

BOOK REVIEWS

Bornkamm, Günther. *Paul*. Transl. by D. M. G. Stalker. New York: Harper & Row, 1971. xxviii + 259 pp. \$7.50.

Günther Bornkamm's *Paul*, described as "equally designed" for the professional theologian and the layman, is written on the premise that there is a "constant and radical interrelationship between Paul's life and history . . . and his gospel and theology."

Part I portrays Paul's life and work. Special attention is given to Paul's experience in Corinth and Ephesus, and also to Romans as "Paul's Testament." The ability that has placed Bornkamm in the front line of NT scholars is particularly evident in Part II which deals with Paul's "Gospel and Theology."

Although little new ground is broken, Bornkamm's approach is original and illuminating. In dealing with Paul's eschatology, he finds the typical formula "yes—but" or "yes—although" inadequate and suggests instead "because—therefore." This is good, but he overemphasizes the lack of coherence in Paul's eschatology and the degree to which traditional apocalyptic speculations and concepts fall away. He does not go as far as some, however, in this respect and considers the parousia, as also the resurrection, to be still very literal events to Paul. For him future existence was not "uncorporeal," and the "heavenly house" to which the righteous are to be transported along with the new "raiment" they are to wear refer to a new kind of body, a "new creation of a whole man occurring at the time of the parousia."

In dealing with the righteousness of God, Bornkamm says that one of the new and surprising elements in his gospel is that God, the Judge, is not himself subject to an "unchangeable norm greater than himself and inevitably determining his verdict." Rather he alone determines the meaning of righteousness, and in this sense righteousness is manifested "apart from law."

Bornkamm is particularly refreshing in his presentation of the relationship between reason and faith which he declares, contrary to common assertion, are not in hopeless opposition. Instead, he finds Paul making "vigorous use of reason, understanding, and conscience" and arguing with the purpose of "persuading and convincing" (p. 119). In a similar way he sees no conflict between spirit and reason in Paul.

In his conclusion Bornkamm grapples with the issue of "Jesus and Paul" and declares that Paul's gospel of justification by faith alone matches Jesus' turning to the godless and the lost. For both salvation means deliverance as "event and miracle," and for both the people who are really in danger are the "good" who need no repentance. He thereby emphasizes the continuity of Paul's gospel with that of Jesus, while at the same time he feels that we probably know more about him today than Paul did almost 2,000 years earlier.

Apart from a few minor typographical errors (e.g., Rom 1:13 f. should be 1:3, p. 246), one major difficulty throughout is Bornkamm's acceptance of only seven letters as authentic. He rejects the Pastoral Epistles, Ephesians, Colossians, and II Thessalonians, which fact is determinative of his under-

standing of both Paul's life and theology at several points. If any or all of these were to be regarded as authentic, considerable adjustment would have to be made. By working exclusively out of the uncontested writings, Bornkamm has taken the "safe route." But as is often the case in this approach, he has perhaps left out too much.

In a similar way Bornkamm is overly skeptical of Acts as a source of information on Paul. Time and again with drumming monotony he has occasion to describe Luke's account as something he simply "worked up," or as "absolutely inconceivable" or following a "defective pattern," so that in effect, the "real Paul" is "completely different" (p. xviii) from the man portrayed in the epistles. Bornkamm does not wholly dismiss the material in Acts but rather faithfully wrestles with it, even going so far as to describe the itinerary as "a very valuable source." He explains his regard for Acts in a 15-page introduction entitled, "Paul as Seen in His Letters and in Acts." Here he is certainly justified in his complaint against the uncritical acceptance of tradition and "simplistic conclusions." However, those critical scholars who feel that the evidence points toward a greater reliability of the account in Acts than this book grants will be disappointed and feel that the work is somewhat weakened thereby.

Notwithstanding, *Paul* is well written, well translated, and certainly worthwhile. Those who profited from Bornkamm's earlier *Jesus of Nazareth* and *Early Christian Experience* will find the present work similarly beneficial.

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Brown, Raymond E., Donfried, Karl P., and Reumann, John, eds. *Peter in the New Testament: A Collaborative Assessment by Protestant and Roman Catholic Scholars*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House; New York: Paulist Press, 1973. ix + 181 pp. Paperback, \$1.95.

Fifth in the series *Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue*, this volume is a report of a group of theologians appointed by their respective churches to reassess the role of Peter in the NT. Their evaluation was also intended to serve "as background for ecumenical discussions of the role of the papacy in the universal church" (p iii).

The eleven scholars who contributed to this publication—five Lutherans, four Catholics, one United Church of Christ, and one Episcopalian—have been able to phrase the results of their investigation with an eye toward general intelligibility. Their report is written for the parish clergy and knowledgeable laity as well as for other scholars. In addition to the preface and some initial chapters having to do with the origins and presuppositions of the study, the remainder of the book is occupied with Peter's role in the NT writings in a roughly chronological fashion.

The volume assesses every reference to Peter in the NT, with strongest focus on passages that highlight his role in the ministry of Jesus and in the earliest church. Of particular importance, among others, are a few verses in Mt 16 which in recent centuries have become *the* text cited by the Roman Catholic Church as scriptural basis for its doctrine of papal authority.