himself is judged by no man" (I Cor. 2:15) is powerful proof to Milton that "outward rules" have no place in judging the man of God. Paul taught that Christians must not pass judgment upon each other, since they are individually servants before God, and not before each other (VI, 8; Rom. 14:4). This thought from the Roman epistle convinces Milton that civil authorities, even if Christian, cannot stand in the place of Christ, since judgment is reserved to him. He turns to the Pauline thought that Christians are Spirit-directed and concludes that they cannot be subject to other authorities since no earthly power can have precedence over God's direction (VI, 13). Throughout his argument Milton depends upon the primary Pauline distinction between flesh and spirit. Christ has called us to a life of inward spiritual religion, but the Erastian Church, so it seemed to Milton, was one of outward carnal force. Thus, he correctly rejects the absurd exegesis of Galatians 5:12 which was used to justify the church's authority over the Christian's body: "a dangerous example of beginning in the Spirit to end, so in the flesh" (VI, 8).

By the time that he writes Civil Power, Milton has come to see the internal nature of the Pauline kingdom. No longer is it tied to the state as he assumed in Of Reformation:

Christ hath a government of his own, sufficient of it self to all his ends and purposes in governing his church; but much different from that of the civil magistrate; and the difference in this very thing principally consists, that it governs not by outward force and that for two reasons. First because it deals only with the inward man and his actions, which are all spiritual and to outward force not liable: secondly to shew us the divine
excellence of his spiritual kingdom, able without worldly force, to subdue all the powers and kingdoms of this world, which are upheld by outward force only. . . . If then both our belief and practise, which comprehend our whole religion, flow from faculties of the inward man, free and unconstraining of themselves by nature, and our practise not only from faculties endu'd with freedom, but from love and charity besides, incapable of force, and all these things by transgression lost, but renew'd and regenerated in us by the power and gift of God alone, how can such religion as this admit of force from man, or force be any way appli'd to such religion, especially under the free offer of grace in the gospel, but it must forthwith frustrate and make of no effect both the religion and the gospel? (VI, 20-21)

This is high Paulinist doctrine. The magistrate can impose the letter, but he cannot force the spirit which is what matters. Milton's argument continues, suffused with Paulinism. He explicates I Corinthians 1:27 and II Corinthians 10:3-6 contrasting the weak things of the gospel with the ostentatious manner of the world (and the English church); and he introduces the Law/Gospel antithesis, borrowing heavily from Galatians 3 (VI, 22-26). Citing II Corinthians 3:17 and Galatians 4:26, 31, he says that "the new-birthright of everie true beleever" is Christian liberty (VI, 28). He then discusses liberty as "the fundamental privilege of the gospel" in which there is scarcely a sentence in which he does not quote or allude to Paul's letters (VI, 28-39). He finds "the weak and beggarly rudiments" of the Galatians heresy in the forced religion of the English established church (VI, 29). Further specific citations are perhaps superfluous, for Civil Power is a veritable encyclopedia of Pauline statements on Christian liberty. There is scarcely a verse remotely relating to Christian freedom which Milton overlooks, and other biblical citations are meager beside the overwhelming dependence upon the Pauline letters. Milton's resounding theme is "Ye have
been called unto libertie" (Gal. 5:13). This tract incontrovertibly
establishes the deep and certain influence that the Pauline doctrine of
freedom had on Milton.

The Pauline doctrine of liberty never receives fuller treatment
from Milton, except perhaps in the twenty-seventh chapter of De Doctrina,
Book I, "Of the Gospel and Christian Liberty." In many respects this
chapter is parallel to the treatise Civil Power. Both argue for individ­
ual Christian freedom from external restraints, and they base their
arguments chiefly on Paul's teachings. In De Doctrina he asserts the
inward nature of Gospel liberty, for the Gospel is "in hearts of believ­
ers" and "by the Holy Spirit" (XVI, 113). It is of no little importance
that in this formal discussion of Christian liberty, half of the verse
citations referred to come from St. Paul. Milton believes that the Law
has been totally abolished, in contradiction to the prevailing Reformed
view, but quite in agreement with Paul (XVI, 125). He sides with
Paul (Rom. 6:14, 15) against those who reply that such a view excuses
sin, by asserting the inward motivation of goodness prompted by the law
of love (XVI, 143). Milton argues with Paul that his doctrine of rejec­
tion of the Law does not allow for anarchy, for "Christ writes the
inward law of God by his Spirit on the hearts of believers, and leads
them as willing followers" (XVI, 151; cf. Rom. 2:29, 5:5; II Cor. 1:22;
3:3; Eph. 3:17, etc.). No longer does Milton see liberty as simply the
birthright of all men—whether or not Christians. He now thinks of

21On Paul's complete rejection of the Law see below pp. 234-238.
liberty as "the peculiar fruit of adoption": "liberty must be considered as belonging in an especial manner to the gospel, and as consorting therewith: first, because truth is principally known by the gospel. . . . Secondly, because the peculiar gift of the gospel is the Spirit, but 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty'" (XVI, 153; cf. II Cor. 3:17; Gal. 4:6 ff.). He defines Christian liberty in Pauline terms:

Christian liberty is that whereby we are loosed as it were by enfranchisement, through Christ our deliverer, from the bondage of sin, and consequently from the rule of the law and of man; to the intent that being made sons instead of servants, and perfect men instead of children, we may serve God in love through the guidance of the Spirit of truth. (XVI, 153-155; cf. Rom. 6:23-24; Gal. 4, etc.)

Hence we are freed from the yoke of human judgments, much more of civil decrees and penalties in religious matters. (XVI, 157)

In this chapter as in the tract Civil Power, Milton demonstrates his thoroughly Pauline approach to religion. While he still believes in political freedom no doubt, he ends his discussion of freedom in the prose by asserting the Pauline internal nature of Gospel liberty which is radically divorced from the magistrate, the courts, and the state church. If Barker is correct that Milton's prose is "the record of his effort to develop a theory of liberty,"22 then Civil Power and the chapter on Christian freedom in De Doctrina help establish the fact that Milton moved from a concept of liberty which is external, political, and therefore less Pauline (though admittedly rooted in Paulinism), toward a theory of liberty which is internal, spiritual, and

22 Barker, p. xv.
eminently Pauline. In this matter as in others (anthropology, mortalism, creationism, and eschatology, for example), Milton seems to have become more Pauline as the years passed.

