

**THE EDIFICE OF EXEGESIS:
THE STRUCTURE OF C. H. DODD'S BIBLICAL THEOLOGY**

by

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I testify that the work contained therein is my own.

Oswald Gray Barnes

PREFACE

My interest in the life and work of C. H. Dodd began in 1975 during my sophomore year at Belhaven College in Jackson, Mississippi. There I was privileged to take a course entitled "The New Testament in Current Studies," taught by Dr. Knox Chamblin. One of the course requirements was the writing of a term paper. I chose the topic, "C. H. Dodd, Joachim Jeremias, and Dan Otto Via: A Comparison of Parabolic Interpretations." During my junior year I took a course on the book of Romans from Dr. William S. Smith and continued my interest in Dodd by writing a term paper on Dodd's contribution to the propitiation/expiation debate, focusing my attention on his understanding of the ἱλασμός word group. But it was during my senior year that I genuinely became fascinated with Dodd. Dr. Chamblin taught a course entitled "The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ." Our textbook was Dodd's last published book, *The Founder of Christianity*.

This little book made quite an impact upon our class because there we were in a supposedly conservative school reading a supposedly liberal work. Several students objected to this requirement, surmising that, if they read the book, Dodd the pied piper would escort them into the abyss of theological damnation. Such was far from the case. As is true in any academic exploration, we learn the most from those with whom we disagree. My study of *The Founder of Christianity* introduced me to the critical study of the gospels, although some would say Dodd's book was a return to the old pre-critical days.

While a student at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, I had the pleasure of taking a course in John, taught by Dr. Lamar Williamson, professor of Biblical Studies at the Presbyterian School of Christian Education. I met with him once a week to read through the gospel in Greek and to discuss my parallel readings in Dodd's

works, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* and *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*. Needless to say, that experience was a spiritual and intellectual feast. In addition, I along with twenty others rode the rapids of the Greek of Romans under one of America's esteemed Pauline scholars, Dr. Paul Achtemeier. Dodd's commentary on Romans was never farther than an arm's reach away.

In November 1981 I was accepted by the University of Edinburgh as a Supervised Post-Graduate student in the faculty of divinity. Professor Hugh Anderson was appointed as my primary supervisor and Dr. Douglas Templeton, secondary. I wanted to continue studying C. H. Dodd, and Professor Anderson suggested the title of my thesis be "C. H. Dodd's Biblical Theology, with Particular Emphasis on His Hermeneutical Principles and Procedures." Since Professor Anderson went on sabbatical my first year in Edinburgh, Dr. Templeton filled in as my primary supervisor. In May 1985 Professor Anderson retired, and Professor J. C. O'Neill was elected to fill the vacancy. Since Dr. Templeton had been with me from the beginning of my study, Professor O'Neill thought it wise that Dr. Templeton be appointed as my primary supervisor with O'Neill as secondary.

No words can express the debt of appreciation I have for Dr. Templeton. He has always been there for me as a friend, counselor, and supervisor. I shall always remember the hours that we spent in his office, drinking some of the strongest coffee in the world, discussing "wee Charles Harold." While I was his student, Dr. Templeton wrote his creative interpretation of the Apostle Paul, *Re-exploring Paul's Imagination*(1988). My interviews with F. W. Dillistone, the late George B. Caird, and J. K. S. Reid would have been more difficult to arrange without his help. In fact, I would not have been able to accomplish a major part of my research without the interview with Professor Caird, for Caird led me to Mansfield College Library, Oxford, where Dodd's unpublished papers had been stored. Dr. Templeton persuaded me to focus my attention on Dodd's views on

biblical interpretation rather than on every area on which Dodd wrote. This advice resulted in the change of my thesis title to "The Edifice of Exegesis: The Structure of C. H. Dodd's Biblical Theology." I would also like to thank his wife Elizabeth for her hospitality in having my wife and me over many times for desserts and discussions, wine and wisdom.

I would also like to express my appreciation to Professor O'Neill for his criticism and encouragement of my work. He made me feel my work was a valuable contribution to biblical scholarship. I would, moreover, like to thank him, the Post-Graduate Committee of New College, and Mrs. Linda Stupart, secretary to the committee, for their generous extension granted me during my present illness.

To every post-graduate student the library is home away from home. Without the assistance of the librarian and staff of New College Library, writing this thesis would have been much more difficult. I would like especially to thank Ian Hope and Norma Henderson for their help in procuring books and periodicals. I am indeed grateful to the librarian for providing the Post-Graduate Reading Room for our use. The friendships made with other post-graduates as we worked together in that cold room will live on. Michael Simmons, Warwick Ross, David Berry, John Lentz, and Jim Miller I thank for the good times we shared. On several occasions I visited the Mansfield College Library, Oxford, and I would like to record my thanks to the librarian for her assistance.

I am grateful to the members of the British Society of New Testament Studies who shared with me at conferences in Edinburgh and Manchester their reminiscences of Dodd, as well as their opinions of his work. A special word of thanks goes to Amos N. Wilder, Kenneth Skelton, R. McL. Wilson, and Ian Moir, who lent me valuable notes of Dodd's lectures that they had taken as his students, and to Wilder, F. W. Dillistone, the late George B. Caird, and J. K. S. Reid for their willingness to be interviewed.

Our stay in Edinburgh would not have been as happy without the companionship of our neighbors in the 15 Nelson Street flats. To Stewart and Ann Wilson we give our thanks for being our closest friends as well as top-flat neighbors.

On the western shore of the Atlantic I would like to thank friends and family who have supported me during this period of research:

—to my students at Belhaven College, whom I taught Bible in 1987;

—to the Mature Adults Sunday School Class at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Jackson, Mississippi, whom I had the pleasure of teaching Winter Quarter 1987;

—to the members of First Presbyterian Church of Florala, Alabama, whom I have had the pleasure of serving as pastor;

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—to my former teachers: J. Knox Chamblin, William K. Wymond, William S. Smith, Walter A. Elwell, J. Julius Scott, George E. Ladd, Jack B. Rogers, James Smiley, Paul Achtemeier, Jack D. Kingsbury, and Lamar Williamson;

—to the members and ministers of the Brandon United Methodist Church and the Brandon Presbyterian Church, from whom I learned the stories of Jesus;

—to all those who became my “ears” and permitted me with my birth defect to hear lectures and seminars by allowing me to read their notes;

—to my audiologist, Dr. Miles Lewis, of New Orleans, Louisiana, who has worked with me since I was seven years old;

—to the Bill Wilkerson Speech and Hearing Clinic, Nashville, Tennessee, for fitting me with hearing aids before I came to Edinburgh;

—to seven special friends, Carolyn Kirkland, Annie Sawyers, Milton Winter, Jimmy McClanahan, Will Berger, Brock and Fay Burnett;

—to my in-laws, Dr. and Mrs. F. T. Lake, and to her mother, Mrs. S. W. Plauché,
Jr.

—to my cousins, Mrs. W. W. Benton, the late Mr. W. W. Benton, Dr. W. Wilson
Benton, and Miss Ann Benton;

—to my uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph L. Barnes;

—to my dear brother and sister-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph B. Barnes;

—to my father, who went home to his reward 30 July 1973;

—to my wonderful mother, Mrs. W. G. Barnes, Jr., who taught me to read, to study,
and to love;

—to my Heavenly Father, whose grace is sufficient for all our needs.

And in the spirit of Matthew 20:16, I wish to record my thanks to my wife Sara for her patience, her prayers, and her perseverance in helping me reach the end of this milestone in our life together. As we close the student days of our marriage with the completion of this thesis, I rejoice that a new chapter has begun. On 3 September 1989 she became the mother of our first child, Heather Grace Barnes.

Oswald Gray Barnes

Mother's Day 1990

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB	The Anchor Bible
ABC	Eiselen, Frederick C., Lewis, Edwin, and Downey, David G., eds. <i>Abingdon Bible Commentary</i> . New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1929
ABRL	The Anchor Bible Reference Library
ALS	autographed letter signed
AMs	autographed manuscript
ATR	<i>Anglican Theological Review</i>
AusBR	<i>Australian Biblical Review</i>
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
Bab. Sanh.	Babylonian Talmud, <i>Sanhedrin</i>
BCPI	<i>Biblical Perspectives on Current Issues</i>
BGD	Bauer, W. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 2nd. edition revised by Gingrich, F. W. and Danker, F. W. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1979
BJRL	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</i>
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentaries
BNTE	Davies, W. D., Daube, David, eds. <i>The Background of the Bible and Its Eschatology</i> . (Studies in Honour of C. H. Dodd), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956
BT	<i>The Bible Translator</i>
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CJT	<i>Canadian Journal of Theology</i>
CongQ	<i>Congregational Quarterly</i>
Corp. Herm.	<i>Corpus Hermeticum</i>
CQR	<i>Church Quarterly Review</i>
CTL	Crown Theological Library
CTM	<i>Concordia Theological Monthly</i>

Dillistone, <i>Dodd</i>	Dillistone, F. W. C. H. <i>Dodd: Interpreter of the New Testament</i> . Grand Rapids: William. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977
Dodd, <i>AccordSS</i>	<i>According to the Scriptures</i>
<i>ApostPD</i>	<i>The Apostolic Preaching and Its Develolements</i>
<i>AuthB</i>	<i>The Authority of the Bible</i>
<i>BibT</i>	<i>The Bible To-day</i>
<i>ChristRN</i>	<i>Christfianity and the Reconciliation of the Nations</i>
<i>EpistsJohn</i>	<i>The Johannine Epistles</i>
<i>Founder</i>	<i>The Founder of Christianity</i>
<i>GospNT</i>	<i>The Gospel in the New Testament</i>
<i>Historical Tradition</i>	<i>Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel</i>
<i>InterpFG</i>	<i>The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel</i>
<i>Meaning of Paul</i>	<i>The Meaning of Paul for Today</i>
<i>MNTStudies</i>	<i>More New Testament Studies</i>
<i>NTStudies</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>Parables</i>	<i>The Parables of the Kingdom</i>
<i>Present Task</i>	<i>The Present Task in New Testament Studies</i>
<i>Romans</i>	<i>The Epistle of Paul to the Romans</i>
<i>DNT</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>DSS</i>	<i>The Dead Sea Scrolls</i>
ed(s).	editor(s)
<i>EDT</i>	Elwell, Walter A., ed., <i>Evangelical Dictionary of Theology</i> , Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984.
<i>EpR</i>	<i>Epworth Review</i>
E.T.	English translation
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
<i>ETh</i>	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>

<i>EvQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>ExpT</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
FBBS	Facet Books, Biblical Series
gen. ed.	general editor
<i>HDB</i>	<i>Harvard Divinity School Bulletin</i>
<i>HeyJ</i>	<i>Heythrop Journal</i>
<i>HibJ</i>	<i>Hibbert Journal</i>
<i>HistEccl</i>	Eusebius's <i>Ecclesiastical History</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
ICC	The International Critical Commentary
<i>IDB</i>	Buttrick, G. A., gen. ed. <i>The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i> . 4 volumes. Nashville: Abingdon, 1962
<i>Interp</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>ISBE</i>	Bromiley, Geoffrey W., gen. ed. <i>The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia</i> . Fully revised. 4 volumes. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979–88
<i>JAAR</i>	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JBR</i>	<i>Journal of Bible and Religion</i>
<i>JEH</i>	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>KD</i>	<i>Kerygma und Dogma</i>

<i>KThR</i>	<i>King's Theological Review</i>
LCT	Library of Constructive Theology
LJS	Lives of Jesus Series
LS	letter signed
LSJ	Liddell, H. G., and Scott, R. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> , revised by H. S. Jones. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940; with Supplement, 1968
<i>LTQ</i>	<i>Lexington Theological Quarterly</i>
LXX	The Septuagint
ⲙ	Majority Text (textus a plerisque codd praebitus)
Metzger, <i>TC</i>	Metzger, Bruce, M. <i>A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament</i> . New York: United Bible Societies, 1971
MNTC	The Moffatt New Testament Commentary
ms(s)	manuscript(s)
MT	Masoretic Text
NCBC	New Century Bible Commentary
n. d.	no date
<i>NDT</i>	Ferguson, Sinclair B., Wright, David F., and Packer, J. I., eds. <i>New Dictionary of Theology</i> . The Master Reference Collection. Downer's Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1988
NEB	The New English Bible
NICNT	The New International Commentary on the New Testament
<i>NIDCC</i>	Douglas, J. D., gen. ed. <i>The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church</i> . Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1974
<i>NIDNTT</i>	Brown, Colin, gen. ed. <i>The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology</i> (Translated, with additions and revisions, from the German <i>Theologisches Begriffslexikon zum Neuen Testament</i> , eds. Lothar Coenen, Erich Beyreuther and Hans Bietenhard). Regency Reference Library. Grand

Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House. 1978; volume 4, 1986

NIV	<i>The New International Version</i>
<i>NorTTs</i>	<i>Norsk Teologisk Tidsskrif</i>
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Supplement to <i>Novum Testamentum</i>
n.s.	new series
NT	New Testament
NTH	New Testament Handbook
<i>NTI</i>	Marshall, I. Howard, ed. <i>New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods</i> . Exeter: Paternoster, 1979
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OBS	Oxford Biblical Series
OT	Old Testament
Ⓟ	papyrus
passim	here and there
<i>PCB</i>	Black, Matthew, and Rowley, H. H., eds. <i>Peake's Commentary on the Bible</i> . Revised and reset edition. Nelson, 1962
PNTC	Pelican New Testament Commentaries
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
REB	The Revised English Bible
<i>ResQ</i>	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
<i>RevExp</i>	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
<i>RevQ</i>	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
<i>RHPR</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses</i>
<i>RGG</i>	Galling, K., ed. <i>Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i> , 7 volumes, 3rd. edition, 1957-65
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology

<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
SNTSMS	Society of New Testament Studies Monograph Series
ST	Studies in Theology
TD	typewritten document
<i>TDNT</i>	Kittel, Gerhard, and Friedrich, Gerhard, eds. <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . 10 vols. trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964-76
TDS	typewritten document signed
<i>ThB</i>	<i>Theologische Blätter</i>
Theod.	Theodotion
<i>ThT</i>	<i>Theology Today</i>
<i>TL^S</i>	<i>Times Literary Supplement</i>
<i>TLZ</i>	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
TM _s	typewritten manuscript
TM _s S	typewritten manuscript signed
TNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
TPINTC	Trinity Press International New Testament Commentaries
<i>TRE</i>	Krause, Gerhard, and Muller, Gerhard, eds., <i>Theologische Realenzyklopädie</i> , Band IX, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1982
<i>TWNT</i>	<i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</i>
<i>TynB</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
<i>USQR</i>	<i>Union Seminary Quarterly Review</i>
v.	verse
VC	<i>Vigiliae christianae</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
<i>WTJ</i>	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neu testamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

At the close of his inaugural lecture as Norris-Hulse Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University in 1936, C. H. Dodd said:

The ideal interpreter would be one who has entered into that strange first-century world, has felt its whole strangeness, has sojourned in it until he himself has lived himself into it, thinking and feeling as one of those to whom the Gospel first came; and who will then return into our world, and give to the truth he has discerned a body out of the stuff of our thought....

This is an ideal. That any of us, or all of us together, will be able to realize it fully, or to give a final interpretation of the New Testament, final even for our own age, is not to be supposed. But here our task lies.¹

Dodd dedicated his professional ministry to this task. Recognized as one of the greatest New Testament scholars of this century,² Dodd, over the course of seven

¹C. H. Dodd, *The Present Task in New Testament Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936), 40–41. The initial citation of a book written by Dodd will give full reference information; the remaining citations of the same book will use the abbreviations listed on page ix.

²See, e.g., W. G. Kümmel, *The New Testament: The History of the Investigation of Its Problems*, trans. S. McLean Gilmore and Howard C. Kee (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1973), 384; Raymond F. Collins, *Introduction to the New Testament*, with an introduction by John P. Meier (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1983), 58; John A. T. Robinson, "Theologians of our Time: C. H. Dodd," *ExpT* 75 (1963–1964): 100–104; K. W. Kim, review of *About the Gospels*, by C. H. Dodd, *JBR* 19 (1951): 95; Ernest Best, review of *The Founder of Christianity*, by C. H. Dodd *Biblical Theology* 22 (1972): 49; and John Reumann, introduction to *The Old Testament in the New*, by C. H. Dodd, FBBS (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963), vi. Robert Morgan and John Barton, *Biblical Interpretation*, OBS (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 306, recently stated their opinion that Dodd was the greatest British scholar and interpreter of this century. Dodd's contributions were recognized by the Society of Biblical Literature in 1942, when he was made an honorary member of the society, Ernest W. Saunders, *Searching the Scriptures: A History of the Society of Biblical Literature, 1880–1980* (Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1982), 107. He was made a Companion of Honour

decades, wrote over twenty books and over 170 articles, essays, lectures, sermons, and reviews.¹ Almost all his major works have had the reputation of establishing new trends in biblical scholarship, and he himself is regarded as one of the leading pioneers of the biblical theology movement.²

Dodd was aware that his study of the New Testament was largely influenced by his background and limited by his "individual, national, and ecclesiastical

for his work in translating the New English Bible and was elected Fellow of the British Academy in 1946, see George B. Caird, "Charles Harold Dodd, 1884–1973," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 60 (1974): 508.

¹An almost complete bibliography has been published by Ronald William Graham, *Charles Harold Dodd, 1884–1973: A Bibliography of His Published Writings*, Lexington Theological Seminary Occasional Studies (Lexington, Kentucky: Lexington Theological Seminary Library, 1974). A bibliography of Dodd's writings which he regarded as noteworthy up to 1954 is printed in his Festschrift, *The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology*, ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), xiii–xviii. This was brought up to 1961 by E. E. Wolfzorn, "Bibliography of the Works of Charles H. Dodd," *ETL* 38 (1962): 63–70. (N.B. Dodd was known as "Harold," not "Charles.") See John Coolidge Hurd, Jr., ed., *A Bibliography of New Testament Bibliographies* (New York: Seabury Press, 1966), 63. J. Tundo Williams brought the bibliography up to 1970 in an appendix to the printed report of a lecture given to the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorian on 8 October 1974, entitled *Aspects of the Life and Works of C. H. Dodd*. Although this report is unavailable for our use, the bibliography is reprinted in Dodd's biography by F. W. Dillistone, *C. H. Dodd: Interpreter of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Co., 1977), 249–51. While researching this thesis, the author has found several of Dodd's published works which have been omitted from the bibliographies mentioned above. They have been included in the bibliography of primary sources in this thesis. In addition, the author has been granted access to Dodd's unpublished works, which are located in the Mansfield College Library, Oxford. Those unpublished works which are readable are listed in the bibliography.

²I. Howard Marshall, "They Set Us in New Paths I. The New Testament: Paths without Destinations," *ExpT* 100 (1988): 11–12. F. F. Bruce, "Exegesis and Hermeneutics, Biblical," *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed., *Macropaedia*, vol. 7 (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1982), 67, but cf. James D. Smart, *The Past, Present, and Future of Biblical Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979), 58. R. H. Lightfoot, review of *History and the Gospel*, by C. H. Dodd, *Theology* 38 (1939): 337, writes concerning Dodd's pioneering work, "Students of the New Testament...have learned to look to [Dodd] for leading and direction in certain new paths, unknown to the pre-war generation, but now in the process of being opened up." In his sermon preached at A Service of Thanksgiving for the Life and Work of Charles Harold Dodd held at Westminster Abbey on 25 January 1974, J. K. S. Reid said, "Repeatedly [Dodd] inserted seminal ideas into the context which could then never be quite the same again. The landscape he left behind him is studded with notable concepts standing like landmarks that will outlast a lot of time."

standpoints.”¹ He recognizes that critics of every age work under the intellectual climate of their time, and he confesses that he himself is not immune to this condition.² In an early book, *The Authority of the Bible* (1928), he speaks at length of the ways in which “the extensive background of experience and tradition”³ can unintentionally create a canon of interpretation in our subconscious mind which guides our understanding as we read the Bible. “All religious readers,” Dodd maintains, “in fact go to the Bible with some sort of presupposition. However firmly they may believe that they accept ‘the Word of God’ without question, they have certain prior beliefs which determine their interpretation.”⁴ Any discussion of C. H. Dodd’s biblical theology or of his hermeneutical procedures that did not take into consideration elements of his background that could have contributed to the formation of his presuppositions, would be deficient.⁵

¹C. H. Dodd, “Thirty Years of New Testament Study,” *Religion in Life* 19 (1949–1950): 323; idem, “Constructive Theology. X. Revelation,” *ExpT* 51 (1939–1940): 449: “Our whole response to life is largely moulded by our place in history”; idem, “The Resurrection,” TMs, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford, “We are still conditioned by our own idiosyncrasy of mind, temperament, inherited ideas, upbringing, and the like”; idem, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, MNTC (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1932), 179, “Heredity, whether physical or social, does account for much in establishing certain predispositions. National character is a real thing, even though individual character must be the personal achievement of the individual.”

²C. H. Dodd, *The Bible To-day* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948), 25–26.

³C. H. Dodd, *The Authority of the Bible*, 1st ed., LCT (London: Nisbet and Co., 1928), 6.

⁴Ibid. See Rudolf Bultmann, “Is Exegesis without Presuppositions Possible?” *Existence and Faith: Shorter Writings of Rudolf Bultmann*, trans. and ed. Schubert M. Ogden (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1960), 289–96.