2. Impediments to True Liberty

The reason that St. Paul spoke so much of Christian freedom was simply that there were so many threats to its survival. All about him he saw enemies to the freedom that Christ had purchased. He reminds the Galatians of those who had secretly wormed their way into the Antiochian fellowship "to spie out our libertie" (Gal. 2:4), as one example of the threats to Christian liberty. And he recounts his single-handed defense of liberty in Jerusalem before the very men who sought to return the church to its Egyptian bondage. The name "Judaizer" has been assigned to Paul's legalistic enemies who attempted to bind Old Testament regulations on the Christian fellowship. "They are often thought to have been of Pharisaic background, such as those in Acts 15:5 who insisted on circumcision for all Christians."23 They may have been Hellenized Jews who were converted to Christianity.24 An example of the strength of the Judaizers in early Christianity may be seen in the Ebionites, a Jewish-Christian sect which rejected Paulinism, and which flourished for centuries.25

The Judaizers could not conceive of a Christian Gospel without rigid ascetic restrictions: "Touch not, Taste not, Handle not"

25Sandmel, p. 164.
(Col. 2:21). Nor could they conceive of a Gospel free of ceremony and ritual observances (Gal. 5:2-6; 4:10; Col. 2:16, 20-23). They burdened the disciples with traditions (Col. 2:20). Furthermore, their syncretistic nature caused them to turn to Gnostic speculations and pseudo-intellectualism, perhaps occult knowledge. Paul rejects the gnosis of the Gnostic-Jewish heresy in Colossae, arguing that in Christ "are hid all the treasures of wisedome and knowledge. And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. . . . Beware lest there bee any man that spoile you through philosophie, and vaine deceit, through the traditions of men, according to the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. 2:3-4, 8).

But Paul faced dangers from a quite different group of people at the same time he was fighting the legalistic Judaizers. If some were demanding a more rigid code than the Gospel required, others without Apostolic authority were abandoning ethical standards. Indeed, certain disciples interpreted Pauline liberty to mean license (Rom. 3:7, 8; 6:15). After Paul argues that grace covers sin in proportion to man's sin, he answers the obvious objection that his system allows for a licentious life in Christ: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue still in sinne, that grace may abound? God forbid" (Rom. 6:1). Since Paul spends time asserting the need for a high ethical life (Gal. 5:14-26), it may be that the same false teachers who demanded obedience to a rigid code, at the same time freed themselves from other more important ethical practices. There was the ever-present danger that Paul's own instructions on liberty could be misinterpreted to allow libertinism:
"For brethren, ye have been called unto libertie: onely use not your libertie as an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13). At least one branch of the Gnostics, a group never named by Paul but apparently alluded to in the Colossian letter, probably belongs in this category of libertines. Their metaphysical dualism allowed some of them to assert that they could do with their bodies as they pleased since redemption was solely an affair of the soul.

Paul, then, had to chart a precarious course between the Pharisaic Christians who tried to set up various taboos, and the Christian libertines who thought the Gospel released them from all ethical convention. F. F. Bruce accurately summarizes the problem: "So, while Paul was doing all he could, on the one hand to restrain those who misinterpreted Christian liberty to mean license to do anything they chose, he was obliged to deal firmly, on the other hand, with those who wanted to introduce a new set of prohibitions which would have banished Christian liberty altogether." 26

Milton, we can be sure from the considerable evidence, saw his predicament as similar to Paul's. He found himself restoring and reasserting the Pauline Gospel of freedom. Against him are the Pharisaic legalists, the Judaizers, the Old Priests and the New Presbyters. Whether they are papists, prelates, or presbyterians, they had one common aim, in Milton's opinion—a constricting enslavement of true believers. These were the "Judaizing beasts" (III, 345) who must be

26 Bruce, p. 17.
defeated by the Pauline prophet. When Milton says that the prelates "Judaiz'd the church" (VI, 63), he was clearly interpreting his own controversial circumstance in Pauline terms. Anglican conservatives, Catholics, and Presbyterians were seventeenth-century manifestations of the old error.

In the course of his polemical writings Milton uncovers a host of false believers who have backslid into "the Jewish beggary, of old cast rudiments" (III, 2).\(^{27}\) One class of such Judaizing Pharisees are the prelates of the church who have usurped divine authority, combining the office of censor with religion in a most unlawful manner (III, 252-253). They bind a liturgy, and a "papistical" and priestly system which Milton cannot find supported in the New Testament (III, 70). However, he can find a pattern for such "fair shews of the flesh" in the Old Testament sacerdotal system (III, 206). In short, prelacy is a "foule relapsing to the old law" (III, 208). He views the prelates as legalistic Jews: "they would bear us in hand that we must of duty still appear before them once a year in Jerusalem like good circumcised males, and Females" (III, 74). In An Apology for Smectymnuus he charges the Anglican bishops, who were suppressing sermons and printed explanations of the English Bible, with turning Christian men into "Judaizing beasts, just as the Pharisees their true Fathers were wont" (III, 345-346).

\(^{27}\) The fact that Milton frequently calls the ceremonies, beliefs, and practices of his opponents "rudiments," a key Pauline designation, is further evidence that he sees his struggle in Pauline terms (see III, 4, 144, 198, 507; V, 290; VI, 29; XV, 261, etc.).
A second category of Judaizers was the Roman Catholic party.

Papists could be charged with Jewish legalism on the same grounds as the Anglican prelates: they enjoined a priestly system which could be seen as analogous to the Jewish ceremonies of the Colossian and Galatian heresies. In A Ready and Easy Way Milton recalls the encroachments of error into the once pure church. By the fourth century error "had brought back again priests, altars and oblations; and in many other points of religion had miserably Judaiz'd the church" (VI, 63). Just as the Law meant bondage for Paul, popery was "pontifical despotism" for Milton (VII, 35).

For a time, Milton hoped that the Presbyterians would liberate a fallen church from the bondage of Jewish legalism, but he was disappointed. Thus, a third category of legalists arises: "New Presbyter is but Old Priest writ large" ("On the New Forcers of Conscience," line 20). The Presbyterians have also imposed an undeserved thraldom upon learning: "it cannot be guest what is intended by some but a second tyranny over learning: and will soon put it out of controversy, that Bishops and Presbyters are the same to us both name and thing" (IV, 331; cf. V, 231). "I fear yet this iron yoke of outward conformity hath left a slavish print upon our necks" (IV, 348).

Milton sees all conservatives as Judaizers, it seems. Thus he charges Charles I with being another member of the Pharisaic party. He accuses Charles's Eikon Basilike with being "too pharisaical" (V, 197). Like the other Judaizers, his words sound of "pride and lordly usurpa­tion" (V, 203).
In spite of the tremendous diversity among these groups, Milton saw certain unifying characteristics which made these "Judaizers" enemies of the Gospel. First, both in theory and practice they insisted on obedience to an external code, contrary to Paulinism. We read in De Doctrina: "It is asserted, however, by divines in general, who still maintain the tenet of the converted Pharisees, that it is needful for those who are under the gospel to observe the law (a doctrine which in the infancy of the church was productive of much mischief)" (XVI, 147). Milton interprets his own struggle as a continuation of the Pauline apostolic one. Just as there were Pharisees in the early church (Acts 15:5), so are there in the English church. They are "a supercilious crew of masters" who are grieved with God's easiness with man (III, 373). They elevate ordinances above the good of man, confusing the latter with the spirit (IV, 126). This was precisely the case with those who rigidly bound marriage laws. They could not, according to Milton, understand the Gospel any more than the Pharisees (III, 378).

Second, Milton's Judaizing opponents were similar in that they imposed ritualistic worship on Christians, without apostolic authority. And to Milton, ceremony "is but a rudiment of the Law" (III, 247). On the matter of ceremony and ritual Milton could conveniently turn to Galatians and Colossians to support his polemic. St. Paul opposed "the rudiments of the world" (Col. 2:8, 20; Gal. 4:3, 9). The exact meaning of these "rudiments" is disputed, a term which seems to have been

used to refer to the legalistic, enslaving ways of the Law as opposed to the liberating, life-giving Gospel. The term is associated with the "bondage" one endures under Judaism (Gal. 4:9). The preoccupation with the externals of church life, which is inherent in ceremony, was a certain sign that the church had returned to the Jewish beggary of cast-off rudiments. He parallels the ceremonial accoutrements of the Anglican church with the Galatian and Colossian rituals (Gal. 4:9, 10; 5:2; 6:12; Col. 2:8). Vestments, prescribed liturgy, and tithes are all digressions into the bondage of ceremonies, and are attempts "to make a fair shew in the flesh" (III, 355; cf. III, 495; Gal. 6:12). Further echoing Paul's language in Galatians, Milton writes: "For we have learnt that the scornfull terme of Laick, the consecrating of Temples, carpets, and table-clothes, the railing in of a repugnant and contradictory Mount Sinai in the Gospel, as if the touch of a lay Christian who is never the lesse Gods living temple, could profane dead judaisms" (III, 261). They have not yet learned that true rituals are of the heart (Rom. 2:28-29).

A third characteristic of the Judaizers is that they are bound by past traditions. The tyranny of custom prevents Milton’s fellow Englishmen from fathoming the freedom inherent in the Gospel. Slavish obedience to customary interpretations of Scripture caused the Presbyterians to reject perversely his marriage teaching (III, 368). Man should not be enthralled in a hopelessly bad marriage, for that would frustrate the Pauline principle of Christian freedom (IV, 77). He finds among the prelates a presumption "to preferre humane Tradition before
divine ordinance" (III, 30). Just as the Colossian heretics burdened the church with heavy traditions, Milton sees the Catholic and Anglican preoccupation with the Church Fathers as a burden for true believers. Milton writes: "I could do religion and my country no better service for the time, then doing my utmost endeavor to recall the people of God from this vaine forraging after straw" (III, 82).

Another characteristic of the Judaizers is their effeminate weakness. Probably this thought derives from the fact that the true disciple is an athlete and a soldier for God, a well-disciplined ascetic.\(^{29}\) Since man is involved in a great cosmic struggle, weakness is a grave sin. Furthermore, Paul specifically condemned the effeminate (I Cor. 6:9). Thus, Milton's judgment is subtle but harsh when he speaks of "the dancing divines" (V, 5). True Christian liberty "is naturally born of manliness" (VII, 511), so tyranny is necessarily accompanied by effeminacy. The prelatical party seeks "to effeminate us all at home," to take us away from manly and honest labors (III, 52-53). This thought is perhaps back of Milton's attack on the manliness of More and Salmasius and Charles I (IX, 291; VIII, 16-17; VIII, 205).

Fifth, Milton saw the vice of licentiousness in the Judaizers of his day. It has been pointed out by New Testament scholars that the Jewish-Gnostic problem sometimes ushered in two opposing tendencies—rigid rules or lax behavior.\(^{30}\) Perhaps this is the thought behind

\(^{29}\) See above pp. 175-180.

\(^{30}\) The Colossian Heresy "has its effect on the ethical approach to life. If matter is evil, then it follows that our bodies are evil. If our bodies are evil, one of two consequences follows. (a) We must
Milton’s thesis that the Judaizers are actually licentious (IV, 187). His enemies on the marriage question are "tempting Pharisees" whose "own unbounded license" was the cause of Jesus’ marriage teaching (III, 455). Pharisees are at once hard-hearted and licentious: "And indeed the Papists who are strictest forbidders of divorce, are the easiest libertines to admit of grossest uncleanness" (III, 496). Thus, Milton argues that Prelacy brings the licentiousness of "gaming, jigging, wassailing, and mixt dancing" (III, 53).

Last, Milton accuses the Judaizers of being guilty of enticing words, false philosophy, and vain deceit, which St. Paul had warned against (Col. 2:4, 8). They corrupted and spoiled the church with their false knowledge like the Gnostics of the early church. The opponents of his marriage views are "severe Gnostics" (IV, 64). He frequently refers to the unsophisticated nature of gospel truth: "S. Paul so fear'd, that if he should but affect the wisdom of words in his preaching, he thought it would be laid to his charge, that he had made the crosse of Christ to be of none effect" (III, 243). The prelates "forsake the heavenly teaching of S. Paul for the hellish Sophistry of Papism" (III, 247). God "never sent us for ministers to the schools of Philosophie, but rather bids us beware of such 'vain deceit'" (VI, 98; cf. VI, 75). Our new covenant with Christ "hath bound us to forsake all carnall pride, starve and beat and deny the body. . . . (b) But if the body is evil, it is possible to take precisely the opposite point of view. If the body is evil, it does not matter what a man does with it. Spirit is all that matters; the body is quite unimportant." William Barclay, The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1959), pp. 119-120.
and wisdom" (III, 248; cf. I Cor.1:17-22; 2:4, 5, 13). Nevertheless, the enemies of the true Pauline Gospel resort to shameful sophistry. In fact, one of Milton's most popular polemical devices is to attack the reasoning of his opponents as sophistical, and therefore contradictory to the Pauline precepts of I Corinthians 2 and 3, and Colossians 2. The prelates deliver us "the scragged and thorny lectures of monkish and miserable sophistry;" they are "fondly over-studied in useless controversies" (III, 273). Milton claims that he has read "of no Sophister among the Greeks so dear" as Bishop Andrews (III, 202). Without fail, it seems, Milton's enemies appeal to the pride of men's thinking, and not to the simplicity of the Gospel.  