⁵Dodd followed this procedure in his interpretation of the theology of Paul. For example, in *The Meaning of Paul for To-day* (London: Swarthmore Press, 1920), Dodd assumes that Paul’s letters reflect his experience (p. 16); therefore, Dodd spends the first two chapters of the book analyzing Paul’s background and experience. In a later work, “The Thought of Paul,” *A Source Book of the Bible for Teachers*, ed. Robert C. Walton, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1970), 313–25, Dodd prefaces his description of Paul’s thought with a study of Paul’s Jewish heritage and of his debt to primitive Christian thought. This approach is required because “any man’s thought is necessarily formed in part by his background and environment, as well as by personal

Graham N. Stanton, in his lucid essay, "Presuppositions in New Testament Criticism," points out that there are subtle differences between the prejudices and the presuppositions of an interpreter. 'Prejudices' he defines as the "personal factors which affect the judgment of the interpreter"; 'presuppositions' he describes as "the philosophical or theological starting point which an interpreter takes and which he usually shares with some others."¹ Stanton makes the point that before any scientific investigation of a text can take place, the interpreter is challenged, as a first step, to put forward his presuppositions.² This step is necessary because it supposedly will explain why the conclusions of equally competent scholars differ so widely. Following a similar point made by John Knox, Dodd writes in an unpublished typewritten paper that "it is now very generally agreed among historians that the idea of a historiography completely free from presuppositions is a chimaera, but the presuppositions ought to be acknowledged."³ He then proceeds to discuss two of these theological presuppositions: that the gospel writers wrote in good faith and that they and their informants were genuinely interested in the facts about Jesus.⁴

experience" (p. 313). See also idem, "The Life and Thought of St. Paul," *The Teacher's Commentary*, eds. G. Henton Davies and Alan Richardson, rev. ed., (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1955), 368–69, where Dodd states that the study of three formative factors must preclude the analysis of Paul's thought: his thinking as a rabbi during his pre-Christian days, his knowledge of the Christian faith at the time of his Damascus Road experience, and his own Christian experience as it matured afterwards. See also J. R. Coats, C. H. Dodd, et. al., *The Gospel of the Cross* (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1918), 51.

¹Graham N. Stanton, "Presuppositions in New Testament Criticism," *NTI*, 61; cf. C. H. Dodd, review of *The Gospel in the Early Church*, by James Mackinnon, *CongQ* 11 (1933): 475.

²Ibid. C. H. Dodd, "Some Johannine 'Herrnworte' with Parallels in the Synoptic Gospels," *NTS* 2 (1955–1956): 75.

³C. H. Dodd, Untitled Paper on Presuppositions, TMs, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford. In this paper Dodd quotes from Raymond Bloch's book, *The Origins of Rome*, ET 1960, and he has penciled in an unreadable quotation from a journal article dated Dec. 14.67. On the basis of internal evidence, we can date this manuscript sometime in the late 1960s.

⁴Ibid. Dodd makes the same point in *How to Read the Gospels* (London: Press and Publications of the Church Assembly, [1941]), 24, and in *The Founder of Christianity*

We must, therefore, examine some of these elements in C. H. Dodd: the climate of his early years, his classical education at Oxford University, his conversation with German theology, and his commitment to Congregationalism.

Climate of Dodd's Early Years

Charles Harold Dodd was born on 7 April 1884, in Wrexham, Denbighshire, North Wales. The eldest of four sons of Sarah and Charles Dodd, he came from a family rooted in the Independent tradition, both on his father's side and on his mother's. The Dodds worshipped at Pen-y-bryn Congregational Church—also known as Salem Chapel, where Mr. Dodd was deacon, choirmaster, and Sunday School teacher.¹ It was upon these two geographical foci—home and church—that Dodd's life was centred during the first eighteen years of his life. Because he rarely left the vicinity of Wrexham, except for the family's annual fortnight holiday, and because communication with the outside world beyond Wales was still slow at that time, Dodd was somewhat isolated from any exchange of new ideas. Home and church provided him with “an abiding framework of reference to which he remained loyal and for which he continued to be grateful throughout his career.”² Indeed, at his ordination service in 1912, he testified that he owed everything to the influence of home and church;³ moreover, twenty-three years later at his Ingersoll Lecture at Harvard University, he commented that

(London: William Collins Sons and Co. Ltd., 1971), 18.

¹G. V. Price writes that Pen-y-bryn Chapel was founded in 1783 as an Independent Church where infant baptism was practiced, “English Nonconformity since the Toleration Act (1689),” *A History of Wrexham, Denbighshire*, ed. A. H. Dodd (Wrexham: Hughes and Son, 1957), 185. He notes further (p. 187) that Mr. Charles Dodd was a “devoted member” of that church, “with a fine influence among the young.”

²F. W. Dillistone, *Religious Experience and Christian Faith* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1981), 91. See also J. S. King, “C. H. Dodd and E. C. Hoskyns,” *KThR* 7 (1984): 1–3.

³Dillistone, *Dodd*, 14.

human personality...is not 'simple' but indefinitely complex. In particular it is constituted out of personal relations. From the beginning of our individual existence we throw out tentacles, as it were, to other persons, and they throw out tentacles to us; and even before self-consciousness dawns we are already caught up in a network of such relations by which our individuality is determined.¹

Dodd wrote an unpublished autobiographical memoir in the 1920s of his early years in Wrexham entitled "The Vanished Order."² From this memoir we derive two important beliefs shared by home and church which affected him for the rest of his life. First, he became aware of the importance of reading the Bible and obeying its commandments. Although he says that he cannot recall the contents of the sermons he heard in church as a small boy, he could recollect the emphasis given to the reading of the Bible.³ Unquestionably, the Bible was authoritative in matters of faith and conduct. To live one's life according to the Scriptures was to obey Christ. He writes:

The one distinctive dogma...which had effective force with us was that of the authority of the Scriptures. The Bible was the Word of God, 'the lawbook of the Church'; it was our textbook of morals, and it took the place of creeds and confessions whose use as standards of faith was deprecated. The Bible, it was assumed, would lead a diligent reader into true faith, without any need for those 'man-made' guides. It was read daily and systematically at family prayers. We were expected to study it privately and to commit passages to memory. Its truth and 'verbal inspiration' were taken for granted, in theory at least; in practice, like all sensible persons, we took liberty to make reservations.⁴

Second, Dodd acquired a strong sense of community, nurtured by the tradition of Congregationalism. The Wrexham of his boyhood was divided between the Established Church and the Dissent. Although the two communities lived side by side, they had no dealings with each other. The Independents bought their food from an

¹C. H. Dodd, "The Communion of Saints," *New Testament Studies* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1953), 145.

²Unfortunately, this document is not available for use in this thesis. Most of it, however, is quoted in Dillistone, *Dodd*, passim; and highlights in it are referred to in Caird, "Charles Harold Dodd," 497-98.

³C. H. Dodd, "The Vanished Order," quoted in Dillistone, *Dodd*, 34.

⁴*Ibid.*

Independent grocer, their clothes from an Independent clothier, and so on. "To do otherwise," notes Dodd, "would have been felt as disloyalty."¹ Through the pattern of exclusiveness practiced by the Independent community, Dodd became aware of the principle of particularity: "We were certainly never told that we were of the 'Elect'; if anyone had said so it would have been embarrassing. But it was in fact the presupposition of our attitude to religion and to life. It justified the strict discipline under which we lived and the sharp distinction between 'professing Christians' and the worldly."²

He goes on to say:

If I were to characterize briefly our religious situation, I shall say that it represented a very late survival of a tradition that had been immensely living and powerful. Its forms lingered among us, and still held significance, when they had almost vanished over most of the country—or at any rate most of England. But the ideas and experiences which had originally given life to the forms were scarcely present. A deep and ever passionate loyalty to the tradition itself, to the community in which it was embodied, and to family associations of many generations was, I believe, the most effective motive.³

As Dodd grew older, this insulation gradually gave way to the infiltration of new ideas inimical to the cherished traditions of the community. He discusses two of these ideas in "The Vanished Order." The first is evolution. He writes: "The doctrine of evolution, after a long time-lag, began to penetrate into our circle. I recall clearly what may have been the first time I heard it discussed. I was about twelve at the time.... Someone mentioned 'this evolution that they talk about,' could it be reconciled with the teaching of Holy Writ?"⁴ Thus, the debate began in Dodd's mind whether or not the Bible and science were compatible.

The fact that it was not until the mid-1890s that the people in Dodd's circle heard

¹Ibid., 29; see also Caird, "Charles Harold Dodd," 497–98.

²Ibid., 34.

³Ibid., 36.

⁴Ibid., 35.

about the new theories of science illustrates well how stringently insulated the community was from outside influences. In Victorian England, Anglicans and Nonconformists had been appraising the enormous expansion of scientific knowledge for years. Elliott-Binns points out that, in spite of the heritage of Bacon and Newton, it was not until the founding of the Royal Institution in 1797 that science “began to shake off the swaddling clothes of medieval times”¹ and made advances. In 1803, Dalton's atomic theory shifted the interest in science from the gigantic to the minute, from the general to the specific. Darwin applied this principle to his study of biology and recorded the results in *The Origin of Species* (1859). By accepting Lyell's theory propounded in *Principles of Geology* (1830) that the earth had been evolving during vast ages and that it was not the product of six days of divine creation, he suggested that evolution worked through a process of natural selection over a period of millennia. Lyell carried Darwin's theory a step further in 1863 when he published *Evidence of the Antiquity of Man*, in which he gave to man “an existence upon the earth which far exceeded anything that had hitherto been supposed.”² Evolution at once challenged the Creation Stories in Genesis and the accepted biblical chronology of Archbishop Ussher, and Anglicans and Nonconformists alike began to debate the relationship between science and the Bible.³

¹L. E. Elliott-Binns, *Religion in the Victorian Era* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1936), 153.

²*Ibid.*, 154. For further discussions of the influence of Lyell and Darwin upon Englishmen in the Victorian Era, and of the relationship between science and religion in general during this period, see *ibid.*, 153–71; *idem*, *English Thought, 1860–1900: The Theological Aspect* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1956), 32–59; *idem*, *The Development of English Theology in the Later Nineteenth Century* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1952), 37–47; John T. Wilkerson, *1662 and After: Three Centuries of English Nonconformity* (London: Epworth Press, 1962), 149; Willis B. Glover, *Evangelical Nonconformity and Higher Criticism in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Independent Press Ltd., 1954), *passim*; John S. Andrews, “German Influence on English Religious Life in the Victorian Era,” *EvQ* 44 (1972): 228; Bernard M. G. Reardon, “Keeping up with Recent Studies XV. Nineteenth Century Religious Thought B. British and American,” *ExpT* 98 (1987): 100–104.

³For the Anglican response, see Elliott-Binns, *English Thought*, 32–59; and for the Nonconformist response, see Glover, *Nonconformity*, *passim*. Note R. W. Dale's

Second, Dodd learned early of the results of biblical criticism. He writes: "The beginnings of biblical criticism too reached our ears. [He then discusses the time when he became aware of the late dating assigned to the book of Daniel.] Here were the first mutterings of the storm that was to overwhelm so many of our ancient landmarks. But the examples I have chosen show how slightly, for the time, we were affected by them."¹ Neill has documented the provenance of biblical criticism in the first chapter of *The Interpretation of the New Testament, 1861–1961*. Although higher-critical principles of interpretation were constantly being formulated by the best minds in Germany during the first half of the nineteenth century, English theologians, for the most part, remained ignorant of them.² This ignorance prevailed until the publication of *Essays and Reviews* in 1860 by a group of scholars mostly from the University of Oxford. One of the writers, Benjamin Jowett, had studied in Germany and was eager to introduce the critical methods he had learned there to the scholars of England. He asked the question, Is the Bible to be read like any other book? And the answer of the contributors to *Essays and Reviews* was an emphatic "yes."³ The Church of England condemned the book and began legal proceedings against Jowett and his colleagues; but the damage had already been done: biblical criticism was here to stay. Biblical inerrancy was dethroned as the basis of the authority of the Bible, and the more liberal

comments concerning the Roman Catholic response, *Essays and Addresses* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1899), 50. This address was delivered in 1869, although published in 1899.

¹Dodd, "The Vanished Order," quoted in Dillistone, *Dodd*, 35–36.

²Stephen Neill, *The Interpretation of the New Testament, 1861–1961* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 29. He notes (p. 3) that few Englishmen had taken the trouble to learn German and that there were not many accurate translations of German theological literature.

³*Ibid.*, p. 30. Jowett's essay, "On the Interpretation of Scripture," was 104 pages. For a further evaluation, see F. F. Bruce, "The History of New Testament Study," *NTI*, 43–44, and G. W. H. Lampe, "The Bible since the Rise of Critical Study," *The Church's Use of the Bible: Past and Present*, ed. D. E. Nineham, SPCK Paperbacks (London: SPCK, 1963), 125–30.

scholars began to use the new principles of biblical criticism in their work. In addition, the orthodox interpretation of Genesis came under scrutiny from an Anglican bishop. In 1862 Bishop Colenso published the first volume of his study of the Pentateuch, demonstrating to his satisfaction inaccuracies in the narrative and challenging Mosaic authorship. Hooker notes in this regard that Colenso's views caused more uproar than those of the theologians because "the world at large takes little notice of theological pronouncements from professors, but protests vigorously when the same pronouncements are made by a bishop."¹ With this background, we can imagine the reactions of the members of the Independent community in Wrexham to some of the higher-critical views propagated in the 1890s.

Although evolution and biblical criticism were incompatible in principle with the staunch beliefs of the Wrexham Independents, through these ideas Dodd realized that there were other possible ways of understanding reality than those advocated within the conservative circle to which he belonged. Throughout his academic life he had an open mind toward other positions, but he never relinquished the basic tenets of his conservative ancestral heritage. We shall point out examples of his attitude at the appropriate points in this thesis.²

¹M. D. Hooker, "Ministerial Training: the Contribution of A. S. Peake," *EpR* 12 (1985): 64. Hooker obviously has in mind the outrage engendered by the Bishop of Durham's statements on the resurrection in 1984.

²It will benefit us to remember the wise words of M. D. Hooker that "when we read the work of scholars written seventy-five years ago, it is necessary to remember the situation in which they were working. We need to make a mental adjustment, similar in some ways to that which we make when reading the Bible itself, putting ourselves back into a past era," "New Testament Scholarship: Its Significance and Abiding Worth," *BJRL* 63 (1981): 425. Indeed, Dodd's first eighteen years in Wrexham belong to a past era. He comments that at that time Wrexham "must have been a full generation behind the development of most parts of England," "The Vanished Order," quoted in Caird, "Charles Harold Dodd," 497. The installation of electricity supply in 1890, the extension of the railway lines, and the invention of the telephone and the wireless helped speed the infiltration of new ideas into isolated Wrexham. See George G. Lerry, *Wrexham: The Centenary Handbook* (Cheltenham and London: Ed. J. Burrow and Co. Ltd., 1957), 30; and Ernest A. Payne, "The Free Churches: Their History and Witness," *Who's Who in the Free Churches (and Other Denominations)* ed. L. G. Pine, 1st ed. (London: Shaw Publishing Co. Ltd., 1951), xxii.

Classical Studies

Dodd's classical education was the second major factor in the development of his *modus operandi*. Caird remarks, "No one who knew him in later years could have doubted that he was the product of a classical education, equally at home with languages, literature, and philosophy."¹ Dodd began his classical education at the age of nine by sitting in on his father's Latin classes for teachers because that language had been dropped from the Brookside Boys' School which he attended. By his twelfth birthday, he became proficient enough to read Caesar.² This ability helped him eventually to win a scholarship to Grove Park Secondary School. His father, however, did not allow him to accept it because he did not want people to think that special privileges had been granted to his son because he was the headmaster of the school.³ When Dodd matriculated at Grove Park in 1906, he studied under the brilliant classics teacher A. E. Leckenby, who introduced him to the study of Greek language and literature and led him to a further mastery of Latin.⁴

During the next six years, Dodd became proficient enough in these languages to win an Open Scholarship at University College, Oxford. This award, however, did not guarantee him a place at the University, for he had to pass the entrance examination which took place twice a year. Responsions, "the narrow gate through which all Oxonians must pass,"⁵ consisted of translation of unseen passages in Greek and Latin

¹Caird, "Charles Harold Dodd," 498.

²Dillistone, *Dodd*, 23-24; see also p. 220. By this time Dodd had taught himself Welsh.

³Mr. Dodd was involved in the British and Victoria Schools of Wrexham as teacher and as principal from 1884-1919, A. H. Dodd, *History of Wrexham*, 334. See further Dillistone, *Dodd*, 21; J. S. King, "C. H. Dodd and E. C. Hoskyns," 1.

⁴Dillistone, *Dodd*, 26. By this time, Dodd had committed to memory long portions of Virgil, Livy, Thucydides, Demosthenes, Euripides, and other classical authors, and it is to his credit that he could still recall such passages in his later years. See John A. T. Robinson, "Theologians of our Time: C. H. Dodd," 100.

⁵J. Wells, *Oxford and the Oxford Life* (London: Methuen and Co., 1892), 70-71.

authors, translation from English into Greek and Latin prose, and English questions or compositions designed to test general intelligence.¹ He passed the examination with honours and matriculated at University College in October 1902.²

According to *The Students' Handbook to the University and Colleges of Oxford*, a B.A. candidate who had passed Responsions "[would] have to pass or obtain exemption from two examinations—the First Public Examination conducted by Moderators, and improperly called 'Moderations', and the Second Public Examination, vulgarly called 'Greats'."³ Dodd read for Honours, unlike most of the students who read for a Pass Degree. He was guided in his preparations for Classical Honour Moderations by the excellent Classics Tutor, A. B. Poynton, a born teacher, who stressed the necessity of precision in the mastery of languages. Dodd's biographer remarks that rigorous exactitude in matters of grammar, syntax, and vocabulary was the ideal and indeed the demand set before Dodd at the very beginning of his university career.⁴ In Hilary Term 1904 he stood examinations in Classical Honour Moderations, consisting in an examination in Holy Scripture, part oral and part written, and thirty-six hours of written papers in *Literis Graecis et Latinis*, testing his knowledge of classical history, philology, and translation.⁵ He won the coveted First Class Honours.

In 1904 Dodd began the second part of his classical education at Oxford. It consisted of the study of Greek and Roman history on the one hand and the study of

¹*The Students' Handbook to the Universities and Colleges of Oxford*, 16th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903), 18–19.

²Dillistone, *Dodd*, 42.

³*Students' Handbook*, 134.

⁴Dillistone, *Dodd*, 44.

⁵*Students' Handbook*, 134, 144–45. See further R. G. Collingwood, *An Autobiography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), 12.

philosophy on the other. We must remember that the study of Latin and Greek was a prerequisite for these disciplines. Writing on "The Place of Classics in Education," A. N. Whitehead shows how the study of classical languages helps one to analyze the peculiarities of historical movement. "Exactness, definiteness, and independent powers of analysis are among the main prizes of the study."¹ No doubt this reasoning lay behind the academic procedure in the classics at Oxford.²

For Dodd, his exceptional competence in Latin and Greek enabled him to live and move and have his being in the history, language, and philosophy of ancient Greece and Rome. It qualified him to enter into "that strange first-century world,...thinking and feeling as one of those to whom the Gospel first came."³ He studied ancient history under R. W. Macon, an authority on Herodotus. Macon emphasized the learning of the *facts* of history but neglected the *interpretation* of those recorded facts. Although in the 1920s and the 1930s Dodd worked out his own theory of the interpretation of history, he owed to Macon his encyclopaedic knowledge of the events of history.⁴ In ecclesiastical history he studied under A. J. Carlyle, who admonished him not to neglect the "implicit history" contained in the Pauline Epistles and the Fourth Gospel.⁵ In philosophy he worked under A. S. L. Farquharson, an

¹A. N. Whitehead, "The Place of Classics in Education," *HibJ* 21 (1922–1923): 257. He says (p. 250), "In classics we endeavor by a thorough study of languages to develop the mind in the regions of logic, philosophy, history, and of aesthetic apprehension of literary beauty. The learning of languages—Latin or Greek—is a subsidiary means for the furtherance of this ulterior object."

²N.B. *Students' Handbook*, 164, "The dominant note of the Examination is in fact general culture upon a firm classical basis."

³See above, 1, n. 1. In 1951 Dodd commented as President of *Novi Testamenti Societas* that "most theologians down to those of my own generation were brought up on the old classical curriculum, and could easily take Paul and John for their contemporaries on much the same terms as Cicero, Virgil, and Pliny." "A Problem of Interpretation," *Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas*, Bulletin II, (Oxford: Oxonian Press, Ltd., 1951), 8.

⁴Dillistone, *Dodd*, 44.

⁵C. H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge

authority on Aristotle, and E. F. Carritt, whose interest lay in moral and political philosophy and in aesthetics. Dodd stood examinations in the Final School of Literae Humaniores during Trinity Term 1906. The first examination was entirely written. He was required to demonstrate his ability to translate Greek (in particular Plato and Aristotle) and Latin (especially the Latin historians), his knowledge of specific periods of Greek and Roman history, and his mastery of political philosophy, moral philosophy, and logic. Three weeks later he was examined orally on his written examination and was awarded another First Class Honours.¹ Thus, his classical education at Wrexham and at Oxford provided him well with the necessary tools to begin New Testament research: discipline of mind, use of original sources, and a command of languages.²

Conversation with German Theology

After graduation, Dodd served as an assistant in the classics department at Leeds University during Michaelmas Term, but, by New Year's Day, he returned to Oxford, teaching part-time and working on the German language, while deciding on a topic for his special research in ancient history. His choice, Roman imperial numismatics, afforded him the opportunity to spend a term in Berlin, a city unparalleled in resources in that area. While in Germany, he increased his fluency

University Press, 1953), 446, n. 3.

¹*Students' Handbook*, 256–63; Dillistone, *Dodd*, 46.