So, in spite of the enormous differences between Catholic, Anglican, and Presbyterian, Milton saw them as essentially one group because they demanded obedience to a code; they bound ceremony and tradition; and were effeminate, licentious and sophistical. Just as Paul fought the extremes of the libertine as well as the legalist, so did Milton. Professor Bruce's summary of the dual forces with which Paul struggled, could be easily applied to Milton. If his enemies did not backslide like the Judaizers into "the Jewish

31 Milton learned, however, that the charge of sophistry was a two-handed engine that could swing his way also. In Tetrachordon he responds to the charge that his own writings are "the meer cunning of eloquence, and Sophistry" (IV, 70). He protests that his work is "sound argument and reason" and if the charge of sophistry is allowed to stand, then "what can be the end of this, but that all good learning and knowledge will suddenly decay" (IV, 70)? Since he loves truth heartily, he is certain his reason is sound, not sophistical (III, 362, 287).

32 See above p. 218.
beggary, of old cast rudiments," then they stumbled "forward another way into the new-vomited Paganisme of sensuall Idolatry" (III, 2).

Of course, it was difficult to separate the opposed groups of legalist and libertine, for in the final analysis they were guilty of the same root sin—attention to the earthly and the fleshly, rather than to the spiritual. Both are therefore guilty of licentiousness. Both lead ultimately to idolatry, which is simply inordinate attention to things material.

But Milton still does recognize, theoretically at least, that there are two antithetical groups which are enemies of the Gospel. In The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce he outlines the opposition his teaching will receive on two fronts: "In which argument he whose courage can serve him to give the first onset, must look for two several oppositions: the one from those who having sworn themselves to long custom and the letter of the Text, will not out of the road: the other from those whose grosse and vulgar apprehensions conceit but low of matrimoniall purposes, and in the work of male and female think they have all" (III, 385-386).

Milton did not have trouble finding those in his day who used their "libertie as an occasion to the flesh" (Gal. 5:13). He contrasts "the vulgar amorists" with his own chaste office as God's spokesman (III, 241). In Of Reformation he recalls, with an implicit application, the era of Constantine when Christians "forsook their first love, and set themselves up two gods instead, Mammon and their Belly" (III, 42).

In the fourteenth chapter of the first book of Doctrine and Discipline,
Milton treats the antinomian tendencies of his day, arguing that Familism, Antinomianism, Anabaptism and other "fanatick dreams" arise from the undue restraints of legalism, and not from an honest understanding of Christian liberty (III, 426). Thus, he answers his critics who were saying that his teaching could open the door to grave abuse. He reassures his readers that he is not opening the door to unrestrained behavior: "Not that license and levity and unconsented breach of faith should herein be countenanc't" (III, 385). The court of Charles I was probably the most significant example of the licentious enemies of the Gospel; they were a "profligate crew of vagabond courtiers" (VII, 549). Charles was supported by "thousands of blaspheming Cavaliers" (V, 168). Charles himself was guilty of "regal prodigalitie" (VI, 145; cf. VII, 237). Milton's anger at the libertarian character of the King's party comes through strongly in *A Free Commonwealth*: "Let our zealous back-sliders forethink now with themselves, how their necks yok'd with these tigers of Bacchus, these new fanatics of not the preaching but the sweating-bub, inspir'd with nothing holier than the Veneral pox" (VI, 139).

Milton recognizes the libertines, along with the legalists, as the chief impediments to the realization of Christian freedom. He does

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33 The term "antinomian" perhaps needs clarification, for there is a sense in which Paul and Milton were antinomian, and there is a sense in which they were not. They were "against" (νεφος) "Law" (νεφος), specifically the moral and ceremonial Law of Moses. But they would not necessarily feel sympathy for the historical movement of Antinomianism that began with Johannes Agricola (1492-1566) (cf. *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, Book I, chapter 14). They would never have agreed to licentious behavior or to the flouting of Judeo-Christian morality. They would, however, have agreed with the Christian antinomian principle that the direction of one's life should come from the internal witness of the Holy Spirit. See J. Macbride Sterrett, "Antinomianism," *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*. 
not, however, spend much time refuting the libertines because they have no respectable intellectual position, and argument would be wasted on them: "It will not be requisit to Answer these men, but only to discover them, for reason they have none, but lust, and licentiousnes, and therefore answer can have none" (III, 36).

3. The Rhetoric of Bondage and Freedom

The Paulinist is a master of rhetoric, and in discussing the call to liberty, he effectively uses language to make life under old religion appear exceedingly undesirable, and life under the Gospel appear pleasing. One of the significant clues to Milton's actual and immediate debt to St. Paul for his theory of liberty arises from his artistic employment of Paul's language describing states of bondage and freedom. We can know certainly that Milton's imagination was stimulated by Pauline thought because he employs the language of the epistles in a vivid and artistic manner. Paul's letters are more than convenient proof texts from which the seventeenth-century polemicist can draw his support. The Pauline corpus is also a considerable matrix which formed Milton's conception of bondage and freedom.

Paul provided Milton with the image of religious legalism as a kind of yoking. "Stand fast therefore in the libertie wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not intangled againe with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1). Milton couples this thought with II Corinthians 6:14 ("Be not unequally yoked with the infidels"), in order to establish that a bad marriage between a believer and an unbeliever is "undeserved thralldom." He deduces that marital misyoking is but another name for
bondage (III, 417, 491). And he recalls that Paul said "that a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases" (I Cor. 7:15). A bad marriage is a "most unnatural and unchristianly yoke" (III, 494), "a servil yoke" (IV, 88). But the metaphor of the yoke informed Milton's thought on subjects other than marriage. Thus, he speaks of England groaning under the prelatical yoke, and the present "iron yoke of outward conformity" (IV, 348). The liturgy is a "servile yoak" (V, 221). In A Free Commonwealth he asks in a sardonic tone: "Is it such an unspeakable joy to serve, such felicity to wear a yoke?" (VI, 136). He continues: "Yet neither shall we obtain or buy at an easie rate this new gilded yoke which thus transports us" (VI, 138). In True Religion he further amplifies the metaphor of yoke into "this Babylonish yoke" of popery (VI, 172). The simple yoke of bondage of Paulinism is embelished with many adjectives in Milton's prose. The yoke is servile, intolerable, impertinent, unnatural, un-Christian, forced, abject, iron, Babylonish, unbearable, slavish, etc. Paulinism provided the seed which flourished in Milton's elaborate prose.