²Many New Testament scholars have testified to the benefits of Dodd's classical education toward the development of his biblical theology. See "An Open Letter by the Editors to Charles Harold Dodd," *BNTE*, v; "In Memoriam: Charles Harold Dodd, 1884–1973," *NTS* 20 (1973–1974): i; Caird, "Charles Harold Dodd," 498; Robinson, "Theologians of our Time," 100. E. G. Selwyn's comment is instructive: "Few would deny that for a flourishing theology some classical learning is a *sine qua non*, for Latin and Greek are the original languages of the great majority of the major documents, and these cannot be properly studied without them. But that is not all that is to be said. The classics are the seed-plot of the common culture of Europe." "The Outlook for English Theology" *Theology* 40 (1940): 13. See also F. F. Bruce, "The New Testament and Classical Studies," *NTS* 22 (1975–1976): 229–42.

in German and obtained a first-hand acquaintance with German theology by attending lectures given by such scholars as Adolf von Harnack and Bernhard Weiss.¹ Dillistone says that "here indeed for the first time the contrast between the British and the German traditions became clear to [Dodd]."² Some of these contrasts—along with some positive influences—can be traced through a brief review of three theologians with whose writings Dodd acquainted himself during his summer in Germany.

Adolf von Harnack

Adolf von Harnack (1850–1931) taught theology at Leipzig, 1876–1879; Giessen, 1879–1886; Marburg, 1886–1888; and Berlin from 1888. A professor of impeccable integrity, indefatigable energy, and encyclopedic intellect, Harnack drew large crowds to his fresh, creative, and powerful lectures. Dodd fell under his spell, attending his lectures and assimilating his thought.

Harnack influenced Dodd in three ways. First, he gave Dodd the example of a masterful teacher-historian. Many of Harnack's former pupils have testified to the drama and to the pungency of his lectures;³ Dodd later said that he had borrowed much of his lecture style from Harnack.⁴ But, more important, Harnack

believed it to be the highest task of the historian to prepare his fellow man for right action in the present. 'Only that history which is not yet past but which is and remains a living part of our present deserves to be known by us all,' he wrote. Hence, he regarded all history as mute as long as it is nothing but a display of antiquarian interest or dealt with only in terms of archaeology, that

¹Dillistone, *Dodd*, 60. Dodd also attended lectures given by U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf and F. Delitzsch.

²*Ibid.*, 222.

³See the testimonies by Bornemann and Bonhoeffer recorded in William Pauch, "Adolf van Harnack," *A Handbook of Christian Theologians*, eds. Martin E. Marty and Dean C. Peerman, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1965), 93–94; Dillistone, *Dodd*, 55.

⁴Dillistone, *Dodd*, 110.

is, as long as it is understood to be merely a record of past human life.¹

Harnack's philosophy of the historian as a teacher who relates the past to the present and understands the present in light of the past had a considerable influence upon Dodd during 1907–1908 because he had come to a crossroads in his life—he had to decide whether he was going to become an historian of antiquity and investigate coins, inscriptions, and artefacts or to become a historian of the ancient biblical world and attempt to make the Bible's message relevant for today.

Second, Harnack gave Dodd a superficial view of dogma which Dodd found appealing because it conformed with his theological upbringing. Harnack descended from the neo-Kantian school of philosophy and the Ritschlian school of theology, and he constructed his interpretation of dogma using the presuppositions of these schools. In his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant had argued that the knowledge of transcendent objects is impossible because they are out of the range of human knowledge limited to sensory experience. Ideas such as God, freedom, and immortality find their *raison d'être* in man's moral consciousness. During the latter forty years of the nineteenth century, the neo-Kantians came along and added their ingredients to basic Kantianism. For example, Lotze was concerned with the idea of value and “argued that religion is not primarily an intellectual matter but involves judgments of value which are irreducible to judgments of fact or necessity, and therefore are not to be tested by purely theoretical canons.”² Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1889) began his teaching career as a Hegelian and accepted Baur's portrayal of early Christianity, but in 1857 he rejected both views. Metaphysics and the traditional formulations of church dogmas he repudiated; propositional religious statements he understood not as statements of fact but as value-judgments.³

¹William Pauck, *Harnack and Troeltsch*, 17–18, quoted in *ibid.*, 55.

²John Macquarrie, *Twentieth-Century Religious Thought: The Frontiers of Philosophy and Theology, 1900–1980*, 2nd. rev. ed., (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1981), 75–76.

³*Ibid.*, 76; Kümmel, *The New Testament: The History of the Investigation of Its*

With all these ideas Harnack found favor. In his *Outlines of the History of Dogma* he writes, "The history of dogma, in that it sets forth the process of the origin and development of the dogma, offers the very best means and methods of freeing the Church from dogmatic Christianity and hastening the inevitable process of emancipation, which began with Augustine."¹ This process is necessary for several reasons:

The claim of the Church that the dogmas are simply the exposition of the Christian revelation, because deduced from the Holy Scriptures, is not confirmed by historical investigation. On the contrary, it becomes clear that dogmatic Christianity (the dogmas) in its construction was *the work of the Hellenic spirit upon the Gospel soil*. The intellectual medium by which in early times men sought to establish it securely, became inseparably blended with the content of the same. Thus arose the dogma, in whose formation, to be sure, other factors (the words of sacred Scripture, requirements of the cult, and of the organization, political and social environment, the impulse to push things to their logical consequences, blind custom, etc.) played a part, yet so that the desire and effort to formulate the main principles of the Christian redemption, and to explain and develop them, secured the upper hand, at least in the earlier times.²

Furthermore, Harnack writes in another work that "the movement in which the product of theology became dogma, the way which led to it must be obscured; for, according to the conception of the church, dogma can be nothing else than the revealed faith itself. Dogma is regarded not as the exponent, but as the basis of theology."³ For Harnack, the husk of dogma obscured the kernel of Christianity. If modern humanity were to understand the gospel, then the husk of dogma had to be cracked from the kernel. Harnack attempted to do this cracking in his 1899–1900 lectures published as *Das Wesen des Christentums*, representing, as Aulén says, "in elegant form the view

Problems, 162.

¹Adolf von Harnack, *Outlines of the History of Dogma*, trans. Edwin Knox Mitchell, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1893), 7–8.

²Ibid, 5.

³Adolf von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, 2nd. ed., vol. I, trans. Neil Buchanan, (London: Williams and Norgate, 1897), 9.

of nineteenth-century liberalism.”¹ Perhaps no other book was more enthusiastically received on the continent than this one,² but in Great Britain it was bitterly criticised.³ The educated masses readily accepted Harnack's conclusions. He had unlocked the chains of doctrinal rigidity which had incarcerated them from understanding the simplicity of Jesus' teaching of the kingdom of God and its coming, God the Father and the infinite value of the soul, the higher righteousness, and the commandment of love.⁴ Coming from a church tradition of simplicity and piety, Dodd could appreciate Harnack's point.

Third, Harnack influenced Dodd by giving him several paradigms for his work. He gave him, first of all, an historical methodology consistent with Dodd's presuppositions of the contaminating influences of dogma on the development of biblical theology. This methodology aimed at the determination of what was of permanent value in the gospel “to find out what was essential” and “to distinguish kernel and husk.”⁵ Dodd used this methodology in order to assess what he called “the true value of the Scriptures.” He says that

we need to find a truer method of approach than that of the old dogmatism. It will be a method which will give attention to the personal and the historical element in the Scriptures. By this I mean that they should be read as the
utterances

¹Gustaf Aulén, *Jesus in Contemporary Research*, trans. Ingalill H. Hjelm, (London: SPCK, 1976), 5.

²Neill, *The Interpretation of the New Testament: 1961–1961*, 131; Dillistone, *Dodd*, 56.

³E.g., see the criticisms by William Sanday, *An Examination of Harnack's "What is Christianity?"* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901, and the point-by-point refutation of Sanday by Harnack's translator Bailey Saunders, *Professor Harnack and His Oxford Critics* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1902). Undoubtedly, Dodd participated in discussions about Harnack before going to Berlin. For a survey of the history of the debate on *Das Wesen des Christentums*, see the section “Literatur zu Das Wesen des Christentums,” in K. H. Neufeld, *Adolf Harnacks Konflikt mit der Kirche* (Innsbruck: Tryrolia, 1979), 207–16.

⁴Adolf von Harnack, *What is Christianity?* trans. Thomas Bailey Saunders, (London: Williams and Norgate, 1901; Harper Torchbook edition, (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), 8, 51.

⁵*Ibid.*, 12–13.

of real individual men, who wrote out of their own intensely personal experience; and they should be read as the record of an historic process of discovery or revelation, in which the cumulative experience of individuals through many generations built up a firm structure of faith and knowledge of God.¹

Dodd also learned from Harnack a methodology for interpreting the kingdom of God through the study of the parables. Harnack writes that "if anyone wants to know what the kingdom of God and the coming of it means in Jesus' message, he must read and study the parables."² Hiers has correctly noted that Dodd's early writings on the kingdom of God mirror many of Harnack's interpretations in *What is Christianity?*³ Although Jesus at times referred to the kingdom as a future cataclysmic event, Harnack maintains that its essential meaning was its presence in the hearts of men.⁴ In *The Gospel in the New Testament*, Dodd says that "the kingdom of God means God reigning, reigning in the hearts of men," clearly manifesting the influence of Harnack.⁵ With regard to the study of the parables, Harnack published a book in 1906, translated into English in 1908 as *The Sayings of Jesus*.⁶ One of the book's conclusions was that the parables in Q of the mustard seed and the leaven represent the kingdom of God as a growing power, making it possible to regard the new epoch which dawned with the active ministry of Jesus as already the epoch of the

¹Dodd, *AuthB*, 12–13.

²Harnack, *What is Christianity?*, 56.

³Richard H. Hiers, Jr., "Pivotal Reactions to the Eschatological Interpretations: Rudolf Bultmann and C. H. Dodd," *The Kingdom of God in 20th-Century Interpretation*, ed. Wendell Willis, (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988), 18.

⁴Harnack, *What is Christianity?*, 56.

⁵C. H. Dodd, *The Gospel in the New Testament*, Every Teacher's Library—13, (London: National Sunday School Union, [1926], 19.

⁶Adolf von Harnack, *The Sayings of Jesus: the Second Source of St. Matthew and St. Luke*, CTL-23, trans. J. R. Wilkinson, (London: Williams and Norgate, 1908). In Amos N. Wilder, handwritten lectures notes of "Teaching of Jesus According to Tradition Common to Matthew and Luke," delivered by C. H. Dodd at Mansfield College, Oxford, 1921–1922, Dodd speaks appreciatively of Harnack's book.

kingdom.¹ Dodd comes to a similar conclusion in his discussions of these Q parables.² This observation will be examined further in chapter four of this thesis.

Finally, Harnack gave Dodd an interest in the investigation of the wider Graeco-Roman world within which the New Testament was written. What were the salient features of that world's thought categories, and, if Harnack were correct, to what degree was the original gospel essence corrupted by its translation and assimilation into these new thought categories? Dodd set out to answer these questions, especially during his Manchester and Cambridge years.³

Johannes Weiss

Johannes Weiss (1863–1914) was professor at Göttingen, 1890–1895; Marburg, 1895–1908; and Heidelberg, 1908–1914. In 1892 with the publication of *Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes*, Weiss shook the foundations of nineteenth century German liberalism, thereby questioning its complacent understanding of the kingdom of God as the subjective experience of God in the heart of human beings.⁴

In *Der christliche Glaube*, Schleiermacher had resurrected the kingdom of God from the graveyard of theological ignorance. His Moravian pietism and his affinity to Romanticism led him to emphasize the subjectivity of religious experience over against the objectivity of dogmatic formulations;⁵ theological assertions now had to be

¹Ibid., 232.

²C. H. Dodd, "The Eschatological Element in the New Testament and Its Permanent Significance," *Interpreter* 20 (1923–1924): 21–22; idem, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (London: Nisbet and Company, 1935; 3rd. rev. ed., 1946), 191–93.

³Dillistone, *Dodd*, 57.

⁴Ernst von Dobschütz, *The Eschatology of the Gospels* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910), 53–54, comments that because of Weiss's book, "there is a strong tendency now among German interpreters to get rid of their own modern views with the aim of looking at the early Christian writings with early Christian eyes,...a tendency historical sincerity combined with some antiquarian feeling."

⁵Alasdair I. C. Heron, *A Century of Protestant Theology* (Guildford: Lutterworth Press, 1980), 26.

made with reference to the self. Perrin explains, "For Schleiermacher, therefore, the Kingdom of God is the corporate God-consciousness which is the existence of God in human nature and which comes into being as a result of Christ' God-consciousness."¹

Albrecht Ritschl took up where Schleiermacher left off. In the third volume of *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung* (1888), Ritschl started a new episode in the history of theology. Ritschl agreed with Schleiermacher on the importance of the kingdom, the rejection of metaphysics, and the concept of *Bewußtseinstheologie*, but he criticized Schleiermacher for not working out fully the ^h theological nature of the kingdom of God and for not clarifying the role of the Mediator.² Ritschl understood the kingdom of God in terms derived from Kantian ethics:

Christianity, then, is the monotheistic, completely spiritual, and ethical religion, which, based on the life of its Author as Redeemer and as Founder of the Kingdom of God, consists in the freedom of the children of God, involves the impulse to conduct from the motive of love, aims at the moral organization of mankind, and grounds blessedness on the relation of sonship to God, and ^a well as on the Kingdom of God.³

He states further:

Those who believe in Christ, therefore, constitute a church in so far as they express in prayer their faith in God the Father, or present themselves to God as men who through Christ are well-pleasing to him. The same believers in Christ constitute the kingdom of God in so far as, forgetting distinctions of sex, rank, or nationality, they act reciprocally from love and thus call into existence that fellowship of moral disposition and moral blessings which extends, through all possible gradations, to the limits of the human race.⁴

¹Norman Perrin, *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1963), 14. Perrin also says (p. 13) that "the modern discussion of the Kingdom of God in the teaching of Jesus may be said to begin with Schleiermacher," but Gösta Lundström, *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus*, trans. Joan Bulman, (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1963), and Ernst Staehelin, *Die Verkündigung des Reiches Gottes in der Kirche Jesu Christi. Siebentes Band: von der Mitte des 19. bis zur Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Basel: Friedrich Reinhardt AG, 1964) omit Schleiermacher from their surveys of the history of research.

²Albrecht Ritschl, *The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation*, trans. and eds. H. R. Mackintosh and A. B. Macaulay, (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1900), 9–10. See James Richmond, *Ritschl: A Reappraisal* (London: Collins, 1978), 266–313 for a discussion of Ritschl's relationship with Schleiermacher and other theologians.

³*Ibid.*, 13.

⁴*Ibid.*, 285.

Thus Ritschl and his school saw the kingdom not as a gift but as an assignment,¹ “the goal of a human program, attainable by individual or social effort.”²

In less than sixty-seven pages, Weiss excoriated this liberal interpretation of the kingdom of God in *Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes* (first edition published in 1892). Ironically, Weiss was the student and son-in-law of Ritschl. While listening to Ritschl, Weiss was disturbed that Ritschl's interpretation of the kingdom of God was entirely different from Jesus' teaching. He writes in the foreword to the second edition of *Die Predigt*, “The clear perception that Ritschl's idea of the Kingdom of God and the corresponding idea in the proclamation of Jesus were two very different things disturbed me quite early. My publication of 1892 was an attempt to stress this difference sharply and vigorously.”³

Weiss saw two basic differences. First, he pointed out that Jesus' conception of the kingdom of God was primarily of an eschatological event and not of an ethical relationship between God and man. In quite severe words he writes

Thus we learn...that as Jesus conceived of it, the Kingdom of God is a radically superworldly entity which stands in diametric opposition to the world. This is to say that there *can* be no talk of an *innerworldly* development of the Kingdom of God in the mind of Jesus! On the basis of this finding, it seems to follow that the dogmatic religious-ethical application of this idea in more recent theology, an application which completely stripped away the original eschatological-apocalyptic meaning of the idea, is ^{not} justified. Indeed, one proceeds in a sense different from that of Jesus.... The Kingdom of God as Jesus thought of it is never something subjective, inward, or spiritual, but is

¹See, e.g. Harnack, *What is Christianity?*, 67: “[Jesus] offered [the disciples] a gift and with it a task”; Lundström, *Kingdom*, 10–12.

²Hugh Anderson, *Jesus and Christian Origins: A Commentary on Modern Viewpoints* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 165.

³Johannes Weiss, *Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes*, 2nd. rev. ed., (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1900), v, quoted and translated in Richard H. Hiers and David Larrimore Holland, introduction to Johannes Weiss's *Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God*, trans. and ed. by idem, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1971), 6. Hiers and Holland's edition—Weiss's first edition (1892)—is the only edition translated into English. Weiss's ^{work is} revised and expanded ⁽¹⁹⁾ the second (1900) and third (1964, edited by Ferdinand Hahn) editions.

always the objective messianic Kingdom.¹

Second, Weiss traced the source of Jesus' conception of the kingdom to late Jewish apocalypticism which taught the doctrine of the dualism of two worlds, one above and one below. "Whatever happens on earth," Weiss says, "has its exact parallel in heaven. All history is only the consequence, effect, or parallel copy of heavenly events."² Seeing Jesus' teaching in the light of apocalypticism and eschatology, Weiss concluded that Jesus expected the kingdom to come immediately in Jesus' lifetime, but the kingdom did not come. Because of this delay, Weiss says that Jesus expected the kingdom to come in the future after his death. To prepare humanity for entering the kingdom, Jesus announced a new morality, a new ethic as the condition for entering.³

Albert Schweitzer

Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965), lecturer at Strasburg from 1902 until 1913, when he went to Lambarene as a medical missionary, wrote that Weiss's *Die Predigt* "was one of the most important works in historical theology. It seems to break a spell. It closes one epoch and opens another."⁴ Schweitzer contributed to the debate about eschatology with the publication in 1906 of *Von Reimarus zu Wrede*, translated into English in 1910 as *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. Because Weiss's *Die Predigt* had not yet been translated, most of the English-speaking world became familiar with Weiss's views through Schweitzer's book and mistakenly regarded Schweitzer as the inventor of the eschatological interpretation.⁵

¹Johannes Weiss, *Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God*, LJS, 1st. ed., ed. and trans., with introduction by Richard H. Hiers and David Larrimore Holland, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1971), 114, 133.

²Weiss, *Jesus' Proclamation*, 74. Note the discussion of this idea in Hiers and Holland, introduction, 8–9, and in Perrin, *Jesus and the Kingdom*, 67.

³*Ibid.*, 105–107, 132–34. See Ben F. Meyer, *The Aims of Jesus* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1979), 41–43.

⁴Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, 2nd. English ed., trans. W. Montgomery, (London: A. and C. Black, Ltd., 1926), 239.

⁵William Sanday, *The Life of Christ in Recent Research* (Oxford: Clarendon Press,

Schweitzer was concerned with the life of Jesus as pictured by nineteenth century German liberalism. In 401 pages he carried on “a running guerrilla warfare”¹ with the 251 authors he mentioned in the index. Cadoux, in “The Historical Jesus: A Study of Schweitzer and After,” shows how Schweitzer had transformed the understanding of the Life-of-Jesus Research so that things could never be the same again.² Dillistone notes that one critic said that Dodd had fought against Schweitzer all his life,³ and in the revised edition of *The Parables of the Kingdom* (1961), Dodd relates, “At the time when I began serious study of the New Testament, this problem [of the relation of eschatology to the kingdom of God] had been forced into the centre of discussion, above all through the powerful influence of Albert Schweitzer.... My work began by being orientated to the problem as Schweitzer had stated it.”⁴

How did Schweitzer state the problem? And what were his solutions to the problem? How did he influence Dodd? Schweitzer wanted to understand Jesus as a person of the first-century world; he carped at any use of modern categories of interpretation superimposed upon Jesus. In opposition to the liberals, he maintained that it was impossible to clothe Jesus in modern dress. A modernized Jesus—“a figure designed by rationalism, endowed with life by liberalism, and clothed by modern theology in historical garb,”⁵ would be unintelligible to the contemporary world. The liberals, he said, had misused the sources and had read their own theological and

1907), 59, notes that he had to borrow Burkitt's copy of *Die Predigt* and actually became familiar with Weiss's work through Schweitzer.

¹Neill, *The Interpretation of the New Testament: 1861–1961*, 192, uses this description of Schweitzer. Sanday, *The Life of Christ*, 45, says that Schweitzer was “no respecter of persons” in *Von Reimarus zu Wrede*.

²C. J. Cadoux, “The Historical Jesus: A Study of Schweitzer and After,” *ExpT* 46 (1934–1935): 406–410. He traces Schweitzer's influence upon theological works up to 1934.

³Dillistone, *Dodd*, 57.

⁴Dodd, *Parables*, vii.

⁵Schweitzer, *Quest*, 237.

philosophical presuppositions into the evidence. Schweitzer, like Weiss, therefore, pointed out the hermeneutical gulf between Jesus and the modern world because Jesus, as an historical figure, belonged only to the first century: "The historical knowledge of the personality and life of Jesus will not be a help, but perhaps even an offence to religion.... Jesus as a concrete personality remains a stranger to our time."¹

Moreover, because Jesus had to be interpreted in terms of *His* own world, the eschatological and apocalyptic elements of His life and teaching had to be brought to the forefront. Schweitzer agreed with Weiss that Jesus' preaching and teaching had eschatological aspects, but he proposed that Weiss did not go far enough because Weiss had failed to see the eschatological character of Jesus' life and teaching. Weiss went only half-way. "He makes Jesus think and talk eschatologically without proceeding to the natural inference that his actions also must have been determined by eschatological ideas."² Thus Schweitzer developed his view of eschatology called "konsequente Eschatologie," translated as "thorough-going eschatology" or "consistent eschatology."³

Schweitzer also insisted on interpreting Jesus in terms of apocalypticism. British scholars reacted to this insistence by considering the impact of this novel view upon their own research.⁴ From now on apocalypticism had to be reckoned with in any

¹Ibid., 399.

²Albert Schweitzer, *Out of My Life and Thought*, trans. C. T. Champion, (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1933, 1949), 48. See also Lundström, *Kingdom*, 70–71; Perrin, *Jesus and the Kingdom*, 30–31; Kümmel, *The New Testament: The History of the Investigation of Its Problems*, 238–40; Neill, *The Interpretation of the New Testament: 1861–1861*, 197.

³Dobschütz, *The Eschatology of the Gospels*, 58, prefers to call it "radical eschatology."

⁴On the impact on British scholars, see Cadoux, "The Historical Jesus," 407–410; idem, *The Historic Mission of Jesus: A Constructive Re-examination of the Eschatological Teaching in the Synoptic Gospels*, Lutterworth Library–12 (London: Lutterworth Press, 1941), 3–5; A. M. Ramsay, *From Gore to Temple* (London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1960), 171–74, the appendix, "The Influence of Albert Schweitzer"; and Perrin, *Jesus and the Kingdom*, 56–64. George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), 8, notes that consistent eschatology has never taken deep

discussion of the kingdom of God. The conference of German and British theologians on the kingdom of God held at Canterbury 2–9 April 1927—of which Dodd was a member—was a direct reaction to Schweitzer. Elements of Schweitzer's thought found unsatisfactory became new areas of research.

Now that the views of Weiss and Schweitzer have been briefly surveyed (the two must be considered together because Schweitzer built upon Weiss's foundation), we must ask how Dodd was influenced by them. First, as previously stated, Dodd had to orientate himself to the question of the relationship of the life and ministry of Jesus to His teaching of the kingdom of God by using Schweitzer's interpretation as his starting point. True, in the first four decades of this century Schweitzer's interpretation had few supporters, but no one could adequately refute it and proffer a better interpretation.¹ Dodd dealt with Schweitzer's views in a series of lectures at Mansfield College in 1921–1922. In one lecture he gives his summary of Schweitzer's position:

Schweitzer starts denying that later theology reflects largely in Mark. [He] denounces reading between the lines, especially the second whole period of defeat. [He] hates psychological method and says Jesus [was] so different we cannot attempt to explain his psychology. [He] accuses liberals of taking Jesus out of true historical event and germanizing Jesus! Jesus' events dominated by messianism, he says. Only since recent researches (Dr. Charles) that we begin to understand the world of thought of that time.²

Furthermore, Schweitzer believes that

Jesus thought [the] kingdom would come at coming at harvest (*sic*). Schweitzer admits that his whole view rests upon pivot of holding this discourse [Matthew 10] a real discourse and not an agglomeration of sayings; but all reasonable criticism seems to show it is such an agglomeration of sayings. Jesus seems to have thought only real obstacle was lack of workers at this time.³

root in England.

¹Cadoux, "The Historical Jesus," 406–410. Dobschütz, *The Eschatology of the Gospels*, 57, says that many of Schweitzer's friends in Germany were surprised by the one-sidedness of his views and refused to follow him.

²Amos N. Wilder, handwritten lecture notes of "Synoptic Data for a Life of Jesus," delivered by C. H. Dodd at Mansfield College, Oxford, 1921–1922.

³Dodd, "Teaching of Jesus According to Tradition Common to Matthew and Luke." See B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins* (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1951, 255, n. 1.

In "The Close of the Galilean Ministry," Dodd suggests that Schweitzer is correct in arraigning the accepted "liberal" scheme of the ministry of Jesus in three well-marked stages: popularity, alienation from the people, and final conflict and catastrophe.¹ Two years later in a significant article in which he adumbrated his views on the kingdom of God, Dodd writes that Schweitzer and his school insist that we must decide between "all eschatology" and "no eschatology." Dodd confesses timidly that he belongs to a party which seeks a *via media*.² And in a 1931 article "The Church in the New Testament," Dodd notes that Schweitzer propounds the view that Jesus proclaimed the imminent Kingdom of God; Dodd, however, prefers "already present" to Schweitzer's "imminent" kingdom.³

Because of Schweitzer's work, Dodd was challenged, as he says, "to face the fact without throwing the blame on later theological reflection as Wellhausen did; to turn attention to eschatology; and to hold to the fundamental assertion of the messianic consciousness of Jesus."⁴ Consequently, Dodd's theory of realized eschatology "rescued New Testament scholarship from the cul-de-sac into which Weiss and Schweitzer had directed it."⁵ Without the theological legacy of Weiss and Schweitzer, Dodd possibly might not have developed his interpretation of the kingdom of God to the extent that he did.⁶ In fact, Dodd says that "[Schweitzer's] own reconstruction has

¹C. H. Dodd, "The Close of the Galilean Ministry," *Expositor* 8th ser. 22 (1921): 280, n. 1.

²Dodd, "The Eschatological Element in the New Testament," 20.

³C. H. Dodd, "The Church in the New Testament," *Essays Congregational and Catholic*, ed. Albert Peel, (London: Congregational Union of England and Wales, 1931), 14.

⁴Dodd, "Synoptic Data for the Life of Jesus."

⁵G. B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1980), 252.

⁶Hiers, "Pivotal Reactions," 18, cautions that "Dodd did not undertake directly and systematically to refute Weiss and Schweitzer." He notes that Dodd never mentions Weiss in his writings and makes few references to Schweitzer.

proved no more tenable than those he exposed. His service was to shock the critical world into seeing how insecurely its work stood and how little positive and generally accepted result the Quest of the Historical Jesus had really attained."¹ Second, Schweitzer influenced Dodd by drawing to Dodd's attention the problem of later traditions about the historical facts in the gospels. Unlike Schweitzer for whom the historical Jesus was "One unknown, without a name,"² Dodd never abandoned the quest of the historical Jesus. In chapters one and nineteen of *The Quest* Schweitzer had argued that the gospels presented no biographical materials for understanding the historical Jesus; Dodd, however, could not submit to such a supposition.³ As we study Dodd's views on the authority of the Bible, the philosophy of the Bible, and on the synoptic problem later in this thesis, the influence of these German scholars upon his thinking will become even clearer.

Dodd's visit to Berlin in 1907 must be marked as one of the most important events in his life. He gained a tremendous respect for German scholarship and could speak with authority concerning it because he had immersed himself in the German temperament from which it flowed. "Britain," writes Neill, "has never been able to make up its mind whether it is part of Europe or not."⁴ There was no oscillation in Dodd's mind: his scholarship was not going to be an eclectic painting using all the motley colours of German theology but a painting using the best of these colours as hues

¹C. H. Dodd, "Present Tendencies in the Criticism of the Gospels," *ExpT* 43 (1931-1932): 246-47.

²Schweitzer, *The Quest*, 403.

³See, e.g. C. H. Dodd, *InterpFG*, 446; idem, *Historical Tradition*, 2; idem, *Founder*, passim. In "Results of Recent New Testament Research," *The Listener* (2 August 1951): 185, Dodd writes, "The problem of the 'quest of the historical Jesus'...might be put in these terms: Granted this tradition, firm, central, primitive, what manner of person, what kind of career in history, what events as the climax of that career, are required to account credibly for the tradition, and for the character of the community which stands behind it? So conceived, the 'quest' appears to have good prospect of valuable results." Cf. idem, *History and the Gospel* (London: Nisbet and Company Ltd., 1938), 113.

and highlights—never as primary colours for scale, perspective, or subject matter.

Dodd returned to Wrexham in August 1907 in order to finish his thesis on numismatics. Another opportunity for research opened up for him in December of that year when he discovered that he had been granted a senior demyship in ecclesiastical history at Magdalene College, Oxford. For the next four years he would have sufficient financial resources to enable him to engage in research in Early Christian Epigraphy at Magdalene.¹

Commitment to Congregationalism

During Dodd's second year at Oxford, he wrestled with the idea of entering the Congregational ministry. This possibility never dissipated even while he was gaining in competence and in recognition as a first-rate classical scholar. Believing that it was in conformity with God's will, he made application at Mansfield College, Oxford, on 14 June 1908, and on 10 October 1908, he ate his first meal in the dining hall as a student for the Congregational ministry.² Thus he committed himself to the instruction in that ecclesiastical tradition in which he had been nurtured at home and in chapel. His affirmation of Congregational principles coloured much of his original contributions to New Testament studies, which we shall demonstrate in the relevant portions of this thesis. In fact, no matter how far his theological and ecclesiastical vision was broadened through his participation in ecumenical discussions, he, like all Independents, found it difficult to turn his back on his Congregational "mentality."³

⁴Neill, *The Interpretation of the New Testament: 1861–1961*, 1.

¹Dillistone, *Dodd*, 58; see also *Students' Handbook*, 47, for the regulations concerning demyship. While at Magdalene, Dodd heard lectures given by C. H. Turner and John L. Myres.

²Dillistone, *Dodd*, 60

³C. H. Dodd, "A Letter Concerning Unavowed Motives in Ecumenical Discussions," *Ecumenical Review* 2 (1949–1950): 52–56. He says (p. 53), "We all feel constrained to insist on certain convictions because we must be true to our 'sacred traditions' or our 'historic principles', which we must on no account compromise."

In this section, we shall discuss the influence that Mansfield College had upon Dodd, first, by describing the founding of that college within the context of the history of Congregationalism, and, second, by examining the interests and presuppositions of the professors who taught him. Afterwards, we shall briefly outline some of the salient principles of Congregationalism to which he committed himself at the genesis of his ministry.

The Influences of Mansfield College upon C. H. Dodd

The Founding of Mansfield College

The founding of Mansfield College in 1889 was an historic occasion for Congregationalism.¹ In 1871 the Universities Test Act abolished subscription to the Articles of the Church of England in the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Durham, allowing Dissenters to matriculate at each university. This Act was one of several adopted by Parliament in the nineteenth century that restored or extended religious liberties of Dissenters lost during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.² Enforced uniformity for the Church of England had been the goal of Elizabeth I; many, however, had disagreed with the Queen's objective and became known as the "Separatists," the forerunners of the "Congregationalists." They believed that the church should consist only of Christians who had responded to the call of the gospel and who had covenanted with other Christians to live together as befits the church of Christ. Robert Browne, one of the leaders of the Separatists, in 1582 published in Holland his famous treatise, "Reformation Without Tarrying for Any," in which he affirmed the

¹For details of the opening events, see *Mansfield College: Its Origin and Opening (October 14-16, 1889)* (London: James Clarke and Co., 1890), and W. T. Pennar Davies, *Mansfield College: Its History, Aims, and Achievements* (Oxford: Alden Press, 1947), 18-22.

²For a full discussion of the acts, consult R. Tudor Jones, *Congregationalism in England, 1662-1962*, (London: Independent Press Ltd., 1962), 269-79; R. W. Dale, *History of English Congregationalism* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1907), 609-45; Elliott-Binns, *Religion in the Victorian Era*, 79-83; John T. Payne, "The Free Churches," xx-xxii.

principle of a gathered church, its independence of bishops and magistrates, and its right to ordain its ministers. Forbidden to put these principles into practice in England, many Separatists sailed to Holland and established churches there.¹

Meanwhile, in 1559 Parliament passed the Act of Supremacy, "proclaiming the King as head of the Church, and declaring that by the Word of God all ecclesiastical jurisdiction flows from him."² Later that year, the first Act of Uniformity was passed, making compulsory the use of the Prayer Book of 1552. With the passage of these acts began the persecution of the Dissenters. Following the civil wars of 1642–1646 and 1647–1648, Oliver Cromwell came to power, and the religious life of England was shared among the Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and Baptists.³

Soon after Cromwell's death, Independents lost all emoluments with the return of Charles II from exile and the Restoration.⁴ Parliament passed the Act of Uniformity of 1662,⁵ which required all ministers to declare their "unfeigned Assent and Consent to all and everything contained and prescribed in and by the book entitled The Book of Common Prayer."⁶ Furthermore, it required all tutors and professors in the universities to declare that they would not take arms against the King and that they would also conform to the liturgy of the Church of England and to the oath of the Solemn

¹G. W. Kirby, "Congregationalism," *NIDCC*, 252; W. B. Selbie, *Nonconformity: Its Origin and Progress*, n.d.), 44–46.

²Selbie, *Nonconformity*, 26.

³Daniel Jenkins, *Congregationalism: A Restatement* (London: Faber and Faber, 1954), 23–24; Dale, *History*, 305–43.

⁴The best discussion of this event is Wilkinson's chapter "The Restoration of the Episcopacy," *1662 and After*, 8–43.

⁵The full title is "An Act for the Uniformity of Public prayers and Administration of Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies: and for establishing the form of Making, Ordaining, and Consecrating Bishops, Priests, and Deacons in the Church of England."

⁶Quoted in W. B. Selbie, *Congregationalism* (London: Methuen, 1927), 121.

League and Covenant. This the dissenting ministers could not do; therefore, on the Sunday before St. Bartholomew's Day 1662, two thousand ministers preached their last sermon to their parishes. In the aftermath, persecutions began and continued unabated until Parliament, with royal consent, passed the Toleration Act of 1689. It alleviated some of the heinous penalties levied on the Independents. Independents were now permitted to have their own places of worship with proper registration and to have their own pastors as long as the ministers accepted most of the Thirty-Nine Articles and took certain oaths. It granted, however, no toleration in educational policies: Dissenters were still refused entrance to Oxford, Cambridge, and Durham until 1871. Hence, with this background in view, we can see that the establishment of a college of Dissent at Oxford was unprecedented in the history of the English university system, and, in addition, we can see how the exigencies of Congregational history helped shape the distinctive "mentality" of Independents such as C. H. Dodd. In fact, Dodd expounded on this mentality in "A Letter Concerning Unavowed Motives in Ecumenical Discussions":

In England, I believe the real division between Anglican and Nonconformist lies not so much in the field of doctrines about episcopacy, or in matters of dogmatic theology...; it rather perpetuates a diversity of tradition in English life going back at least to the Civil Wars of the seventeenth century. At that time we did each other wrong in a conflict which was in part religious but in part social and political. However little we may resemble our Cavalier and Roundhead predecessors, I believe their conflict is in our bones. We dissenters (to speak for the party I know), after enjoying political power and prestige for a few years, emerged as the defeated party, and the fact, I believe, colours our subconscious reactions.... Since the seventeenth century English life has largely flowed in two separate currents, one of which has been mainly associated with the established Church, and the other with the dissenters. On each side there are standards, ideals, habits, convictions, prejudices, which taken together make up a distinctive mentality, largely determining our first response at least to any question that comes up. This mentality is only partly, perhaps only to a slight degree, dependent on distinctive religious convictions or traditions, but it is intimately bound up with them, and constantly acts upon them. We always need to ask whether our tenacity in defending certain positions may be due to something other than pure doctrinal logic.¹

When Dodd matriculated at Mansfield College, he was not entering foreign

¹C. H. Dodd, "A Letter Concerning Unavowed Motives in Ecumenical Discussions," *Ecumenical Review* 2 (1929-1950): 55.

territory. One of the aims of the founders of the college was that it should “meet the spiritual needs of the Free Churchmen in the University, to provide them with a centre and a rallying point.”¹ Dodd had taken advantage of this opportunity throughout his undergraduate years at University College by attending chapel at Mansfield and by eating often in the dining hall. He was acquainted with several professors and occasionally dined in their homes. Now, as a student at Mansfield, he had the privilege of studying under them.²

The Faculty of Mansfield College

The faculty of Mansfield College under whom Dodd studied was most distinguished. It represented the best in the liberal Protestant tradition, “which in its more moderate form...determined the climate of biblical studies in the English universities in the opening decades of the present century.”³ As we have shown, Congregationalism since the Reformation maintained a strict Calvinistic orthodoxy, but in the middle of the nineteenth century this orthodoxy gave way to the infiltration of liberal theological views.⁴ In 1875 R. W. Dale published a work on the atonement which denied a penal substitutionary atonement and granted a representative Christology.⁵ Another result of this new liberalism in Congregationalism was the publication in 1907 of *The New Theology* by R. J. Campbell. This book stirred up a

¹Davies, *Mansfield College Oxford*, 13; see W. B. Selbie, “Fifty Years at Oxford,” *CongQ* 14 (1936): 282–84.

²Dillistone, *Dodd*, 50, 61.

³C. H. Dodd, introduction to *The Roads Converge: A contribution to the question of Christian Reunion by members of Jesus College*, ed. P. Gardner-Smith (London: E. Arnold, 1963), 4; see also F. F. Bruce, “C. H. Dodd,” *Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology*, ed. Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, 2nd rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1969), 239–41; V. H. H. Green, *Religion at Oxford and Cambridge* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1964), 345.

⁴See above, p. 9.

⁵Selbie, *Congregationalism*, 169–70.

hornet's nest of controversy because its thesis essentially denied any difference between God and man. Campbell tried to reconstruct theology around the liberal idea of divine immanence.¹ The professors at Mansfield, while following the lead of Dale in modifying orthodox Calvinism, opposed the "New Theology" controversy, as it was called, and attempted to combine modernism with the warmth of evangelical Calvinism.² The most influential faculty members at Mansfield were A. M. Fairbairn, Alexander Souter, George Buchanan Gray, J. Vernon Bartlet, and W. B. Selbie.

A. M. Fairbairn, the first principal of the college, occupied that position until Dodd's second year. He had laboured for three decades to make Mansfield a respectable institution at Oxford University, for many Anglicans were not delighted with having a college of Dissent there. Fairbairn, moreover, "was enormously learned, a pioneer in theological thought."³ Through his lectures and his writings—notably *The Place of Christ in Modern Theology* (1893) and *The Philosophy of the Christian Religion* (1902)—his students were introduced to Hegelianism, the comparative study of religion, and the use of the historical method.⁴ Of particular interest to us is his *Studies in Religion and Theology*, published in 1910, while Dodd was at Mansfield. This volume is a collection of Fairbairn's lectures and addresses concerning "The Church: in idea and history." It also contains a short section in which he outlines his principles of biblical interpretation.⁵ Dodd was fortunate to have

¹See J. K. Mozely, *Some Tendencies in British Theology* (London: SPCK, 1951), 34.

²Jones, *Congregationalism in England*, 351; Nathaniel Micklem, *What is the Faith?* (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1936), 11–17; Selbie, *Non-conformity*, 245.

³Nathaniel Micklem, *The Box and the Puppets* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1952), 41.

⁴Davies, *Mansfield College Oxford*, 17.

⁵A. M. Fairbairn, *Studies in Religion and Theology: The Church in Idea and in History* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910), 245–52.

been able to attend Fairbairn's lectures during the year 1908–1909, because Fairbairn retired at Easter and died in 1912.¹

In New Testament studies, Dodd studied under Alexander Souter, “a genial, friendly figure, an exact scholar, a typical representative of Browning's Grammarian.”² Souter had written *A Study of Ambrosiaster* (1905) and *Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo* (1908) and was constantly researching in the fields of translation and textual criticism, the fruit of which would appear in works such as *The Text and Canon of the New Testament* (1913), *A Pocket Lexicon to the Greek New Testament* (1916), *The Character and History of Pelagius's Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul* (1916), and *The Original Home of Codex Claromontanus* (n.d.). He regarded Augustine as “the greatest man that ever wrote Latin,” while to him the Epistles of Paul (to whom he was ‘passionately devoted’) were “the most valuable writings in the world.”³ Dodd respected Souter's competence in the classical languages as well as in NT criticism. Souter taught him the mechanics of using his classical training in the service of New Testament exegesis, and he instilled in him his zest for Pauline studies. Needless to say, Dodd made the transition from the study of classical Greek to the study of koine Greek with ease, and he acquired an expert understanding of the idioms and nuances of both.⁴

¹ Fairbairn is the subject of a worthy biography by W. B. Selbie, *The Life of Andrew Martin Fairbairn* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914), and his theological thought is carefully examined by Jones, *Congregationalism in England*, 269, who comments: “Fairbairn was pre-eminently the link between the Victorian religious world and that of the twentieth century; his theology was a ‘mediating theology’. He was the father of Liberal Evangelicalism amongst Congregationalists.... He laid the basis on which his students could build with a care for detail.” See also John Dickie, *Fifty Years of British Theology* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1937), 59–61.

² Dillistone, *Dodd*, 62.

³ Alexander Souter, *The Earliest Latin Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul* (Oxford, 1927), 139, quoted in F. F. Bruce, “The New Testament and Classical Studies,” 230.

⁴ F. W. Gingrich, “The Classics and the New Testament,” *ATR* 15 (1933): 304, writes, “The New Testament scholar with no thorough knowledge of classical Greek must ever remain in the class of the ‘expert’ in the history of the English language who cannot

In Old Testament studies, Dodd sat under George Buchanan Gray. Gray had studied Semitic languages at Mansfield College and had obtained a first class in the school of Oriental Studies in 1891. That year he was promoted to professor of Hebrew and Old Testament Exegesis.¹ He was a follower of the school of biblical criticism represented by J. Wellhausen and S. R. Driver, but, as Driver points out, “he was an independent thinker with a positive and constructive aim essentially his own.”² This was reflected in his writings which covered all aspects of Semitic lexicography, Old Testament introduction, and Old Testament exegesis. He was a committed Congregationalist, “an Independent of the Independents.”³ He provided a counterbalance to Dodd’s strong Hellenistic background in the classics by instructing him in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Syriac. Furthermore, he instructed him in the higher criticism of the Old Testament, a methodology which Dodd accepted and defended in *The Authority of the Bible* (1928) and in *The Bible To-day* (1946). Gray served as Speaker’s Lecturer in Biblical Studies (1914-1919) and as Grinfield Lecturer in the Septuagint (1919–1921)—two positions Dodd would later occupy.⁴ As a tribute to the

read Chaucer.” He warns that the NT scholar must not force NT Greek into classical categories. C. F. D. Moule, *The Language of the New Testament: Inaugural Lecture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), surely has Dodd, among others, in mind when he writes (p, 24): “We have come to recognise more clearly than commentators of past generations the relation of κοινή Greek as a whole to its antecedents in the classical era, and the fallacy of proceeding on the assumption that the two languages are the same.” In 1929 Dodd made the same observation in review of *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John*, by J. H. Bernard, *CongQ* 7 (1929); 369, “The new study of Hellenistic Greek has delivered N.T. scholars from the classical obsession which was the bane of the Westcott school (and diminished the value of the R.V.). See Dodd’s discussion in “Notes from Papyri,” *JTS* 23 (1922): 62–63, of the uses of ἵνα that have caused much difficulty to those who approach the NT from the standpoint of classical Greek.