St. Paul also pictures the restrictions of legalism as a life of childhood under a schoolmaster, a guardian, or a pedagogue: "Then I say that the heire as long as he is a childe, differeth nothing from a servant. . . . But is under tutors and governours, until the time appointed of the Father. Even so, wee when wee were children, were in bondage under the rudiments of the world" (Gal. 4:1-3). "Before faith came, wee were kept under the Lawe, as under a garison, and shut up unto that faith, which should afterward be revealed. Wherefore the Law was our
Schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we may be made righteous by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster" (Gal. 3:23-25). The picture of the child or the immature man under the schoolmaster appealed to Milton's imagination. In An Apology for Smectymnuus he compares the "slavish minds" of the prelates to the man under the tutor: "Besides that then it was the time, when as the best of them, as Saint Paul saith, 'was shut up unto the faith under the Law' their School-master, who was forc't to intice them as children with childish enticements. But the Gospell is our manhood, and the ministry should be the manhood of the Gospell, not to look after, much lesse so basely to plead for earthly rewards" (III, 363). Milton's argument for freer divorce is based upon the thought of Galatians 3--of necessity man must be more free under the Gospel, than he had been under the Law:

"For what can be more opposite and disparaging to the cov'nant of love, of freedom, & of our manhood in grace, than to be made the yoaking pedagogue of new severities, the scribe of syllables and rigid letters" (IV, 134-135). He says in Defensio Secunda that the whole nation of England is in danger of returning to the slavery of childhood: "like a nation in pupillage, you would then want rather a tutor" (VII, 251). It is a short step from the thought of pupillage and pedagoguery to duncery. So, the legalism of prelaty is "inquisitorious and tyrannical duncery" (III, 240).

For Paul, the opposite of pupillage under the Law is full sonship which is realized in Jesus Christ:
But after faith is come we are no longer under a schoolemaster.
For ye are all the sonnes of God by faith, in Christ Jesus.
(Gal. 3:25-26)

But when the fulnesse of time was come, God sent foorth his
Sonne made of a woman, and under the Law, thathee might
redeeme them which were under the Law, that wee might receive
adoption of the sonnes. And because yee are sonnes, God hath
sent foorth the Spirit of his sonne into your hearts, which
crieth, Abba, Father, Wherefore thou art no more a servant,
but a sonne: now if thou be a sonne, thou art also the heire of
God through Christ. (Gal. 4:4-7)

According to Paul man is either a servant in subjection to the rudiments,
the Law, etc., or else he is a son by adoption. Sonship entitles him to
full freedom. He is the son of the King and his rightful heir. He has
intimacy with the Spirit of Christ, who is the supreme Son. He is
"adopted" out of a life under the Law into a life in Christ. The Paul-
ine doctrines of adoption and sonship were quite influential in Milton's
thinking. In De Doctrina he devotes a chapter to adoption as sons
(Book I, chapter 23). There he explains that liberty is the first bene-
fit of adoption, obviously basing his thought on Galatians:

From adoption is derived, first, liberty; a privilege which was
not unknown to the posterity of Abraham; in virtue of their
title as children of God, even under the law of bondage. . . .
In the spirit of this liberty, they did not scruple even to
infringe the ceremonies of religion, when their observance would
have been inconsistent with the law of love. . . . But the
clearer and more perfect light in which liberty, like adoption
itself, has been unfolded by the gospel. . . . (XVI, 53-55)

In A Treatise of Civil Power, which is so thoroughly Pauline, he writes
that Christian liberty is "the birthright and outward testimonie of our
adoption" (VI, 32). But even in earlier works, such as The Reason of
Church Government, Milton's argument for man's dignity rested upon the
doctrine of sonship. Since man was ransomed "to a new friendship and
filial relation with God" (III, 261), he cannot afford to debase himself in sin. In A Ready and Easy Way he thinks of the happiness that would result if men would but recognize their sonship: "Christendom might soone rid herself and be happy, if Christians would but know thir own dignitie, thir libertie, thir adoption" (VI, 99).

The metaphor of letter and spirit (or flesh and spirit) is perhaps the most significant Pauline device for describing the states of bondage and freedom. In Paul's conception there is an outer nature, which is fleshly, sensual, and enslaving, and an inner nature, which is spiritual, uplifting, and liberating (Rom. 2:28-29; Col. 2:17; Gal. 5:17; Rom. 2:27; 7:6; II Cor. 3:6). The flesh and the letter stand for what is base in man, what is carnal and opposed to his will. The Galatians, through their bondage to Law, were in danger of walking after the flesh, instead of the spirit. At the same time they were guilty of following the letter of the Law and disobeying the spirit of the Gospel. The letter/spirit or flesh/spirit antithesis not only illustrated the fundamental Pauline distinction, but it became a principle by which Milton arrived at conclusions not specified by Scripture (for example, divorce for incompatibility). Milton, in all his debates, attempted to follow the guidance of the living spirit, and not the dead letter (IV, 75). The letter signifies the ceremonies, rules, regulations, traditions, and customs of legalism which enslave, whereas the spirit, the breath of charity, liberates (IV, 126). The inner always takes precedence over the outer. So, when the letter seems to contradict the spirit, the spirit is always to be followed (XVI, 143). The flesh and the letter
are synonymous with the papal trapping of the church. Thus, in his "Grandsires dayes" the English people received "the sudden assault of his reforming Spirit warring against humane Principles, and carnall sense, the pride of flesh that cry'd up Antiquity, Custome, Canons, Councils and Lawes. . ." (III, 145-146), in short, a religion of "the old pompe and glory of the flesh" (III, 199), which is opposed to the Gospel "pure, spirituall, simple, and lowly" (III, 199).

Another very effective metaphor of bondage and freedom is in the antithesis of substance and shadow. Paul tells the Colossians that the ceremonies and rituals of the false teachers are like insubstantial shadows beside the reality of the Gospel: "Let no man therefore condemne you in meat & drinke, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moone, or of the Sabbath dayes. Which are but a shadowe of things to come: but the bodie ($\omega\nu$, substance, reality) is in Christ" (Col. 2:16-17).

Milton's thought is stimulated by this distinction in contrasting bondage and liberty. Thus, he speaks of "a moral solidity" and "a ceremoniall shadow" (III, 203). Clearly alluding to the thought and language of Colossians 2, Milton asks: "What but a vain shadow else is the abolition of 'those ordinances, that handwriting nayle'd to the crosse', what great purchase this Christian liberty which Paul so often boasts of" (IV, 348). The metaphor probably is involved in other passages as well (III, 37; VI, 19).

There are some other Pauline metaphors we can briefly mention. The term "rudiments," the childish elements, is a term signifying the bondage of spiritual infancy (III, 2, 4, 198, 507; VI, 29, 31).
The metaphor of Sinai as bondage (Gal. 4:24) also influenced Milton. The burden of marriage restrictions is like throwing the mountain of Sinai on the suffering Christian (III, 508). This is particularly effective use of Pauline metaphor, for Milton's thought not only conveys the legalistic restrictions of the Mosaic code delivered at Sinai, but it also suggests the intolerable and suffocating weight of the mountain heaped upon the helpless victim.