¹G. R. Driver, “Gray, George Buchanan,” *DNB* (1922–1930), ed. J. R. H. Weaver (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), 357.

²*Ibid.*

³Micklem, *The Box and the Puppets*, 44.

⁴Driver, “Gray,” 358. Dodd was Grinfield Lecturer 1927–1931 and Speaker’s Lecturer 1933–1937.

influence of George Buchanan Gray upon him, Dodd dedicated *The Bible and the Greeks* to his memory. "Few institutions," remarks Dillistone, "can have been so well equipped at that time to preserve a fruitful balance between the two cultural foundations of our culture than Mansfield with its two eminent teachers, Souter and Gray."¹

J. Vernon Bartlet instructed Dodd in ecclesiastical history. Davies describes him as "something of an oddity—tall and spare, with a piquantly Spanish appearance and erudite manner of utterance."² Having been at Mansfield from its beginning, Bartlet was well-respected by Anglicans at Oxford. His published works included *Early Church History* (1894), *The Apostolic Age* (1900), and the Century Bible commentaries on Mark (1901) and Acts (1901). He had been a charter member of Professor W. Sanday's Oxford Seminar on the Synoptic problem (of which, in its later years, Dodd was a member)³ and was a contributor to the important volume produced by that Seminar in 1911 entitled *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem*.⁴ Under Bartlet, Dodd could relate his encyclopaedic knowledge of Greek and Roman history to the investigation of nascent Christianity. This interaction later found literary expression in Dodd's article "The History of Christianity from the Death of St. Paul to the Reign of Constantine" (1929). In a footnote, he acknowledges his debt to Bartlet for his suggestions and criticism.⁵ But more than an academic relationship developed

¹Dillistone, *Dodd*, 62.

²Davies, *Mansfield College Oxford*, 27.

³C. H. Dodd, "The Tradition Behind the Gospels," TMs, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

⁴J. Vernon Bartlet, "The Sources of St. Luke's Gospel," *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem*, ed. W. Sanday (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), 315–63.

⁵Dodd, "The History of Christianity from the Death of St. Paul to the Reign of Constantine," *The History of Christianity in the Light of Modern Knowledge*, a collected work, with Cyril Bailey, James H. Baxter, Edwin R. Bevan, and others, (London and Glasgow: Blackie and Son, Ltd, 1929), 460, n. 4. Dodd also refers to *Christianity and History* (co-authored by Bartlet and A. J. Carlyle) and to Bartlet's article "The Eucharist in the Early Church" (in *Mansfield College Essays*).

between them: Bartlet became Dodd's trusted adviser and was almost a second father to him since the day they met.¹ It is interesting to note that Bartlet was one of the first at Mansfield to acquire an interest in Christian reunion. In 1908 he told the Third International Congregational Council that he "favoured the closest union possible between denominations provided only that it could be achieved without sacrifice of principles."² He participated in the 1927 World Conference on Faith and Order at Lausanne³ and, for many years, in the negotiations for the establishment of the Church of South India.⁴ Dodd, no doubt, was impressed with the way Bartlet balanced his commitment to Congregationalism with his openness toward ecumenical concerns. Dodd wrote his first article on ecumenism in 1920, and, over the course of his career, he contributed many other articles and participated in countless ecumenical discussions.⁵ In fact, Dodd could write in 1952 that "Ecumenicity is inseparable from genuine Christianity."⁶ His vision of a united church led him to emphasize the universalistic passages of scripture at the expense of the particularistic. As is well

Concerning the latter work, see the comments of John W. Grant, *Free Churchmanship in England 1870-1940* (London: Independent Press, n.d.), 281-282.

¹See Dillistone's comments, *Dodd*, 59, 104.

²Quoted in Jones, *Congregationalism in England*, 362-63; see also Grant, *Free Churchmanship in England*, 260.

³Geoffrey F. Nuttall, "Bartlet, James Vernon," *DNB 1931-1940*, ed. L. G. Wickham Legg (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), 52.

⁴Barry Till, *The Churches Search for Unity*, Penguin Books (Bungay: Chaucer Press, Ltd., 1972), 291-99.

⁵Dillistone, *Dodd*, 193-202. This chapter is entitled "The Friend of Reunion." See also the comments of A. N. Wilder, "Kerygma, Eschatology and Social Ethics," *BNTE*, 510-12. Wilder notes that Dodd's volume *Gospel and Law: The Relation of Faith and Ethics in Early Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), represented an important contribution to one of the basic issues of the ecumenical movement: "to furnish moral leadership to the nations and to the mass-culture of our day."

⁶C. H. Dodd, *Christianity and the Reconciliation of the Nations* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1952), 14.

known, he was a committed universalist; and we shall have to examine this element in his biblical theology.¹ Needless to say, Bartlet had a tremendous impact upon his thinking.

After Fairbairn retired as Principal, W. B. Selbie succeeded him. Selbie had been one of the first students at Mansfield, winning the Septuagint prize in 1888. He stayed on after graduation as Hebrew lecturer but later left for the preaching ministry at Emmanuel Church, Cambridge, before being called back to Mansfield.² Davies makes two comments which shed light on Selbie's influence upon Dodd. First, he writes:

Selbie was a small man physically, and some perceived something mouselike in his appearance; but he soon proved himself to be a lion in more important respects. It is said that when he became Principal he remarked that while Fairbairn's great work had been to make scholars, his own chief aim would be to make preachers. He wanted to turn out men who could save souls.... He had a fighting directness as a speaker, and soon people were flocking to Mansfield College Chapel to hear the word of God by this master of what was emphatically the vernacular.³

Selbie held before Dodd an example of what genuine preaching should be: scholarly in preparation, simple in proclamation. It was he who encouraged Dodd to

¹Dodd, like many of his fellow Congregationalists, was a pacifist. His pacifism arose out of his belief that the philosophy of the Bible—that is, its philosophy of history—prohibits in principle the idea of war. By 1916 Dodd was active in the National Council against Conscription. He was a member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation and attended a peace conference in Cambridge in December 1914. He addressed the Congregational Union Autumn Assembly in 1929 on “The Teaching of Jesus Christ on Christianity and War” (an attempt to find the script of this address proved fruitless), and he addressed the Council of Christian Pacifist Groups meeting in London in 1938. This speech, “The Theology of Christian Pacifism,” was published in a joint document *The Bases of Christian Pacifism*. See further Dillistone, *Dodd*, 72–73, 83–84, 153–55. In many of Dodd's writings he has something to say about war and peace, and we shall discuss his pacifism in the context of his biblical theology in chapters three and six.

²Nathaniel Micklem, “Selbie, William Boothby,” *DNB 1941–1950*, ed. L. G. Wickham Legg and E. T. Williams (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 768.

³Davies, *Mansfield College Oxford*, 34. Micklem, *The Box and the Puppets*, 42, says that the pulpit was Selbie's “throne”; and Jones, *Congregationalism in England*, 372, notes that Selbie and P. T. Forsyth “both represented the scholar in the pulpit.” The same could be said about Dodd.

take the Brook Street Congregational Church in Warwick after graduation.¹ There, having been trained in homiletics by Selbie, Dodd disciplined himself to be a faithful preacher of the Word of God. His sermons were always simple and pellucid—never abstruse or recondite. Like Selbie, he never forgot the man in the pew, but he also never sacrificed the integrity of his scholarship in order to condescend to his listeners. He believed that the most profound truths of scripture could be simplified and made practical. Years after his death, a member of that Warwick congregation said to Dodd's biographer, "We listened to Harold Dodd's quite wonderful sermons and it is a tribute to him that they were really intelligible and gripping to a small boy like myself of 8. I must have acquired much of my biblical knowledge from those sermons at that receptive age."² Many years after the Warwick pastorate, Dodd wrote in his commentary on the Johannine Epistles that a negative response to the preaching of the gospel may often result from two factors: the failure of the preacher in his presentation of the message and the failure of the preacher in his sympathetic understanding of the people to whom he appeals.³ The fact that Dodd's preaching from the pulpit and on the radio generated positive responses from his listeners, indicates his success in these areas of homiletical preparation. Dodd's special interest in preaching carried over into his academic research: *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments* (1936) was his analysis of the form and content of early New Testament preaching and contained his philosophy of preaching in his own time.⁴

¹Dillistone, *Dodd*, 63.

²*Ibid.*, 71.

³C. H. Dodd, *The Johannine Epistles*, MNTC (London: Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd., 1946), 101.

⁴C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments* (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd, 1936)—N.B., all references to *ApostPD* will be from this edition (240 pp.) and not the re-set second edition (96 pp.). See also his comments on preaching delivered to the 1966 meeting of the Spade Conference of Practical Liturgys—a society of Roman Catholic Priests—in idem, "The 'Message' in the Gospels and the Epistles," *The Ministry of the Word*, ed. Paulinus Milner, Congress Books (London: Burns and Oaks, 1967), 45–64.

Second, Davies writes, “As a teacher Selbie was able to maintain and in some respects to supplement the work of Fairbairn. Bartlet points out that Fairbairn was least abreast of modern thought in the sphere of empirical psychology and that here his successor was strong.”¹ Being one of the first Oxonians to use the principles of the New Psychology for interpreting religious experience, Selbie helped introduce this movement to Dodd and convinced him of its legitimacy as a tool for the formation of one’s biblical theology. Dillistone notes that “[Selbie’s] emphasis in the teaching of doctrine was less on metaphysical issues, more on the ethical and psychological problems involved in seeking to relate the Christian faith to the life of the twentieth century.”² We can almost make the same characterization about some of Dodd’s works, especially *The Meaning of Paul for Today* (1920), *The Authority of the Bible* (1928), *The Epistle to the Romans* (1932, MNTC), and his collection of articles on “The Mind of Paul” (1933, 1934). Selbie, moreover, emphasized several theological themes which Dodd incorporated into his biblical theology: the OT prophets as religious geniuses; the solidarity of the universe; the power of sin in the moral universe; and redemption as emancipation.³ Thus Selbie probably had more long term influence

¹Davies, *Mansfield College Oxford*, 34.

²Dillistone, *Dodd*, 63. While Dodd was a student at Mansfield, Selbie wrote *Schleiermacher: A Critical and Historical Study* (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1913). He comments (p. 267): “In all attempts at theological reconstruction, and in the necessary effort to re-write the philosophy of religion in terms of the new psychology, [Schleiermacher] is a force to be reckoned with.” Dodd never mentions Schleiermacher in his writings, but he constantly mentions Rudolf Otto’s *The Idea of the Holy*, which stresses the ‘numinous’ as “that element in religion...which is related to God,” Dodd, *AuthB* 38. Otto descends from Schleiermacher’s school of thought—see the instructive review of *The Idea of the Holy* by Sidney Cave, “The Paradox of Religion. A Study of Otto’s ‘The Holy,’” *Expositor* 25 (1923): 100–113. In 1924, Selbie published *The Psychology of Religion*, recognized by Wilhelm Vollrath, *Theologie der Gegenwart in Grössbritannien* (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1928), 253–54, as the best work on the subject in England at the time. Dodd refers to Selbie’s book in *AuthB*, 136, n. 1. See also Georg Strecker, “Charles Harold Dodd: Person und Werk,” *KD* 26 (January–March 1980): 51.

³W. B. Selbie, *The Servant of God* (New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910), 51, 58–66. For the idea of “religious genius” see Dodd, *AuthB*, passim, and the discussion in chapter two of this thesis; “solidarity,” see C. H. Dodd, *The Meaning of Paul for Today*,

upon Dodd that any other Mansfield professor.

Salient Principles of Congregationalism

Now that we have surveyed the influence of Mansfield College upon Dodd during his theological training, we must canvass some of the more prominent features of Congregationalism. In "The Vanished Order," Dodd writes that, while attended Pen-y-bryn Chapel as a child, he received a thorough grounding in *Congregational Church Principles*.¹ Fairbairn, Bartlet, and Selbie supplemented his early instruction by providing him with exegetical, theological, and practical justification for these principles.

Dodd began his professional ministry in complete loyalty to these fundamentals. At his ordination examination, he was asked why he preferred to exercise his ministry in a Congregational Church. He responded, "I am persuaded that the independent or congregational church-order, at its best, conserves most fully the spirit of the primitive Church and the liberty of the Gospel: and that it gives the fullest opportunity for the exercise of a spiritual ministry, unfettered by superfluous forms whether of Church government, of ritual or of Dogma."²

In 1920 Dodd wrote a brief paper, "Realities at Stake from the Evangelical (Free

Christian Revolution Series—11 (London: The Swarthmore Press, Ltd., 1920), 59–61, 95, 103; idem, *Romans*, 79, where Dodd notes that "solidarity" is an ancient conception only recently rediscovered; idem, *Three Sermons* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1954), 19–20; idem, "The Life and Thought of St. Paul," 374; "sin in the moral universe," see Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, chapter eight, "The Decisive Battle," 94–105; idem, *Romans*, 18–30; idem, "The Life and Thought of St. Paul," 371; and for "redemption as emancipation," see idem, *Meaning of Paul*, chapter eleven, "Emancipation," 106–122; idem, "Colossians," *ABC*, 1253; idem, "History and Doctrine of the Apostolic Age," *A Companion to the Bible*, ed. T. W. Manson, (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1939), 405; in Kenneth Skelton, handwritten lecture notes of "Theology and Ethics of the New Testament II. Method and Content," delivered by C. H. Dodd at Jesus College, Cambridge University, Lent Term, 1940, Dodd says that redemption comes to mean the same as emancipation and that this is Paul's meaning.

¹Dodd, "The Vanished Order," quoted in Dillistone, *Dodd*, 34.

²*Ibid.*, 61.

Church) Side," in which he intended to set forth those principles of Congregationalism which appeared to him to be that tradition's "most permanent and essential contribution to any united Church."¹ He insists that these principles "are not proposed as either exclusive or exhaustive, but as principles which must not be denied in any scheme of reunion."² Indeed, we can say that the principles he mentions are the more salient features of Congregationalism and were generally supported by eminent Congregational churchmen on both sides of the Atlantic.³ By listing these principles from Dodd's article and expanding upon them with references from Dodd's other writings, we can acquire some idea of the ways in which Congregational polity molded his thinking during his formative years. In addition, we shall have an ecclesiastical frame of reference by which to measure his work in order to see at what points he remained faithful to his tradition and at what points, if any, he departed from it.

Members of the Church Must Be Christians

"Religion," writes Dodd, "begins in experience, not in the sense that a movement on our part initiates anything, but that the act of God must enter our experience in order to be a fact of life to us. Let so much be said to justify our starting with a personal experience of God's grace."⁴ Without this experience of grace, no

¹C. H. Dodd, "Realities at Stake from the Evangelical (Free Church) Side," *Interpreter* 16 (1920): 124.

²*Ibid.*

³E.g., cf. Henry M. Dexter, *Congregationalism: What it is; Whence it is; How it works; and Its Consequent Demands* (Boston: Nichols and Noyes, 1865), and R. W. Dale, *A Manual of Congregational Principles* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1884). This is not to say that Congregationalism was static in the elaboration of its principles. Dale's *Manual*, for example, was not accepted by everyone; eventually, it was reprinted without the section concerning the sacraments—see Grant, *Free Churchmanship in England*, 105–11. The value of the *Manual* was that it recalled many Congregationalists to a closer consideration of their traditions. It should be said here that Dale was instrumental in the founding of Mansfield College—see Davies, *Mansfield College Oxford*, 19–20.

⁴Dodd, "Realities," 124; W. B. Selbie, "The Religious Principle of Congregationalism," *Mansfield College Essays: Presented to the Reverend Andrew*

person can claim the name Christian (Eph. 2: 8–9). Membership in God's people is, indeed, *sola gratia*,¹ but formal membership is no proof that one is a Christian.² In this regard Dodd defines the church as “the comity of the forgiven.”³ Dale lays down the principle that personal faith in Christ is the only requirement for admission into the Church because “it is in answer to such a faith that God grants the remission of sins and the gift of a Divine life.”⁴ Moreover, the Church cannot exercise its functions, powers, and privileges, which are authorized by Christ, if its members are persons who do not respect Christ's authority.⁵ The idea that citizens of the State are members of the Christian Church by right of their citizenship is unscriptural and unhealthy to the Body of Christ.

Christians Should Be Organized Into Churches

Dodd maintains that this organization is the result of God's creative activity: “The Church is perpetually created afresh by the dealing of God in Christ with the souls of men.... And where the marks of Christ are found, there His Body is—the Body that is created by His Spirit, and recognized by His lineaments. That is enough. Where Christ is in personal touch with the souls of men, there is the Church.”⁶ Furthermore,

Martin Fairbairn, D.D on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), 30, 38; idem, *Congregationalism*, 245.

¹C. H. Dodd, “The Biblical Doctrine of the People of God,” *The Doctrine of the Church*, ed. Dow Kirkpatrick, (London: The Epworth Press, 1964), 31, 37; idem,

²Dodd, *EpistsJohn*, 53.

³C. H. Dodd, “Christianity and History,” 23 October 1949, AMs and TMs. Sermon preached by C. H. Dodd at St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford. Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

⁴Dale, *Manual*, 47; idem, *Essays and Addresses*, 90; Dexter, *Congregationalism*, 1–2, 26–29.

⁵*Ibid.*, 144.

⁶Dodd, “Realities,” 124.

the Church as the Body of Christ functions through the fellowship of its members with one another and with Christ. This fellowship constitutes the *esse* of the Church and is itself prior to any embodiment of rite, doctrine, or organization. "The new life in Christ, while it rests upon a most intensely individual experience, is yet a life in which no man is an individual."¹ Congregationalism, therefore, does not recognize any form of Christian individualism apart from the Church.² Selbie puts the matter plainly:

The members of a Christian Church must be Christians. This root principle of Congregationalism points back...to a definite religious faith. The grace of God in the forgiveness and regeneration of the individual, and the justifying power of faith give to the Christian privileges and a status which he cannot set aside without great and certain loss. And this enhanced estimate of the individual involves the true estimate of the Church. The Church becomes a living organism in which each member has his function. Only as this function is exercised by all in a normal and healthy fashion will the Church continue to live and make progress.³

This principle is basically derived from Matthew 18:20, a verse Congregationalists are fond of quoting: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them."⁴ Dale emphasizes that the intention of the verse was not limited

¹Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 138.

²Ibid., 125. This was not always the case in the history of Congregationalism. During the Evangelical Revival of Wesley and Whitefield, the importance of the individual was emphasized, while the Church's importance was de-emphasized. Grant writes that "the Evangelicals were chiefly interested, not in building up Churches, but in snatching individuals from Hell fire," *Free Churchmanship in England*, 97. For the effects of the Evangelical Revival upon Congregationalism see *ibid.*, 96–101; Wilkinson, *1662 and After*, 118–19, 132–35; Jenkins, *Congregationalism*, 25; Dale, *History*, 583–98; Selbie, *Nonconformity*, 171–98. In the late nineteenth century there was a revival of interest in the Church led by the indefatigable R. W. Dale, whose *Manual* spurred the interest.

³Selbie, "The Religious Principle of Congregationalism," 38–39.

⁴Cf. C. H. Dodd, "Matthew and Paul," *NTStudies*, 60; *idem*, "Christ, the Hope of the World," *We Intend to Stay Together*, a collected work, with G. K. A. Bell, E. H. Robertson, and R. C. Mackie, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1954), 15. In a series of lectures on the church given in Cambridge in 1946, Dodd discusses this verse. He notes that Pirque Aboth 23 says, "If two are gathered together and words of Torah are between them—that fact means divine presence there." Here Christ = Torah and Shekinah. Dodd says that Matthew unites the two, thereby giving a Matthean definition of the ἐκκλησία.

to the Christians of the first century but is applicable for all Christians of all generations.¹ He states further: "A church is *constituted* 'where two or three are gathered together' in His name. By this is meant that they are gathered together in acknowledgement of all that His name reveals concerning Himself and His relations to God and to Man. Christ is the bond of union between those who are 'gathered together'; *but this cannot be true except of a society of Christians.*"²

The Local Congregation, Led by the Spirit, is Independent and Self-Sufficient

Dodd writes, "The fellowship of Christian people, as the Spirit-guided Body of Christ, claims autonomy. It must be free to act as led by the Spirit."³ This is probably the most important principle of Congregational polity. Dale almost overstates his case when he emphasizes that "any form of Church polity which denies that every congregation of Christian men may have the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit in the conduct of its own religious affairs is self-condemned."⁴

Dodd gives his most careful attention to the explication of this principle. In any congregation gathered in the name of Christ, the Lord is present there (Matt. 18:18-20), and the whole Catholic Church is present and "acts in their act."⁵ He notes that the term church primarily expresses the Jewish idea of the People of God, unique in the world, and like the Jerusalem of the Psalms, "at unity with itself." The church as a local congregation is only a secondary definition of ἐκκλησία.⁶ But that one local

¹Dale, *Manual*, 17.

²Ibid., 41. The second italics are ours for emphasis.

³Dodd, "Realities," 125.

⁴Dale, *Essays and Addresses*, 117.

⁵Dodd, "Realities," 125.

⁶Dodd, "From St. Paul to Constantine," 450. Dodd devotes the first lecture of his 1946 Cambridge lectures on the church to the study of the etymology of ἐκκλησία, a word with "a splendid history" [*Meaning of Paul*, 144]. He says that the Christian meaning

congregation represents, or even is, “the one Church of God made visible at that point of time and place.”¹ In his article “La Conception de L'Église” he clarifies this point in detail:

Tout comme il ne peut y avoir qu'un seul Israël, de même il ne peut y avoir qu'une seule *ecclesia*. Le mot, dans son sens propre, ne saurait connaître de pluriel. Il est vrai que dans les Actes, les Epîtres de saint Paul et l'Apocalypse, on rencontre le pluriel ἐκκλησία. Mais il faut considérer ce fait comme un usage secondaire et dérivé, sans doute influencé par l'emploi du mot dans le grec profane. Le sens que saint Paul prête à ce terme quand il parle de la communauté chrétienne de Corinthe et d'Ephèse comme d'une ἐκκλησία est indiqué par sa formule: «l'*Ecclesia* de Dieu qui est à Corinthe» c'est-à-dire le peuple unique de Dieu dans sa manifestation particulière et locale. L'Église de Dieu n'est pas l'addition de l'Église de Corinthe à l'Église d'Ephèse, mais est bien plutôt analogue à celui de l'idée platonicienne avec les idées particulières dans lesquelles elle est personnifiée. De même qu'une chose est bonne parce qu'en elle se manifeste la réalité éternelle, qui est αὐτὸ τὸ ἀγαθόν, de même le groupe d'hommes et de femmes de Corinthe est «l'Église de Dieu qui est à Corinthe» parce qu'en lui se manifeste la réalité éternelle qui est l'Église ou le peuple de Dieu.²

And in his 1946 Cambridge lectures, he asks, which meaning is prim ary, the singular or the plural?

cannot be given etymologically because the ἐκ has lost its force in usage. Nearly always the term means the assembly of free citizens of a city state exercising civic rights. In the plural it means meetings in different places and/or times. In biblical usage the LXX translates לְקַרְא, to summon, call, or rarely another substantive from the same root, a body of people summoned (Judg. 20, 21; I Sam. 19:20; Job 30:28); especially to denominate congregation of Israel often considered as gathered in one particular place (= assembly) often in Deuteronomy, Judges, and Chronicles. The idea of assembly transferred to Israel as the totality of the people of God—in this sense no plural because the meaning “people of God” is so predominant (cf. Ps. 26:12, 68:26). לְקַרְא also translates συναγωγή, a term often synonymous with ἐκκλησία. Since συναγωγή, and not ἐκκλησία, was used in Hellenistic times for assemblies, it has a plural usage (Acts 19:39–41 = secular Greek meaning; Acts 7:38 = Israel in LXX meaning; I Cor. 14:34 = meeting of Christian people assembled at particular place for particular purpose; and I Cor. 14:35 = women speaking in the church. Dodd observes that ἐκκλησία is most often used of the body of Christians in some sense (I Cor. 10:22, 11:22; Gal. 1:13; cf. LXX use and I Cor. 12:28, Ephesians, and Colossians, where just the singular is used). In addition, ἐκκλησία is also common (I Cor. 7:17, where the meaning is ‘separate congregations’, no meetings; I Cor. 14:33; II Cor. 8:1; Gal. 1:2).

¹Dodd, “The Church in the New Testament,” 13.

²C. H. Dodd, “La Conception de L'Église,” *Oecumenica* 3 (1936): 159. In “Matthew and Paul,” *NTStudies*, 57–58, Dodd writes that Matthew 18:17 should be read with the unexpressed meaning of the Catholic Church, even though the verse obviously refers to a local church. The whole passage in context, he feels, demands such an interpretation.

On linguistic evidence it is the singular, collective sense. If we take this hypothesis, we can account for the plural use. Acts begins by talking of ἡ ἐκκλησία (Acts 8:1 = church of Jerusalem; 9:31 = church throughout Judaea, Galilee, and Samaria; this is the historical development of the church). Christians at Jerusalem could assemble at one local assembly but at the same time was (*sic*) all the Christians in the world. In Acts 9:31 those in Galilee and Samaria are non-resident members of Church at Jerusalem but could all meet on occasion. But as the church spread, this conception became more difficult, and when the church spread to Hellenistic world, it used συναγωγή with its plural. So Christians in the Hellenistic world came to speak of their own assemblies in the plural (I Thess. 1:2; I Cor. 1:2).¹

Like all Congregationalists, Dodd has a tremendous trust in the ability of any congregation to be guided by Christ without recourse to the judgments of other Christian people:

But we need to have faith that those who have Christ in their midst are truly guided by Him; and though they may seem at the time to be acting in a fashion contrary to other similarly guided bodies, yet by following the guidance they have they will in the end be brought into manifest harmony with all other Christians. The way of unity here is the way of adventurous faith. Life is too complex and too fluid for any easy application of hard and fast rulings; they attempt vainly to frustrate its infinite adaptations. A group of Christians, therefore, in fellowship with Christ and with one another, will seek to act in utter dependence on His Spirit as given in their experience; they will act with the greatest reverence for the convictions of all other Christian people, past and present, but with subservience toward none, lest they quench the living Spirit. In acting so we may try one another's patience, but if our faith is great enough we shall not fear the issue.²

Since the local church is autonomous, the work of priesthood belongs to all the members, not just to a particular class or caste. All believers have been given special gifts and charismata to do the work of the Church (I Cor. 12). By confirming their gifts within the local church, believers enjoy a robust fellowship with one another, thereby confirming the *esse* of the Church. This fellowship, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, enables the Church to find and declare truth because the revelation of God is not complete but progressive. "It is here," writes Dodd, "that subjection to traditional authority becomes

¹Dodd, *Cambridge Lectures on the Church*, 1946.

²Dodd, "Realities," 125-126. This principle is carefully worked out in idem, "The Church in the New Testament," 3-16; idem, "The Relevance of the Bible," *Biblical Authority for Today*, ed. Alan Richardson and W. Schweitzer (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1951), 157-62, esp. 160-61; cf. *AuthB*, 299.

a danger, if the appeal to authority becomes a double standard of truth. If a prophetic soul declares, 'This is true, for I see it to be true,' he must not be met with, 'Nay, on the contrary that is true, for so the Church has defined,' else the progressive revelation of God is being hindered."¹ For this reason, Congregationalists have opposed the formulation of creeds or confessions as statements of faith to which its members must subscribe. Imposing a creed on those who enter the Church would restrict the free action of God to reveal more light from His Word.² Nevertheless, they have declared that this liberty of theological expression has been consistent with the requirement of a fundamental orthodoxy.³ Dodd would concur whole-heartedly with Selbie that Congregationalists

believe in leaving men and Churches free to think for themselves, and to give expression to the truth as God reveals it under the new forms of every age. They believe also in the working of the Spirit of God in illuminating the human mind and leading it into all the truth. They do not regard the expression given to Christian truth in any age as final, but are ever watchful for new light. They believe in a 'deposit' of the Gospel, in a Christian life and experience which are the same for all men, and are prior to any intellectual expression which can be given to them. But they believe also that this intellectual expression must necessarily vary with the varying forms of human thought.⁴

*The Primacy of the Preaching of the Word of God
and of the Administration of the Sacraments*

Dodd does not mention this principle in the article discussed above, but we can infer it from the comments he makes. If there is more truth to be revealed from the Word of God, then that truth must be proclaimed within the fellowship of believers. It is

¹Ibid., 126; see also Dale, *Manual*, 188; Dexter, *Congregationalism*, 257; Jenkins, *Congregationalism*, 41.

²Dale, *Manual*, 14–15; Nathaniel Micklem, *What is the Faith?* (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd, 1936), 25–29.

³Ibid.

⁴Selbie, "The Religious Principle of Congregationalism," 36–37. The resemblance of this quotation to some of Dodd's comments in his inaugural lecture at Cambridge University is striking.

in the worship of the Christian church that one can receive “inside knowledge” of the faith¹ and be safeguarded against modern idolatries.² It would appear that since all the members of a given local church have the direct illumination of the Holy Spirit in order to discern truth, then that church does not need a preacher to proclaim that truth to them.³ Dale inveighs against this supposition by an appeal to the apostolic preaching in the New Testament. He notes that at that time great emphasis was laid on the personal element in the divine revelation of God. The Word became flesh, and God was revealed, “not in a series of inspired theological definitions, or in an inspired theological treatise, but in a living Person.”⁴ The personal influence that Christ had upon the apostles so affected them that they had to proclaim their personal testimony to Christ. Moreover, before the books of the New Testament were written, many in the Church depended on their knowledge of Jesus through the preaching of an “oral gospel” handed down through the tradition (I Cor. 15:3f). In the apostolic churches, the ministry of preaching was the function of the elders, bishops, and pastors—men, who, according to Dale, shared the same title and the same office.⁵ Their calling and their power come from the authority of Christ, not that of the Church. By arguing that the laws of human nature are unchanging and that the divine methods for the salvation of men are unchanging, Dale demonstrates the permanence of the pastoral ministry of preaching. The fact that all believers have the Holy Spirit does not subtract from the efficacy of the preaching ministry, for the preacher himself is called by the same Holy

¹C. H. Dodd, “The Centre of Christian Experience,” *Man and His Nature*, a collected work, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1949), 84; idem, *Three Sermons*, 17; cf. idem, *Founder*, 11.

²Dodd, *Epists John*, 142.

³Dale, *Manuel*, 104.

⁴*Ibid.*, 91–94. Dodd also believes this idea—see “The History of Christianity,” 451–52.

⁵Dale, *Essays and Addresses*, 55.

Spirit and is granted supernatural qualifications. The Holy Spirit reserves some revelations only for the pastor in order that the pastor might "stimulate and direct the religious thought and life of the Church."¹

Dodd never attempts, as Dale does, to justify this principle; he accepts it without argument. Moreover, he subscribes to the principle of the importance of the sacraments—especially the Eucharist.² He published several articles on the biblical teaching of the Eucharist,³ and he gave his own theory of that sacrament as he understood it within the context of his theory of realized eschatology.⁴

As has been shown, Dodd was profoundly influenced by his Congregational background. And, in the course of this thesis, we shall point out how this influence shaped some of his most distinctive contributions to New Testament studies. Surprisingly, various studies of his work have neglected to show this. Those studies by Bruce, Caird, and Robinson⁵ contribute nothing to our understanding in this area;

¹Ibid., 59.

²See Dale, *Manual*, "Congregational Theories of the Lord's Supper," 157–59. but cf. Grant, *Free Churchmanship in England*, 38–46, 162–67.

³C. H. Dodd, "Eucharistic Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel," *Expositor* 2 (1911): 530–46; idem, "The Eucharist in Relation to the Fellowship of the Church," *Theology* 22 (1931): 333–36; idem, "The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament," *Christian Worship*, ed. Nathaniel Micklem (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), 68–82; cf. idem, "The History of Christianity," 458–62.

⁴This is examined in Chapter Three.

⁵Bruce, "C. H. Dodd," *Creative Minds*; Caird, "C. H. Dodd"; idem, "Charles Harold Dodd"; Robinson, "Theologians of Our Time: C. H. Dodd," *ExpT*. In addition, the following studies lack any information on Dodd and Congregationalism: R. F. Berkey, "The Influence of C. H. Dodd's 'Realized Eschatology' on Later New Testament Scholarship," (Ph.D dissertation, The Hartford Seminary Foundation, 1958); L. Brun, "C. H. Dodd som nytestament forsker," *NorTTs* 48 (1947): 81–121; W. Ward Gasque, "Dodd, Charles Harold," *NIDCC*, 305–6; idem, "Dodd, Charles Harold," *EDT*, 326–27; Ronald W. Graham, "C. H. Dodd: His Work and His Interpreters," *LTQ* 8 (1973): 1–10; Joachim Jeremias, "Dodd, Charles Harold," *RGG*, 214–15; Robert Dean Kysar, "A Comparison of the Exegetical Presuppositions and Methods of C. H. Dodd and Rudolf Bultmann in the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel," (Ph.D dissertation, Northwestern University, Illinois, 1967); I. Howard Marshall, "Dodd, Charles Harold," *NDT*, 202; Thomas E. McCollough, "The Biblical Theology of C. H. Dodd," (Th.D dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1955); Ruth Page, "C. H.



only the "In Memoriam" by Davies, the article by King, and the biography by Dillistone¹ (upon which King is dependent) offer any information. Dillistone, of course, has the most extensive treatment of Dodd and Congregationalism; however, his handling of the evidence is somewhat hampered because he does not examine Dodd's article, "Realities at Stake from the Evangelical (Free Church) Side," and Dodd's essay, "The History of Christianity from the Death of St. Paul to the Reign of Constantine."²

In this chapter we have looked at four areas of Dodd's background during his formative years in order to see how his background shaped those presuppositions which he held when he began his professional career in the early 1920s. First, we examined the climate of his early years as a boy in Wrexham. We saw how he was isolated culturally and geographically from the world beyond the environs of Wrexham and how this led to an emphasis upon family and chapel life. From this he received an interpretation of reality (the importance of community life within the family of God) which he never abandoned. We saw that, with the coming of the technological revolution to Wrexham, the isolation of the town gradually gave way to the infiltration of new ideas drastically different from those held by those within Dodd's native circle.

Dodd's Use of History Critically Examined," *Theology* 79 (1976): 329-37; James Byron Recob, "The Role of Eschatology in Pauline Ethics as Interpreted by C. H. Dodd and Rudolf Bultmann," (Th.D dissertation, Boston University, 1971); Georg Strecker, "Charles Harold Dodd: Person und Werk," *KD* 26 (1980): 50-58; idem, "Dodd, Charles Harold (1884-1973)," *TRE*, 15-18; Duane Allison Walker, "The Views of Charles Harold Dodd Concerning the New Testament," (Th.D dissertation, Boston University, 1956); E. E. Wolfzron, "Realized Eschatology: An Exposition of Charles H. Dodd's Thesis," *ETL* 38 (1962): 44-62.

¹Davies, "In Memoriam"; King, "C. H. Dodd"; Dillistone, Dodd; idem, *Religious Experience*, passim; see also Dillistone's comments lately in "Note on C. K. Barrett, 'Rudolf Bultmann,'" *EpR* 12 (1985): 64-68.

²For example, Dillistone, *Dodd*, 193, writes, "The particular denomination to which Dodd's family belonged, of which he became an ordained minister and of which he remained a loyal member to the end of his life, has often been regarded as a collection of autonomous units where every congregation is free to do that which seems right in its own eyes. But Dodd did not so regard it." Judging from Dodd's statements in the above-mentioned articles, it is obvious that in 1920 he did regard it as such.

Dodd, however, learned to accept those ideas which made sense to him. Thus, although he never relinquished the basic emphases of his background, he always kept an open mind toward those with whom he disagreed. During his career he corrected many of his earlier conclusions in the light of new evidence. In fact, it is a basic presupposition of his biblical theology that no one will be able to give a final interpretation of the New Testament, "even for our own age."¹ The interpreter must constantly revise and correct his conclusions, because, as M. D. Hooker writes, there is always the possibility that "today's assured results [will] become tomorrow's question marks."²

Second, we looked at the impact that Dodd's classical education made upon him and how it benefited him in his New Testament studies. To be sure, it gave him the necessary tools to do original research in the ancient texts and to understand the history and philosophy of the classical age. But, more importantly, it emphasized to him the necessity of doing word-studies and of developing a methodology for precise translation of the biblical texts. Indeed, these are the areas in which Dodd made some of his most original contributions to biblical studies. In Part I of *The Bible and the Greeks*, he added to our understanding of "the religious vocabulary of hellenistic Judaism" by publishing his word-studies of various terms.³ Moreover, in Part II of *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, he selected twelve of the leading ideas of the Gospel of John and compared them with their usage in the MT, the LXX, Philo, and in the literature of the Hermetica, Gnosticism, and Mandaeism.⁴ His series of reviews of

¹Dodd, *Present Task*, 41.

²Hooker, "New Testament Scholarship," 425.

³C. H. Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1935), 3–95. These chapters are an expansion and revision of his Grinfield Lectures on the LXX, delivered at Oxford, 1927–1931. Chapter V, "Atonement," was previously published as "'ΙΛΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ,' Its Cognates, Derivatives, and Synonyms, in the New Testament," *JTS* 32 (1930–1931): 352–60.

⁴C. H. Dodd, *InterpFG*, 133–285.

Kittel's *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* are instructive, not only for his detailed criticisms of some of the contributor's treatment of the terms discussed, but also for his supplementary comments on the terms.¹ As is well-known, Dodd served as General Director of the New English Bible and as Convener of the Translator's Panel for the New Testament. During the many years that he assisted in this project, he sometimes circulated to the members of the committees short papers on the problems of translation. He had hoped to collect them and publish a book on translation principles, but, due to his death, this was never done. (C. F. D. Moule, his literary executor, published eight of these short studies in *The Bible Translator* three years after Dodd's death).² Although it is unfortunate that this proposed book was never completed, we do have several articles written by Dodd specifically on the methodology of translation.³ Therefore, another presupposition of his biblical theology is that careful philological work must be done on the text before we can determine the theology of the text. He writes, "A language is the crystallisation of a particular way of thought. Before we can enter into the way of thought employed by the New Testament writers we must learn their language."⁴ Thanks to his classical education, this was one territory in which he

¹C. H. Dodd, review of *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, ed. G. Kittel, Lieferungen I–VII, *JTS* 34 (1933): 280–85; idem, review of *TWNT*, ed. G. Kittel, Band I, Band II, *JTS* 39 (1938): 287–93; idem, review of *TWNT*, ed. G. Kittel, Lieferung V, *JTS*, n.s. 5 (1954): 244–48.

²See C. H. Dodd, "New Testament Translation Problems I," *Technical Papers for the Bible Translator* 27 (1976): 249–311 (with introduction by C. F. D. Moule); idem, "New Testament Translation Problems II," *Technical Papers for the Bible Translator* 28 (1977): 101–16.

³C. H. Dodd, "The Translation of the Bible: Some Questions of Principle," *Times Literary Supplement*, Religious Books Section, (20 March 1959): viii, reprinted, *BT* 11 (1960): 4–9; idem, introduction to the New English Bible: New Testament, 1st. ed. (Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press, 1961), v–xi (only with the 2nd. ed., 1970, do the initials C.H.D. appear after the introduction); idem, "Some Problems of New Testament Translation," *ExpT* 72 (1960–1961): 269–74, and *BT* 13 (1962): 145–57; idem, "Eight English Versions of the New Testament," *ExpT* 73 (1961–1962): 356–57 (a review of *The New Testament Octapla*, ed. Luther A. Weigle).

⁴C. H. Dodd, "The New Testament," *The Study of Theology*, ed. Kenneth E. Kirk (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd, 1939), 224.

could move with ease.

Third, we listened in on Dodd's conversation with German theology by discussing three German theologians who influenced him during his period of study at Berlin University in 1907. Adolf von Harnack, Johannes Weiss, and Albert Schweitzer contributed valuable insights which Dodd formulated into his biblical theology. Although Dodd learned about German theology from his professors at Mansfield College after he had returned from Berlin, nothing could compare with this first-hand acquaintance with the lectures and the writings of the German masters. Throughout his career Dodd kept an active interest in the latest theological developments from his German friends,¹ and in his supervision of doctoral candidates, he always required that the student have a working knowledge of the German language before beginning research.²

Fourth, we examined Dodd's commitment to Congregationalism. We saw how he was conscious of his denominational heritage and how the exigencies of Congregational history contributed to his Congregational mentality. We saw how he was influenced by his professors at Mansfield College and how they provided him with exegetical and theological justifications for Congregational beliefs in the midst of Anglican predominance. And we outlined several of the basic principles of Congregationalism, taken from one of Dodd's early articles on the subject. Of course, later in life he modified some of these principles in the light of his research; however, we can say unhesitatingly that Congregationalism provided him with the basic agenda for his biblical theology. Preaching, teaching, the Bible, the church, the sacraments, ethics: all are dominant motifs of his biblical theology. It is true that these subjects were trends of the biblical theology movement and that much of what Dodd wrote, particularly in the 1930s and 1940s, was in response to this movement. Nevertheless,

¹Dodd, "Thirty Years of New Testament Study," 324-25.

²Dillistone, *Dodd*, 152.

because of his background, much of his thinking in these areas had become second nature to him, thus causing him to be an active participant, not a mere spectator, in this movement.

CHAPTER TWO

THE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE

The problem of biblical authority confronts each generation of exegetes as they seek to interpret the Bible. As we study the edifice of exegesis which Dodd constructed, it is important to see how he understood the authority of the Bible. The disciplines of textual criticism, source criticism, form criticism, and the concepts of revelation, inspiration, and interpretation, are all connected with the problem of biblical authority.¹ It is necessary, therefore, for us to examine Dodd's understanding of biblical authority.

This chapter will investigate Dodd's views on biblical authority from a chronological perspective, seeking to identify the elements in his understanding and to see how they changed over the span of his life. Attention will also be given to the relationship of biblical authority to the disciplines of biblical criticism. Since one's theological perspective is largely determined by one's place in society,² we shall formulate Dodd's views on biblical authority during his Oxford years, his Manchester years, his Cambridge years, and during the years of his retirement.

¹See James I. Packer, "Hermeneutics and Biblical Authority," *Churchman* 81 (1967): 7-11; Donald Guthrie, "Biblical Authority and New Testament Scholarship," *Vox Evangelica* 16 (1986): 7-23; and Robin Nixon, "The Authority of the New Testament," *NTI*, ed. I. Howard Marshall, (Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1977): 334-50.

²Dodd, "Constructive Theology. X. Revelation," 449.

Dodd and Biblical Authority

Dodd's Views on Biblical Authority at Oxford

In 1928 Dodd was given the opportunity to contribute a volume on the authority of the Bible to the series called *The Library of Constructive Theology*. The editors, W. R. Matthews and H. Wheeler Robinson, wrote in the general introduction to the series that

the Christian Church as a whole is confronted with a great though largely silent crisis, and also with an unparalleled opportunity.... Something more is needed than a defence of propositions already accepted on authority, for the present spiritual crisis is essentially a questioning of authority if not a revolt against it. It may be predicted that the number of people who are content simply to rest their religion on the authority of the Bible or the Church is steadily diminishing, and with the growing effectiveness of popular education will continue to diminish.... Nothing less is required than a candid, courageous and well-informed effort to think out anew, in the light of modern knowledge, the foundation affirmations of our common Christianity.¹

Dodd met the requirement of the editors with the publication of *The Authority of the Bible*. In addition to this work, he also wrote in the same year an unpublished handwritten lecture entitled "The Authority of the Bible (1928)—Keine Aktuelle Frage?"² Both writings contain the essence of Dodd's thinking on the authority of the Bible during his tenure as professor at Mansfield College, and important aspects of his interpretation of this authority can be demonstrated in his published and unpublished writings from 1911–1929.