4. The Territory of Just and Honest Liberty

Another proof of Milton's careful reading of the Pauline doctrine of freedom is evident in his assertion that the Gospel requires a radical rejection of the Law. Milton's view in his own day was a minority opinion, but scholars today widely agree that St. Paul actually did reject the whole Law. The orthodox view was that Paul taught only the abrogation of the "ceremonial law," but that the "moral law" of the Old Testament remained intact. This was the view of the Thirty-Nine Articles. For centuries the church had distinguished between moral and ceremonial law in order to preserve the Jewish moral law for the church, but such a distinction is not Pauline. D. E. H. Whiteley, for example, asserts that Paul never makes any explicit distinction between moral and spiritual law; therefore, the whole of it is nullified. Bultmann also argues that Paul does not distinguish between "cultic-ritual" demands


35 Whiteley, p. 86.
and "formal-legal" or "moral" demands. Sandmel says that Paul made the whole law null and void. And Klausner says that the Torah (which would include moral and ceremonial regulations) was replaced by faith in Christ in Paul's view. Wayne Meeks says that Augustine demonstrated once and for all that Paul did not distinguish between ceremonial and moral law. If the Law is a single entity, and if Paul teaches that it is replaced by Gospel, then the Law must be totally rejected according to Paulinism. The church, however, distorted Paul's teaching, as Maurice F. Wiles points out in his monograph The Divine Apostle, in order that it might preserve the sanctity of law in a Latin culture. Thus, the dangerous tendencies of Pauline antinomianism were disarmed.

For some time Milton held to the orthodox, but un-Pauline, belief that the Law had its ceremonial and moral aspects, and that only the ceremonial aspect passed with the coming of Christ. All the way through the divorce writings Milton was committed to the distinction of ceremonial and moral law. In Tetrachordon he argues that the ceremonial law passed away when all was fulfilled, but "Of the morall law he knew the pharisees did not suspect he meant to nullifie that: for so

36Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 135.
37Sandmel, p. 159.
38Klausner, p. 516.
39Meeks, p. 217.
41Cf. Samuel S. Stollman's summary of Christianity's relationship to the Old Testament. He points out that while Luther and the Anabaptists accepted the Pauline abrogation of the whole Law, others (Zwingli, Bucer, and Calvin) held the more orthodox view that the moral law remained in operation; "Milton and Judaism," diss. Wayne State University 1964, pp. 76-79, 82-83.
doing would soon have undone his authority, and advanc'd theirs" (IV, 140). The reason for accepting this distinction may have been the powerful support it gave his divorce teaching, because Moses allowed divorce for a reason other than adultery. If Moses allowed divorce and his law is moral law, then Milton could preserve the law for the Christian dispensation by appealing to the moral law of Moses. He does just that, arguing that Moses' divorce teaching was "Law grounded on moral reason" (III, 410). He accuses his opponents of abolishing "a whole moral Law" in order to maintain no divorce, contrary to Moses (III, 410). They are guilty of a "flat renouncing of the religious and moral Law" (III, 412).

While the desire to support his marriage views may have led him for some time into accepting an un-Pauline view, eventually he abandoned the position. This change in view has been documented by Sewell, Stollman, and others.42 Sewell writes: "We can trace his changing view of the Mosaic Law and his progress to that point where he decided that with the coming of Christ the whole of the Law was abrogated."43 Although others have noted Milton's dynamic understanding of the Law, they have not properly pointed out Milton's movement toward a Pauline view of the Law.

Milton moves from an orthodox acceptance of the moral law of the Old Testament to the radical Pauline view that it was cancelled in its entirety. By 1659, when he produces Of Civil Power, the distinction

42 Sewell, pp. 8 ff.; Stollman, p. 88; Barker, p. 106.
43 Sewell, p. x.
between Law and Gospel, between Old and New, is very sharp (VI, 25). "His doctrine of Gospel liberty led him to the belief that nothing, not even the Ten Commandments, could stand under the gospel as a prescription to man's conscience. No shred of the Law remains obligatory, for, as it were, man would still be servile." 44

The complete rejection of the Law of Moses was completed by the time Milton wrote De Doctrina. He tells us that with the introduction of the Gospel "the whole of the preceding covenant, in other words the entire Mosaic law, was abolished" (XVI, 125). "Now not only the ceremonial code, but the whole positive law of Moses, was a law of commandments, and contained in ordinances" (XVI, 129). If one doubted Milton's Pauline view of the Law, then the twenty-seventh chapter of the first book of De Doctrina should dispel all doubt. Milton records seven arguments to prove irrefutably that the Law was abolished completely, and every argument is based almost exclusively on Pauline teachings. In his proof Milton scarcely looks to the words of Jesus or the Evangelists for support. It is St. Paul who teaches Milton that the whole Law has passed away: "On the united authority of so many passages of Scripture, I conceived that I had satisfactorily established the truth in question against the whole body of theologians, who, so far as my knowledge then extended, concurred in denying the abrogation of the entire Mosaic law" (XVI, 147). Milton discovers after he reaches his own conclusion that others (Zanchius and Cameron) have also come to the same conclusion.

44 Ibid., p. 13.
The Pauline view that the Law was entirely abrogated was exceedingly liberating to Milton's mind. That is why he places such emphasis upon the abrogation of the whole Mosaic system in his chapter on Christian liberty. The demise of the Law signalled the cessation of mental and spiritual servitude. The territory and dominion of "just and honest liberty" (III, 373) far surpassed his earlier dreams. "From the abrogation, through the gospel, of the law of servitude, results Christian liberty" (XVI, 153). Thus, man is free "from the rule of the law and of man; to the intent that being made sons instead of servants, and perfect men instead of children, we may serve God in love through the guidance of the Spirit of truth" (XVI, 153-155). "Hence we are freed from the yoke of human judgments, much more of civil decrees and penalties in religious matters" (XVI, 157). Milton recognizes a kind of liberty that is spiritual, charismatic, and internal. The direction and restraint come from within the enfranchised soul, and not through the outward restraint of civil and ecclesiastical restrictions.

5. The Inward Law of Charity

The Pauline doctrine of spiritual antinomianism was always dangerous in the eyes of orthodoxy for it could always too easily be misunderstood. If we are indeed free from the moral law of the Torah, then the perverters of grace could easily say, "Why not continue in sin that grace may abound?" (Rom. 6:1). The Pauline doctrine reached perilously close to utter moral anarchy. But for the true Paulinist, moral laxity does not at all result from an understanding of Christian freedom. Paul himself maintained an impeccable moral code which, not accidentally,
coincided with the Jewish moral law. In each of his letters he includes hortatory sections in which he gives ethical instruction. In his aban-
donment of the Law, Paul never comes close to giving up his high ethics. In the same way Milton, who is liberated by the Pauline Gospel, main-
tains a strict ethic. Perhaps Paul the iconoclast simply rejected the Law intellectually while maintaining its rules practically. Probably, he thought that the rules he offered to his churches were not the pre-
scriptions of the Mosaic Law, but the innate directions of the inner voice of God (Rom. 2:14-15).