¹W. R. Matthews and H. Wheeler Robinson, general introduction to *The Authority of the Bible*, by C. H. Dodd, *The Library of Constructive Theology*, (London: Nesbit & Co., Ltd., 1928), v. Writing almost 50 years later, James Barr, *The Bible in the Modern World* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1973), 28, comments that the concept of authority no longer fits the modern intellectual structure in which serious theological work is done. But Barr surely overstates the matter.

²C. H. Dodd, "The Authority of the Bible (1928)—Keine Aktuelle Frage?" AMs, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

Definition of Authority

How does Dodd define 'authority?' What does the term mean?¹ In the 1928 lecture Dodd discusses two types or definitions of authority. First, there is the idea of mandatory authority. He gives as an example the laws of the state. Mandatory authority is usually backed by sufficient force, although authority and power are not identical. "The most perfect (*sic*) form of mandatory authority is that which is *freely accepted*. A book obviously cannot in itself exercise mandatory authority (tho [*sic*] an authoritarian church could compel its acceptance, but this would be an intrusion into the sphere of religion from an alien sphere)."² Second, there is the idea of declaratory authority. Dodd states that this aspect of authority is growing in importance as knowledge becomes more specialized. "We have to trust the expert," he writes, "always with the assumption that if we were able to test his statements experience would corroborate them."³ It is the latter definition of authority that Dodd generally uses in *The Authority of the Bible*, discernible in the following statement:

I assume that the function of authority is to secure assent to truth; that for us the measure of any authority which the Bible may possess must lie in its direct

¹J. Marsh, *IDB*, s.v., "Authority," 1:319, comments that ἐξουσία is used in the LXX about 50 times and is used of dominion or kingdom over which a king exercises his sovereign rule (II Kings 20:13, Isaiah 39:2). The authority of human rulers originates from God who rules eternally (Dan. 4:31), installs and removes kings (Dan. 2:21). This Old Testament concept of divine and delegated authority, Marsh says, seems to form "the fruitful basis for the insights of the NT." Several words in the New Testament convey the idea of authority, such as ἐξουσία, δύναμις, ἐπιταγή, ὑπεροχή, and αὐθεντέω. But ἐξουσία alone expresses the idea of religious authority. Occurring 108 times in the New Testament, ἐξουσία may mean (1) freedom of choice, right to act, decide, or dispose of one's property as one wishes; (2) ability to do something, capability; might, power; (3) authority, absolute power, warrant; (4) the power exercised by rulers or others in high position by virtue of their office—*BDG*, s.v., ἐξουσία, 277-78; see Dodd's comments on ἐξουσία in *InterpFG*, 270.

²*Ibid*; Schubert Ogden, "Sources of Religious Authority in Liberal Protestantism," *JAAR* 44 (1976): 403-6. Dodd gives further examples of mandatory authority in "The Centre of Christian Experience," *Man and His Nature*, A Collected Work (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1949), 81: a man may be invested with authority by law, such as a governmental official, or he may acquire it by physical force, such as the authority of occupied troops in a conquered land.

³*Ibid*.

religious value, open to discovery in experience; and that this value in turn will be related to the experience out of which the Scriptures came.¹

Granted that in 1928 Dodd was willing to acknowledge the authority of the Bible, how does he interpret this authority? What are some important aspects of biblical authority, and what are Dodd's assumptions about these matters? D. E. Nineham comments that in *The Authority of the Bible* Dodd is more generous than Bultmann in what "the man on the Clapham omnibus" can accept in the Bible with integrity, but he also correctly posits that Dodd's case rests on certain prior assumptions which, if proven to be incorrect, destroy his whole argument.² In the following discussion we will analyze four aspects behind Dodd's presupposition that the NT is authoritative.

The Authority of the Canon

The fundamental aspect behind Dodd's belief in the authority of the NT is the New Testament's canonical authority. Because these twenty-seven writings were felt by the Church "to be most vitally related to the spiritual impulse that created it," the Church collected them into a canon so that by about A.D. 200 the canon was essentially the same as ours today.³ In comparison with other writings of the time, Dodd stipulates

¹Dodd, *The Authority of the Bible*, xiii; idem, "Realities," 126. John Bright, *The Authority of the Old Testament*, (Abingdon Press, 1967; reprint ed. in the Twin Book Series, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1975), 26, n. 5, says that Dodd is correct to formulate his approach to authority in this manner, but Bright also says that by Dodd's definition "the Bible may not only have been our only authority, and it may not have been...even the supreme and final one."

²D. E. Nineham, *Explorations in Theology 1* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1977), 102. To be fair to Nineham, we should point out that he is critical of Dodd at this point for trying, as it were, to read between the lines of the biblical narratives instead of taking them at their face value. The point is still well taken for Dodd's analysis of biblical authority.

³Dodd, *Authority*, 196; cf. p. 3. The books included, according to Eusebius (*HistEccl.*, III, 25), are Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts of the Apostles, Fourteen Epistles of Paul (including Hebrews), Revelation, First John, and First Peter; *ibid.*, 195; but cf. Alexander Souter's discussion in *The Text and Canon of the New Testament*, 175-78. For an recent evaluations of the genesis of the canon, see Kurt Aland, *The Problem of the New Testament Canon*, Contemporary Studies in Theology (London: Mowbray & Co. Limited, 1962); Hans von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible*, trans. J. A. Baker (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972; First Paperback Edition, 1977); Bruce M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and*

that “the canon as a whole stands spiritually, intellectually, and aesthetically, on an altogether higher plane.”¹ He suggests in an essay written in 1929 that the Church defined its canon consisting of the OT and the NT largely in reaction to Marcion, who had rejected the OT and had adopted a NT based on “the Gospel” and “the Apostle.”²

The Rejection of the Traditional Doctrine of Biblical Authority

This observation leads us to note a second aspect: the authority of the NT is not derived from any doctrine of verbal infallibility or of inerrancy.³ Dodd can make this claim for several reasons.

First, Dodd is critical of the churches of the Reformation for seeking an external authority other than the pope. During the Middle Ages, the questioning spirit was kept in abeyance; no one questioned the authority of the church. In *The Authority of the Bible*, Dodd accuses the leaders of the Protestant Reformation for transferring the authority formerly attributed to the pope and the church to the scriptures. Therefore, what we now have is a “paper pope.” He concedes that this view did not differ from that of the Catholic Church in its unreformed branches, but he contends that “a documentary authority is in its effect something different from an institutional

Significance (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); and F. F. Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1988).

¹Ibid. Cf. idem, “The New Testament Witness to Jesus Christ,” in *Jesus: Master and Lord*, A Course of Study Outlines, vol. II, ed. P. I. Painter, (London: National Council of Y.M.C.A.'s Inc., 1928), 11: The writings of the New Testament are “first-hand documents of a most profound and momentous spiritual movement.” But note in several of Dodd's writings that he has a low regard for the book of Revelation, see idem, *The Gospel in the New Testament* (London: The National Sunday School Union, 1926), 62: “The author of Revelation has brooded too much, and his vision is out of focus”; idem, *The Authority of the Bible*, 187: Revelation “is a work deeply Jewish and only superficially Christian.”

²Dodd, “The History of Christianity,” 441.

³Dodd, *AuthB*, 129.

authority.”¹ Furthermore, Dodd states that the Bible has no doctrine of its own inspiration, and he rejects in a footnote the orthodox interpretation of II Timothy 3:16 and II Peter 1:21 by saying that “neither passage claims the rank of inspired Scripture for the writing for which it occurs, or defines the works to which it attributes inspiration.”²

Second, as we saw in chapter one,³ Dodd grew up in a world that was caught up in the infectious excitement of scientific discovery. The mysteries of the universe lay waiting to be discovered by those trained in the scientific method. Old theories once held sacrosanct went by the board as quickly as new ones were spurned. Because of this advance in knowledge, modern man had refused to remain a child.⁴ Soon it became apparent to Dodd that there was a sharp dichotomy between the new discoveries of science and the biblical picture of the world. The cosmological world-view presented in scripture failed the acid test of the scientific method, and Dodd could breathe a sigh of relief that he can reject the “fantastic ideas which we cannot share as we follow John and Paul in the development of Christian thought away from pure eschatology.”⁵ This new knowledge can help spot superstitious elements in scripture uncongenial with modern thought, such as belief in a personal devil,⁶ belief in demon possession,⁷ or perhaps Paul’s obsolete view of human sexuality.⁸

¹Ibid., 9.

²Ibid., 15, n. 1.

³See above, pp. 8–10.

⁴Smart, *The Strange Silence of the Bible*, 91–92.

⁵C. H. Dodd, “The Eschatological Element in the New Testament and Its Permanent Significance,” *Interpreter* 20 (1923–1924): 18. Dodd rejects these ideas partly because of his aversion for apocalyptic.

⁶C. H. Dodd, *The Meaning of Paul for Today* (London: Swarthmore Press, 1920), 58.

⁷Ibid., 125. Dodd says that a person who supposedly is demon possessed is a “morbid case of a divided personality.”

Third, Dodd makes the assertion with many of his contemporaries that modern criticism has destroyed the foundations of these doctrines of infallibility and inerrancy.¹ He takes for granted that the new critical theories of the OT have so changed the terrain of its history that the ordinary reader of the Bible needs biblical criticism to help him read it correctly. Only then, can the Bible, *more reasonably understood*, regain its lost authority in the church and be of better use in devotional and corporate worship.²

Fourth, Dodd writes that there are many passages in the Bible, which, in their plain and natural meaning, cannot be taken seriously by any intelligent Christian today as binding upon conscience. More specifically, he abhors the “outworn morality” of certain parts of the OT, especially the imprecatory psalms and certain injunctions in the Pentateuch and in the Prophets quoted out of context, such as “an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.”³ In chapter five of *The Authority of the Bible*, he goes into greater detail on this subject. He writes:

We must always allow for limitation and error in the prophets. It should hardly be necessary to state so obvious a proposition, but the doctrine of

⁸Ibid., 150; idem, “The Ethics of the Pauline Epistles,” *The Evolution of Ethics*, ed. E. H. Sneath (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1927), 321.

¹Dodd, *AuthB*, ix; see the comments of Marcus Dods, *The Bible: Its Origin and Nature* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1905), 138–39; and of A. S. Peake, *The Bible: Its Origin, Its Significance, and Its Abiding Worth* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1914), 398–99. For a comprehensive discussion see H. D. McDonald, *Theories of Revelation: An Historical Survey 1860–1960*, (1963), 208–346, reprinted in *Theories of Revelation: An Historical Survey 1700–1960*, Twin Book Series (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979; and idem, “The Bible in Twentieth-Century British Theology,” *Challenges to Inerrancy: A Theological Response*, ed. Gordon Lewis and Bruce Demarest (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984), 89–119.

²Ibid., 8,13; Anders Nygren, *The Significance of the Bible for the Church* FBBS–1, trans. Carl C. Rasmussen, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963), 33–44. For this reason it is useless, says Dodd, to claim for the Bible accuracy in matters of science and history. Such an attempt would be hopeless.

³Ibid., 13; Dennis Nineham, *The Use and Abuse of the Bible: A Study of the Bible in an Age of Rapid Cultural Change* SPCK Large Paperbacks—33, (London: SPCK, 1976), 47–49.

inspiration has been so confused by the demand for inerrancy that it is necessary. No one not blinded by a superstitious bibliolatry could possibly accept for truth, as they stand, many elements in Old Testament prophecy. Intelligent readers who went to the writings of the prophets convinced that they contained nothing but what, being directly dictated 'Word' of the living God, is eternally true, found it impossible to give full value to their actual words.... We are not here thinking of errors of fact in the narrative portions of Scripture, but of elements in the religious message of biblical writers which we cannot hold to be true or valid. Isaiah in the bitterness of his soul cries out, 'Jehovah will not have compassion on their fatherless and widows.... His anger is not turned away, but his arm is stretched out still.' While we can understand and respect the outraged sense of justice that underlies his words, we may not take them as a true description of our Father in heaven. It is no laudable ambition expressed in the words, 'The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.' Yet they occur in one of the most sublime chapters of the so-called 'Third Isaiah.'¹

Then Dodd follows with this comment: "Any theory of the inspiration of the Bible which suggests that we should recognize such utterances as authoritative for us stands self-condemned. They are relative for their age. But I think we should say more. They are false and they are wrong."² On the basis of these four reasons for rejecting the authority of the Bible as interpreted by orthodox Christianity, Dodd says that a revision of this view is necessary if the Bible is to retain any authority at all.

The Revision of the Traditional Doctrine of Biblical Authority

By denying the verbal inspiration of Scripture, and by stipulating that the authority of the Bible is not a correlate of its inspiration, Dodd still has to account for the fact that the canon is on "an altogether higher plane" than other writings.

His solution is that it is not the words of the Bible which are inspired; it is the *authors* who are inspired—men who can be categorized as religious geniuses. He writes, "In the Bible we must acknowledge the authority which belongs intrinsically to genius. Such genius is unquestionably before us in the outstanding personalities who

¹Ibid., 127–28; see further, 143; so also Bright, *The Authority of the Old Testament*, 49, "The Bible...can even be made the authority for things that are patently wrong."

²Ibid., 128.

give to the whole literature its distinctive character, though not all of its writers fall themselves within that category.”¹

Taking his cue from the insights of the new psychology movement, Dodd in *The Authority of the Bible* and “The Authority of the Bible—Keine Aktuelle Frage?” revised the older theory to include elements of human personality, consciousness, and sentiments. In the Bible we have a record of the experience of a human society over a period of a thousand years or more. We have in these writings a first-hand contemporary record of what real people made of the strange events they were passing through.² That is not to say that all the people who experienced these events could express themselves in language with which we can understand. In Dodd's thought all the writers of scripture are not on the same level of literary expression or of depth of emotion, and this idea provides him with his rationale of using the concept of religious genius to highlight those portions of scripture that possess distinction. Therefore, he acknowledges this authority in three epoches at which the highest level of religious genius appears: the pre-historic period of Moses, the eighth to sixth century prophets (Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Second Isaiah), and in the writings of the NT, especially in John and in Paul as they wrote of the Founder of Christianity.³ Because these writers so transcended the historical relativities of their day, they were able to perceive the things of God more deeply than others. In fact, they are like poets and artists, who see life not logically but imaginatively, and since they have the ability to communicate religious ideas intuitively, they make us sharers in their experiences.

A second aspect of Dodd's revision follows from the authority of religious genius. Since the writings of those whom he classifies as religious geniuses do not make up the bulk of the Bible, what kind of authority can we ascribe to those other parts?

¹Ibid., 31; idem, “The Authority of the Bible (1921)—Keine Aktuelle Frage?”

²Dodd, “The Authority of the Bible—Keine Aktuelle Frage?”

³Dodd, *AuthB*, 27–31.

Here Dodd brings up the concept of "religious experience." Dodd has maintained the position that the ultimate authority is truth itself; we apprehend that truth when it makes sense of our total world view as we see it in our experience. He criticizes the practice of many pietistic people in the nineteenth century who, after losing the comfort of having the Bible as an external authority, turned within to their own personal experiences of the divine. Such practices were doomed to failure because there was too much emphasis on individual rather than corporate experience and because such personal experiences were defenceless against the latest criticism of psychology. How is an individual to know whether certain feelings in him are not the product of religious stimuli but of other stimuli having no religious significance?¹

The problem as Dodd sees it is with the narrow definition of religious experience. He broadens it to include "the whole of life religiously interpreted, rather than isolated feelings." And since the life of one who wants to live life religiously can never be fully isolated from others, no narrow limit can be placed to his social environment, being co-extensive with history.² This appropriation of religious experience is fundamental to Dodd's concept of biblical authority because now the subject matter of religious thought is not simply what we think of as individuals but as members of the historic society of mankind. He goes on to say that the biblical history is our history in that both histories share in the vicissitudes of life. There is a unity in history. In this case the identification of ourselves with the biblical history (*sich hineinleben*) provides the key to understanding our own experience of life. And biblical criticism is the hand that turns the key.³ Consequently, Dodd's revision of the traditional understanding of biblical authority in the categories of religious genius and of religious experience has freed him from accepting the Bible as a collection of

¹Ibid., 135.

²Ibid., 137–38.

³Dodd, "The Authority of the Bible—Keine Aktuelle Frage?"

dogmatic proof-texts; it has freed him from accepting any kind of mechanical theory of inspiration deduced from external principles; and it has justified him for using biblical criticism as the means of understanding the scriptures as they were intended to be understood.

The Authority of Jesus Christ

Dodd agrees with those who say that the authority of Jesus Christ is absolute, but he disagrees with those who maintain that, because Christ has absolute authority, whatever teachings or deeds he may have done as they are recorded in the gospels, also bear his authority. The question of how Christ's authority is mediated in the gospel story has not been answered.

Certain parts of the gospels, says Dodd, are simply not true in their plain meaning or are unacceptable to the conscience of Christians. For example, some of Jesus' pronouncements in Mark 13 certainly happened after that generation had long died. A possible explanation for this difficulty is that there must have been a mistake in the reporting: either the words are falsely attributed to Jesus or there must have been some misunderstanding among his listeners. In any respect, he lays down the principle that "we no longer accept a saying as authoritative because it lies before us as a word of Jesus, but because we are rationally convinced that it is a word of His, and that will mostly mean in the last resort, because we are convinced that it is worthy of Him, that is, true and important."¹

Dodd also makes the point that since Jesus had a real incarnation, then he was an individual with the same limitations as those around him. It follows that Jesus probably shared the same views of the OT as his followers in according Mosaic authorship to the Pentateuch and Davidic authorship to some of the Psalms which

¹Dodd, *AuthB*, 233.

criticism has dated as late as the Maccabean period and that he also shared the same cosmological world view with his belief in demons and in a personal devil.¹

If neither of the above solutions adequately explains the authority of Jesus Christ, what does? Dodd concludes that we have to go behind the sayings of Christ to the great Personality they portray. Jesus was a Person who spoke and acted with authority.² Thus Christ's authority becomes real for us, not by our using his words to prove dogmatic assertions, but by our total impression of his life as it is portrayed in the gospels. He writes:

Thus while we do not uncritically accept what Jesus said because of a prior belief in His 'sinlessness', yet there is something in the record that leads us to believe that in some deep and not fully explicable way His inner life possessed a unique moral perfection, which would account for the unique authority His words have actually carried in spite of all local and temporal limitations.³

Again, this provides Dodd with his justification for using biblical criticism in the attempt to recover the most authentic form of his teaching so that the authority of that Personality will stand out.

In 1921–1922 Dodd delivered two sets of lectures at Mansfield College: "The Teaching of Jesus according to Tradition Common to Matthew and Luke" and "Synoptic Data for the Life of Jesus."⁴ And in these lectures he demonstrated how criticism can shed light on the authority of Jesus Christ.

First, he says that the recent conclusions of source criticism are helpful in determining the best traditions of the Gospel narratives. The authority of Mark and Q

¹Ibid., 239.

²Dodd, "ἸΗΣΟΥΣ Ο ΔΙΔΑΣΚΑΛΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ," *Theology* 17 (1928): 206. Dodd says that Jesus had an independent and sovereign way of teaching which distinguished him from the Rabbis in the eyes of the populace; see also idem, *AuthB*, 239; idem, "The Authority of the Bible—Keine Aktuelle Frage?"

³Dodd, *AuthB*, 240.

⁴I am indebted to Amos N. Wilder, who graciously allowed me to study his notes of these lectures. For Wilder's comments on these lectures, see "New Testament Studies, 1920–1950: Reminiscences of a Changing Discipline," *JR* 64 (1984): 435–37.

are preferable to the matter peculiar to Matthew or Luke.¹ In Dodd's opinion, Mark and Q represent older material and are perhaps more valuable.² As we shall see, this insight will form an important part of Dodd's hermeneutic later in his life.

Second, Dodd discusses the relationship of Jesus with the religious authorities of his day. At first Jesus was acceptable in the synagogues (Mark 1:21,39; 3:1; 6:2; Luke 4:15; 13:10). The Pharisees even invited Jesus into their homes (Luke 7:36; 11:37; 14:1). During this time, it appears that Jesus was recognized as a Rabbi. As his ministry went on, Jesus aroused suspicions by his tendency to make slight of certain distinctions, such as Sabbath observance (Luke 13:14), blasphemy and forgiving sins (Mark 2:6–12), and befriending bad people (Luke 7:34; 15:2). In addition, Jesus permitted the disciples not to fast (Mark 2:18); to sit down to meals without customary ablutions (Mark 7:1–8; Luke 11:38); and to ignore authoritative interpretation of the Sabbath law (Mark 2:23–28; 3:1–6; Luke 14:1–6). In such matters, Jesus was setting his authority over and above the authority of the religious leaders.³

¹Amos N. Wilder, handwritten lecture notes of "Synoptic Data for the Life of Jesus," delivered by C. H. Dodd at Mansfield College, Oxford, 1921–1922; idem, *AuthB*, 229–30. Dodd speculates in this lecture that the special Lucan material may rest on early independent authority—perhaps Philip.

²Amos N. Wilder, handwritten lecture notes of "Teaching of Jesus according to Tradition Common to Matthew and Luke," delivered by C. H. Dodd at Mansfield College, Oxford, 1921–1922. In discussing the four beatitudes peculiar to Matthew, Dodd says that these beatitudes may "have less authority yet may well be genuine, standing on their own two feet." Also, he says that the correspondences of the beatitude material in Matthew and Luke would lend "a strong presumption that here at least these two presuppose a common written source."