Nevertheless, Paul's enemies argued that his doctrine was opening the way to licentiousness, and quite interestingly Milton was attacked on the same grounds. Milton turned to Paul for vindication:

"The common objection to this doctrine [of the Law's complete abrogation] is anticipated by St. Paul himself" who argues that the removal of the Law actually weakens the power of sin, rather than increases it (XVI, 143).

Absolute antinomianism was untenable for St. Paul; the Law is abrogated, but something positive takes its place, so that man does not dwell in a wilderness of erratic impulses and selfish motives. If men are to please God and dwell in social harmony, then some kind of "law" must operate. For Paul, it is love or charity. Hence, the supreme im-
portance that Paul gives the concept (see especially I Cor. 13). Love is the fulfillment of the Law: "in the mighty establishment and practice of the commandment of love everything which they [the proponents of Law]

45 Chadwich, p. 4; Sandmel, p. 118.
maintain as an indispensible demand upon the Christians is sufficiently carried out." Only the great virtue of love will prevent the liberated Paulinist from sinking into moral laxity. "Paul proclaims that the quintessence of the Law is contained in the commandment to love one's neighbor." Love is not an abstraction for Paul. It is "an actual, all-powerful, constantly dynamic force." Paul's thoughts on agape bring him closest to being a lyric poet, for in Christian love he sees an internal code for the practice of true religion: "for he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the law" (Rom. 13:8); "For the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart" (I Tim. 1:5); "For all the Law is fulfilled in one worde, which is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy selfe" (Gal. 5:14).

Anyone even slightly acquainted with Milton's thought, can immediately perceive the parallel, for everywhere Milton appeals to the softening breath of charity in place of rigid external law. For Milton also, charity is the supreme fulfillment and replacement of the Law. Even when he had not fully rejected the Old Testament, the Pauline theme of charity was operating. "For this is the glory of the gospel, to teach us that 'the end of the commandment is charity'" (IV, 197). In Doctrine and Discipline Milton appeals to the supreme law of love (III, 374). When Milton finally rejects the Law altogether, the rule of charity functions in its absence. Thus, in Civil Power the promptings

46 Johann Weiss, Earliest Christianity, II, 551.
47 Deissmann, Contemporary Thinking About Paul, p. 250.
48 Holmes, Contemporary Thinking About Paul, p. 150.
of love overrule the Law:

Nay our whole practical duty in religion is contained in charitie, or the love of God and our neighbor, no way to be forc'd, yet the fulfilling of the whole law; that is to say, our whole practise in religion. If then both our belief and practise, which comprehend our whole religion, flow from faculties endu'd with freedom, but from love and charity besides, incapable of force, and all these things, by transgression lost, but renew'd and regenerated in us by the power and gift of God alone, how can such religion as this admit of force . . . ? (VI, 21)

"Charity is truest religion" (IV, 215). In De Doctrina also, Milton turns to love as the end of the Law, and therefore hopes to ward off objections that Pauline liberty will result in anarchy: "the law of love is declared to be better than a compliance with the whole written law" (XVI, 143-145). Even Scripture which would seem to be an external code is to be read "in the spirit of the law of love" (XVI, 145). This law of love cannot be administered or forced upon anyone, for it is spiritual in nature. It is tied to the direction of the Spirit: "Under the direction of the Spirit the end of the institution" is attained "in love of God and our neighbor" (XVI, 147). He also says that "Christ writes the inward law of God by his Spirit on the hearts of believers, and leads them as willing followers" (XVI, 151).

Such conceptions are not very consoling to the orthodox advocates of Law. How can one know when he is obeying the dictates of love? And what of those who use their freedom from Law as a pretext to sin? How can such a theory function practically? But such questions do not bother the convinced Paulinist, because he learns that freedom from Law is probably not for everyone. Paulinism is a religion of the minority. "I confess that there are but few, and those of great wisdom and courage,
that are, either desirous of liberty or capable of using it" (VII, 75). And though some will use Pauline liberty as an occasion for the flesh, Milton believes that the internal guidance of the Spirit according to the rule of charity is infinitely preferable to slavish obedience to the Law.

Milton, the Pauline prophet, saw the content of the evangel as fundamentally liberating. His theory of liberty, while perhaps enhanced by the classical and English traditions of freedom, is nevertheless Pauline through and through. His understanding of liberty—whether political or religious—has a solid theological basis derived from Paul. The seventeenth-century polemicist saw liberty as a major if not the single most important issue of the Gospel. His twenty years as a controversialist were spent in defending Gospel liberty. He interpreted his own situation according to the terms of Paul's struggle for freedom. So, like Paul, he faced both Judaizer and libertine. He defended the true Cause by borrowing and embellishing the Pauline rhetoric of liberty. And perhaps most important of all, Milton rejected the whole Law as did Paul, and he replaced it with the more subjective internal spiritual direction of charity. Thus, Milton's message, like his manner, is suffused with Paulinism.
CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

Whereasover I open St. Paul's epistles, I meet not words but thunder, and universal thunder, thunder that passes through all the world. —John Donne

I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. —St. Paul

I find myself concluding a subject upon which there is so much more to be written. The thunder of Paul's epistles, of which John Donne speaks, was heard loudly in the seventeenth century, and everywhere its effects may be seen. Especially may its effects be seen in the prose of John Milton. There are so many points upon which to compare the two that I have found it necessary to pass over material simply because other topics demanded attention. There are hundreds of references to Paul's letters in the prose works, but I have been able to discuss only a few of them. From the material that is here presented, though, I expect that it is sufficiently clear that Milton preferred the "Apostle and interpreter of Christ" before the productions of antiquity and of his own age. Milton's religious thought would have been a very different matter had Paul never lived. It would have been so different, in fact, that it is impossible to imagine. Certainly his understanding of his life's work and his prophetic message would have been enormously altered had he not known St. Paul's thought. One wonders: Could Milton have

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spoken in the way that he did of freedom of conscience, of the liberty of the spirit, of the eternal glory of man the icon of God, and of the justification of the first Adam made possible by the second? Could he have been motivated to spend himself in liberty's defense solely from his acquaintance with the classical libertarian spirit? Could he have replaced the external law with the internal direction of charity had he not known the Pauline divine hymn of charity? Could he have spoken so surely, endured so ascetically, and preached so vehemently, had his mind and heart not known the voice of Paul? I do not think so.

I readily admit that more could be said, perhaps should be said, about the thunder of Paulinism in Milton's prose. But from my research I believe several important conclusions may be drawn. First, it is an altogether proper and profitable enterprise to read Milton in his Pauline context. There has been some discussion among Milton scholars as to the relative importance of the immediate and the historical contexts of Milton's ideas. In practice there seems to be a preference for studies of Milton's contemporaries or immediate predecessors. A few critics, though, have expressed doubt, at least momentarily, about the wisdom of ignoring the older biblical context. Tillyard, for example, writes: "It is of course very hard to be sure that one is right in mentioning Calvin or Perkins or some other Puritan divine rather than St. Paul or St Augustine in speaking of whence Milton derived his version of central Christian dogma." In spite of such momentary reservation, there are

1Studies in Milton, p. 160:
sadly few studies of Milton's biblical debts and associations. Some critics prefer almost any source or analogue to the "sacred verity of Paul" (III, 103), and it seems still true today as it was in Milton's that Paul's doctrine is less studied than the traditions about him (III, 93). But I think my research demonstrates the value of re-examining Milton in his biblical context.

Second, we may conclude from this study that Milton's integrity stands, at least in his handling of the biblical materials. Milton reverenced the Scriptures. He treated the Bible as the word of God. I think no one has proven that he ever deliberately and knowingly disregarded the teachings of Scripture. This is not to say that his exegesis was always correct, but it is to say that he never closed his eyes to the text simply because he wanted to believe something else. The critic who carefully reads the Bible and modern undogmatic biblical criticism will answer "yes" to C. A. Patrides' query concerning Milton's suggestion that his doctrines have a biblical basis: "Could it be that Milton's several claims require a reappraisal after all?" In Paulinism we discover a foundation for such heresies as mortalism, creation ex Deo, and subordinationism. In the future we must be less smug about dismissing Milton's frank assertion: "I had not even read any of the works of heretics, so called, when the mistakes of those who are reckoned for orthodox, and their incautious handling of Scripture first taught me to agree with their opponents whenever those opponents agreed with Scripture" (XIV, 15).

2Bright Essence, p. 70.
Third, my research puts the source hunter for Milton's heresies on a more accurate course. My studies do not deny the place of others in the Christian tradition who held similar views to Milton's, but they do demand that one recognize the eminent biblical influence. It is simply indefensible for one to spend large amounts of time pointing out parallels between Milton and men he may not have even known, when there are clear parallels yet to be explored between Milton and a man whom he knew intimately and whom he admitted as a source--St. Paul.

Fourth, we can conclude that Milton became increasingly Pauline with the passing of time. He was not a Paulinist simply because he was born in an age when it was the natural thing to be. Nor did he slough off his Paulinism as he became mature and intellectually independent. On the contrary, he remained faithful to the Apostle's teaching. Indeed, when he discovered that true Paulinism differed from traditional Paulinism, he proved his fidelity to the saint by accepting his unpopular ideas (e.g., the rejection of the whole Law).

Fifth, we may conclude that Miltonism can be better understood when one is sensitive to the prophetic institution of which Paul was a prominent member and one of its chief molders. One need not like Milton's prophetic manner or accept his prophetic message, but surely one is not fully qualified to appraise Milton's thought if he is unaware of the prophetic institution and its particular manifestation in the greatest Christian, Paul.

Last, we may say that Milton's doctrine of liberty can be studied quite profitably in light of the teachings of the great "prophet
of freedom."³ Paul is, after all, "the great source-book for the non-conform ing individual."⁴ In studying the non-conformist Milton, it is logical to look to the father of non-conformist thought. If one studies Milton only in the light of the Puritan writings or the documents of Protestantism, he can only do a superficial job of excavation. Milton and his contemporaries built on a common foundation, that foundation being Paulinism. The complete picture comes by digging both downward to the Pauline foundation and laterally to the contemporary analogues. The research into the Pauline doctrine of liberty can be as enlightening as can the research into Puritan thought on liberty.

This study not only allows us to make these deductions; it also introduces new questions and opens new directions for Milton studies. First, my study naturally leads to the question of Paul's influence in the poetry. Perhaps the thunder of Pauline thought is as loud in the poetry as it is in the prose. Second, this study invites a more detailed study of certain Pauline parallels which I treated only briefly. For example, a more comprehensive study of a particular doctrine like Christological subordinationism might yield an even better understanding of Milton's true position, perhaps revealing subtle similarities and differences with Paul. Third, one might hope for a new general examination of Milton in the light of the Scriptures. The Bible remains Milton's richest storehouse of ideas, and Milton scholars can only gain from an

³Schweitzer, Paul and His Interpreters, p. 16.
⁴Sandmel, p. 117.
intimate knowledge of the biblical materials and the findings of modern scholarship.\textsuperscript{5} It has surprised me how often biblical scholars' conclusions have proven useful in reading Milton. Yet, because the two disciplines of literature and biblical theology are somewhat out of touch with each other, productive interchange has been rare. I am quite convinced W. H. Auden was correct when he suggested that two functions of the critic included the demonstration of relationships between works of different ages and cultures, and the demonstration of the relationship between art and religion (among other things).\textsuperscript{6} Milton's prose reads differently within the Pauline framework. More important, it reads with new understanding. Fourth, this study raises the question of Paul's place in the whole period of which Milton was a part. It is possible that the influence of Pauline thought on Milton is paradigmatic for the whole liberal movement of Protestantism, but it has not been adequately demonstrated. John S. Coolidge's work deals with some limited aspects of Paulinism in the Puritan era,\textsuperscript{7} but if a more comprehensive study of Paulinism were available, then we would have a more accurate instrument by which to measure Milton against his contemporaries.

\textsuperscript{5}In some respects the student of biblical theology is better able to read the Bible objectively than he has ever been. Unlike the earlier periods when Milton's religion was studied, often with adverse results, biblical studies today are remarkably free of dogmatic presuppositions. In my own study I have profited from Jewish, Roman Catholic, and Protestant scholarship. Rarely did I find sectarian bias getting in the way of the meaning of Paulinism. For this reason, it may well be that the Milton scholar has a fairly objective standard of biblical interpretation by which to judge Milton's theology, which was not available even a generation ago.


\textsuperscript{7}The Pauline Renaissance in England.
The twentieth century has wrestled with the question of the value of Milton's religious thought in an age which seems to have rejected so much that was fundamental to the poet-polemicist. Before we are too quick to abandon Milton's thought as hopelessly antiquated, it might be wise to look again at the foundation upon which he built. "I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon," wrote Paul (I Cor. 3:10). The question remains whether Milton's structure is of "golde, silver, precious stones, timber, hay, or stubble" (I Cor. 3:12). I think there is good reason to believe both the foundation and the superstructure are sound. Milton does retain a living power to move us. And quite happily, the foundation is proving its strength today also. The thunder of Paulinism is being heard in the twentieth century. If the renascence of Paulinism in our time is any indication, Milton's religious ideas will likely continue to have an audience for some time to come, at least among the freeborn of the Spirit.
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Pauline Studies


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