³Dodd, "Synoptic Data for the Life of Jesus." Note that most of Dodd's examples come from Mark. E. G. Selwyn, "The Authority of Christ in the New Testament," *NTS* 3 (1956–1957): 84, says "it is not by accident that in St. Mark, which is much the shortest of the Synoptic Gospels, the word 'authority' is predicated of Jesus exactly the same number of times as in St Matthew, which is more than half as long again, and also relatively to its length more frequently than in St Luke."

Dodd's Views on Biblical Authority at Manchester

In 1930 C. H. Dodd moved from Oxford University to assume the Rylands Chair of Biblical Criticism at Manchester University. Dillistone remarks that it was at this time that Dodd's literary output increased to a remarkable degree.¹ It was also at this time that his unpublished materials began to accumulate because of his frequent lectures and his becoming a religious broadcaster for the BBC. From this time onward—with a few exceptions—most of his published works would consist of lectures or broadcasts almost exactly as they were delivered.

The Authority of the Canon

In 1931 Dodd published *The Bible and Its Background*, a collection of broadcasts talks dealing in a non-technical way with such questions as the origin of the Bible and the history of its people. Never departing from his views in *The Authority of the Bible*, Dodd emphasizes again the importance of the Bible as a canon of scripture to which all sections of the Christian Church appeal as authoritative, though that authority would be variously interpreted.² He has an interesting discussion on the relationship of the Apocrypha to the traditional Christian canon. He points out that the Greek-speaking Jews outside Palestine had a much longer list of books for their OT,

¹Dillistone, *Dodd*, 110. One can easily see this by looking at the primary bibliography of Dodd's works. During the nineteen years Dodd was at Oxford, as a student, preacher, and professor, he wrote twenty-eight separate pieces of theological literature, an average of one and a half a year. During the six years he was at Manchester, he wrote twenty-four separate pieces of theological literature, an average of four a year.

²Dodd, *The Bible and Its Background* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1931), 11. In May 1933 Dodd delivered an address to the inaugural conference of Friends of Reunion published in leaflet form as *The Basis of Reunion* (London: Richard Madley, Ltd.) in which he stated as the first point of reunion that "the Scriptures are the common possession of all Christian communions. All of us hold that the beliefs for which we stand are in conformity with the Scripture; nor should we wish to insist that anything which has no scriptural warrant should form part of the confession of the reunited Church. We are content therefore to give our common consent to the faith we find proclaimed within the limits of Holy Scripture."

including such works as Ecclesiasticus, First and Second Maccabees, Tobit, and the Apocrypha. Dodd writes:

The Christian Church in general has drawn some distinction between the Old Testament and the Apocrypha, while various Christian communions differ in the degree of authority they allow to the latter. From a strictly historical point of view, the Writings and the Apocrypha go very much together, though some of the apocryphal books are a little later than the close of the Old Testament. Some of the Writings, like Job, are clearly superior in spiritual value to most of the Apocrypha; but others, such as Esther, are as clearly inferior to apocryphal books such as Ecclesiasticus or the Wisdom of Solomon.¹

Then he says that in order for one truly to understand the period of history just before the dawning of Christianity, one must read the Apocrypha with the OT. Dodd does not accord these writings with the status of Holy Scripture.

With respect to the formation of the NT canon, Dodd states that that process was slow, just as the OT was. The nucleus of the canon was the Gospels, containing the accounts of the person, work, and teaching of Jesus Christ. These documents were the authoritative standard for the life and work of the early church. By the end of the second century, twenty of the twenty-seven books of the present canon were included. How these twenty came to be included Dodd does not say. He does state that the church admitted those books into the canon that mattered the most and that guided them in the living of their faith. They did this by a sort of "spiritual intuition" and by wanting to guard the fundamentals of the Christian faith from any writings that delved into heresies or mystery religions. In time only seven other books were added to the second century canon, most of them minor writings like II Peter and James. These twenty-seven books were the canon by which other developments could be tested.²

¹Ibid., 25.

²Ibid, 26–27; idem, review of *Living Issues in the New Testament*, by C. A. Anderson Scott, *CongQ* 11 (1933): 361. Dodd says very much the same thing with respect to the Old Testament canon in *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* MNTC (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1932), 150, by saying that Paul and all Christians of his time (so far as we know) "accepted the historic revelation in the Hebrew Scriptures as the starting point of Christianity."

The Rejection of the Traditional Doctrine of Biblical Authority

While at Manchester, Dodd continued his rejection of the old dogmatism of biblical authority, although not with the same zeal and enthusiasm. We can see this polemic expressed in three ways.

First, Dodd proceeded in his rebuttal of the Reformation principle of interpreting the message of the Bible along doctrinal lines. In fact, one gets the impression that one of Dodd's goals he set for himself in writing his Romans commentary was that he might redeem Paul's thought from the chains of Reformation theology. Unlike the commentators of that era, he proposes that the modern approach to Romans must not only ask the questions, what did Paul say? and what did Paul mean? but also, is it true? The latter question was never asked by the exponents of traditional biblical authority because it was never questioned.¹ Moreover, Dodd makes an interesting comment in his discussion of Romans 3:21–26 that during the Middle Ages and the Reformation, current ideas were read into Paul's theology which were not in Paul's mind because the ancient ideas of sacrifice were no longer alive then as they had been in Paul's day.

While we reject some of the historic statements of Pauline theology, we must admit that they were not untrue to his intention, in so far as they enabled men to believe reasonably, in terms of the thought of their time, that God in Christ has done whatever needed to be done in order that men might be freed from the guilt of their sin, and start upon a new life in the strength of divine grace. That is the essence of the matter, and many theological doctrines which we must think alien in their detail from Paul's thought have nevertheless safeguarded for their time the Gospel which he preached.²

¹Dodd, *Romans*, xxxiv. On p. 141 Dodd chides Augustine and Calvin for making the mistake of erecting upon their correct apprehension of the electing grace of God a rigid dogmatic system, thereby laying "snares at the feet of believers." We should note that although Dodd is against the dogmatism of the Reformation, he acknowledges that Congregationalism, like other Christian bodies of the Reformation, sets out to construct its church life on the basis of the New Testament, see idem, "The Church in the New Testament," *Essays Congregational and Catholic*, ed. Albert Peel (London: Congregational Union of England and Wales, 1931), 3.

²Ibid., 61.

Second, Dodd maintains that the old cosmological world-view of the scriptures must be rejected. It is important for him that in answering the most fundamental question for religion, that of the nature of God and his relation to ourselves, that we must preserve the integrity of our thought by trying to answer that question in a way that makes sense of the religious life and fits into our own philosophy of the world as we experience it.¹ For example, the powers represented in texts such as Eph. 1:10,21, 3:10, 6:12; Col. 1:20 are identical with the στοιχεῖα of Gal. 4:3 and Col. 2:10. These powers are not in Dodd's mind literal beings but are mythological representations of factors in man's environment over which he has no control.² To regard them as personal beings is to misunderstand the intention of these verses. Likewise, if we reject Mark's stories that Jesus calmed the storm and fed five thousand with five loaves of bread, it is because these stories do not fit into our present world-view.³ Attempting to rationalize these miracles, as the old liberals did, will not help us understand what relevance the story has for us. Only as we ask the right questions of the story does its meaning take on significance: not did Jesus actually feed so many people with so little bread, but did Jesus really bring a new kind of spiritual life into the world, and can we still live by it?⁴

Third, Dodd continued to teach that modern criticism had evaporated the idea that the scriptures were inerrant. In his 1932 article, "Present Tendencies in the

¹C. H. Dodd, "Things Most Certainly Believed. III. God in Christ," *ExpT* 46 (1934–1935): 114–15.

²C. H. Dodd, "The Message of the Epistles: Ephesians," *ExpT* 45 (1933–1934): 61, n. 1; see also idem, *Romans*, 185. See further J. Y. Lee, "Interpreting the Demonic Powers in Pauline Thought," *NovT* 12 (1970): 54–69; and Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Theology* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1981), 140–45, and the literature cited therein.

³C. H. Dodd, "Miracles in the Gospels," *ExpT* 44 (1932–1933): 505.

⁴*Ibid.*, 506; cf. idem, "The Close of the Galilean Ministry," *Expositor* 8th ser., 22 (1921): 273–91. In this sense the Fourth Evangelist has shown a better way in John 6.

Criticism of the Gospels," he surveys the recent advances in gospel studies, and he points out, for example, that the new discipline of form criticism has helped the critic to pay more attention to the human factors that went into the shaping of the biblical tradition both with respect to the individual writers (the older they became, the more likely their memory failed them) and with the development of the tradition during the period of oral tradition from A.D. 30–60 (this tradition was "counter-signed" by the developing church).¹ This new method of criticism, along with the refinements in source criticism, enables the critic to understand the biblical writings much better than ever before.²

The Revision of the Traditional Doctrine of Biblical Authority

During his early years at Manchester, Dodd still adhered to his belief that the inspiration of the scriptures was a result of the religious geniuses who wrote it. With respect to the prophets, he says that starting with Amos we have authors who are first-rank men, men who stand out in the Bible and in the history of the human spirit. They are religious geniuses of the highest order because of their power of insight, their depth of imagination, and intensity of feeling to perceive the mysteries of God and man and make their readers share in that experience.³ Thus, Dodd carries over his opinion

¹C. H. Dodd, "Present Tendencies in the Criticism of the Gospels," *ExpT* 43 (1931–1932): 246–51. Dodd makes the same point with respect to the author of Acts. In a review of E. F. Scott's *The Literature of the New Testament*, Dodd agrees with Scott's opinion that the author of Acts wrote a picture of the early church "sufficiently accurate in substance, though blurred to some extent by the haze of a distant retrospect"; idem, "The Study of the New Testament," *Religion in Education* 1 (1934): 142.

²C. H. Dodd, "The Mind of Paul: II," *New Testament Studies* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1953), 87; cf. idem, review of *The Beginnings of Christianity*, Part I, Vols IV–V, ed. Frederick J. Foakes-Jackson and Kirsopp Lake *CongQ* 11 (1933): 361, where Dodd comments on the "over use" of criticism by the authors of that work which was otherwise "one of the greatest events of the century in Biblical studies," idem, "The Study of the New Testament," 142.

³Dodd, *The Bible and its Background*, 41–42.

developed in *The Authority of the Bible* and “The Authority of the Bible—Keine Aktuelle Frage?” that it is not the words of scripture that are inspired, it is the authors.¹

The old dogmatic view of biblical authority must also be revised, says Dodd, because of the unity of religious experience. Using the same principles he used during his Oxford years, he showed in his Romans commentary and in a BBC radio broadcast how the scriptures are authoritative in this way. For example, when Dodd comments on Romans 7:9–11, he notes that the passage reads like an allegorical interpretation of the story of the Fall of man. Philo of Alexandria and the writer of the tract *Poimandres* in the Hermetic Corpus interpret the Genesis passage allegorically, so why couldn't Paul? Since the LXX of Genesis has many resemblances in Romans 7, Dodd reasons that Paul “lived himself into” the Fall and so interpreted it as “a parable of individual experience.” It is true, concedes Dodd, that when one interprets a passage allegorically, he usually finds what he is looking for, but he writes, “The reason why Paul found there a story of how an individual fell into the power of sin and death was that he had had experience of it, and the old story fitted his experience.”² It does not follow that if one admits that the Bible is authoritative that the Fall is a literal, historical event. As Dodd so often says, the biblical history is our history—the story of Everyman. Commenting on Romans 15:3, he writes:

We should say, no doubt, that [these words] were written in intention for contemporaries; but that, since there is a unity in the spiritual history of man, they have an application beyond their original intention, wherever the like spiritual conditions and needs recur; and, further, so close is the unity of the

¹In both works Dodd talks about experts in science and technology and their ability to make judgments about their fields which unqualified people would not be able to (*AuthB*, 24–25; “The Authority of the Bible—Keine Aktuelle Frage?”). And in a letter written in 1960, Dodd says that he does not know Accadian or Ugaritic and that he accepts what the “experts” tell him, C. H. Dodd, to E. H. Robertson, 2 December 1960, TLS, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

²Dodd, *Romans*, 106. A decade later, Dodd stated the same thought in a BBC broadcast: “For Paul, more than any writer I know, entered imaginatively into the whole biblical story, and found in it a clue to his own experience of life,” idem, “EVERYMAN'S BOOK 20. Conclusion, 30 March 1941,” TMs, BBC Radio Broadcast Transcript, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

spiritual history represented in the Bible, there is nothing of permanent religious value in the Old Testament which has not an application to Christ, and through Him, to Christians.¹

Likewise, in his unpublished typewritten broadcast talk, "For the Children,"² Dodd spoke of the despaired captives exiled in Babylon and of the renewal of hope and vision given to them that God was with them, wherever they might be. Although Babylon is now a heap of ruins, the message of those captives can be real to us today—"that the whole world is God's house, and His children can be with Him wherever they may be."³ Again, Dodd is showing that it is this unity of religious experience, not inerrant proof-texts, that gives the Bible its certain authoritative base.⁴

The Authority of Christ

In *The Authority of the Bible* and in his Mansfield lectures Dodd made a case for studying the gospel accounts of Jesus Christ by using the discipline of source criticism. Mark and Q are the "pillars" of our knowledge of Jesus, and a constant study of both traditions will help us feel that "in them we are in real though not direct touch with the memory of the disciples." In fact, Dodd explains, "what matters most is that the more critical our study has been, the more sure we become that here is a real

¹Dodd, *Romans*, 221–22. This idea of unity in experience is well-argued in Dodd's Ingersoll Lecture at Harvard University 30 April 1935 entitled, "The Communion of Saints." As in *The Authority of the Bible*, where he argued that individual experience was not enough and had to be supplemented and confirmed by corporate experience, in this lecture he reasons that all life is shared life, and that it is with respect to the "network of relations" that our individuality is determined, "The Communion of the Saints," 145; cf. idem, "Letters of a First-Century Traveller," *An Outline of Church History: From the Acts of the Apostles to the Reformation*, vol. IV, *Life and Letters of the Early Church*, ed. Edward Shillito, 4 vols., (Woking, England: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1939), 15.

²C. H. Dodd, "The Exile: For the Children, 18 June 1933," TMs, BBC Radio Broadcast Transcript, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

³Ibid. This principle is implied in the title of a little book Dodd wrote for children, *There and Back Again*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton Ltd.).

⁴See also Dodd, *The Bible and Its Background*, 57, and idem, "The Church in the New Testament," 12.

Person in history, many-sided, often perplexing, certainly too great to be reduced to any common type, and not fully intelligible to us; but, for all that, unmistakably individual, strongly defined in lines of character and purpose, and challenging us all by a unique outlook on life.”¹ The benefits of such historical study are that it helps us to know Jesus better.

During the Manchester days, Dodd expounded on this idea. In “Present Tendencies in the Criticism of the Gospels,” he comments that “Mark and Q remain our two fundamental sources for the life and teaching of Jesus.”² In a controversial article entitled, “The Framework of the Gospel Narrative,” he argued for the historical reliability of the Marcan outline of the ministry of Jesus as presented in the generalizing summaries, and he restates the reliability of Mark and Q in presenting us with early traditional material.³ And in his review of Scott’s *The Literature of the New Testament*, he reiterates the same view.⁴ What Dodd is doing here in relation to the authority of Jesus is to say that the traditions about Jesus that are authoritative are those found in Mark and Q. By saying that Mark and Q are the pillars of our historical knowledge of Christ, he means that these sources present the most reliable picture—that is, the most valuable. This principle is brought out most dramatically in his 1935 work *The Parables of the Kingdom*. In this book he sets out to answer the question, what was the meaning of the kingdom of God during the ministry of Jesus? Form criticism has given the critic a valuable tool to set the sayings of Jesus into their various *Sitze-im-Leben*. What Dodd does is to study the parables of Jesus in light of this principle. He does not, however, study all the parables—only those found within Mark and Q. He

¹Dodd, *AuthB*, 230–31.

²Dodd, “Present Tendencies,” 246.

³C. H. Dodd, “The Framework of the Gospel Narratives,” *NTStudies*, 1–11.

⁴Dodd, “The Study of the New Testament,” 138.

contends that by doing so we shall “not only be saving time by leaving out of account (with few exceptions) those parts of Matthew and Luke which have no parallel in other Gospels, but we shall also be dealing with material which has the best claim to bring us in touch with the earliest tradition accessible to us at all.”¹ Again, with regard to the predictions of Jesus concerning the future, he writes, “We enquire, therefore, what, on the testimony of the best sources to which we have access, did Jesus predict?”² This observation is to anticipate our evaluation of Dodd, but let it be said here that, although Dodd holds to the authority of the canon, when it comes to the authority of Jesus Christ, it is ultimately the Marcan and Q material that matters. Thus Dodd is formulating a canon-within-the-canon hermeneutical principle which will be evident in his Cambridge writings.³

It is interesting that in the same year he published *The Parables of the Kingdom*, he wrote an article for the *Expository Times* in which he argued that by a prima facie reading of the Gospels in order to let them make their impression on us as a whole, we are struck by the numinous element in them. Source and form criticism may be able to eliminate disparate elements within the books, but they cannot erase “the pervading impression of authority and mystery” which surrounds the Personality of Jesus Christ. And the authority of Jesus, as Dodd understands it in this article, is that Jesus provides the clue to understanding God and His purpose.⁴

¹C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (Nisbet & Company, 1935), 41.

²*Ibid.*, 53; see especially p. 69.

³Willi Marxsen, *The New Testament as the Church's Book*, trans. James E. Mignard, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1972), 28–29, 64–67, advocates a similar position.

⁴Dodd, “Things Most Certainly Believed. III. God in Christ,” 116. Here Dodd follows up on his observation in *AuthB*, 232, that Christ is somehow “the inner light,” the “spark of divinity within us.”

In 1936 Dodd became the Norris-Hulse Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University. During the fifteen years he stayed there, he wrote fifty-five published materials, and many unpublished lectures and broadcasts, for an average of almost five a year.¹ It was during this time, as we shall see, that his views of biblical authority changed.

The Authority of the Canon

Dodd acknowledges the authority of the twenty-seven books of the NT in almost every writing of his period. The process by which the books were included into the canon is clearly spelled out in the first chapter of *The Bible To-day*.² Why were these books, and not the whole body of Christian literature, organized into a canon? He answers that the selection process was a part of the whole impulse of consolidation which took place after the apostolic age. During this time the church was threatened from without and from within by persecution and heresy. The response to this threat was the organization of faith and practice of the church under the "Rule of Faith" and the Christian Canon.³ As he said in earlier writings, Dodd is not sure about how some of the books were included; history remains silent on that matter. But he can state this, that "the Church intuitively acknowledged the authority of these particular works."⁴ In this regard, the canon was "an expression of a distinctive movement of life and thought";⁵ a "first-rate evidence from men who came under direct contact of the

¹Most of Dodd's unpublished materials included in the bibliography are undated, but using internal evidence, we can speculate that some of them were written during this period.

²Dodd, *BibT*, 1–14.

³*Ibid.*, 6; see *idem*, "The History of Christianity," 441. In *History and the Gospel*, (London: Nisbet & Company, 1938), 23, 107, Dodd writes that the canon contained the classical documents of the early church.

⁴*Ibid.*, 7; *idem*, *History and the Gospel*, 48; *idem*, *ApostPD*, 125–26.

⁵Dodd, *Present Task*, 16.

historical crisis in the Gospels";¹ and a group of writings by men who bore witness to the revelation of God² as the "pioneers of Christian theology."³

In his 1939 essay "The New Testament" Dodd says the following about the canon. The NT contains several writings which describe a complex of events taking place in the first century. These events constitute a crisis in the religious life of Judaism, in which the man Jesus Christ, claiming to be the Son of God, was crucified, dead, and buried, but rose again from the dead. Out of this crisis the Christian Church emerged "as a historical phenomenon,"⁴ and through reflection upon the facts of this crisis and its significance, the Christian Church, with a common voice, produced the writings of the NT as an authoritative record of these facts. "The New Testament, then," writes Dodd, "lies before us: twenty-seven writings of various kinds, constituting together a Canon or standard of Christian faith and life."⁵ Furthermore,

¹C. H. Dodd, "The Kingdom of God: Miracles," *Religion in Education* 15 (1948): 40. For Dodd's evaluation of the canonicity of II John and III John, see idem, *The Johannine Epistles*, MNTC (London: Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., 1946), ix–xiv. Dodd does not believe that the author of the Fourth Gospel and the author of the First Epistle were the same person, (see idem, "The First Epistle of John and the Fourth Gospel," *BJRL* 21 (1937): 129–56), but this does not weaken the authority of I John as a canonical book because its author recognized the authority of the Fourth Gospel, *Epistles John*, 31, 37, 73. Likewise, in "A New Gospel," *NT Studies*, 45, Dodd writes that the *Egerton Papyrus 2* fragments show similarities with the four gospels, and he comments (p. 45) that it "would seem to have emanated from a circle which held the Fourth Gospel to be authoritative, but which, if it knew the Synoptic Gospels, preferred, at least in some cases, other authorities."

²Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 14.

³C. H. Dodd, "The Kingdom of God and History," *The Kingdom of God and History*, a collected work, with H. G. Wood and others (Chicago: Willett, Clark & Company, 1938), 15.

⁴Dodd, "The New Testament," 219; idem, "What is the Purpose of God?," *Religion in Education* 17 (1949): 6, where Dodd says that the immediate result of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ was the emergence of the church as a historical community.

⁵*Ibid.*, 224–25.

Its writings, by whomever they were produced, were accepted by the general mind of the Church as an authoritative exposition of the revelation of God by which its life was created and sustained: of the facts and of their significance. Apart from all particular questions regarding authorship, date, and the like, these writings are a first-hand record of the creative period of the Church, in which the springs of its life are laid bare. The Church itself refers us to them as its credentials; as the 'Canon', or norm by which its faith and practice are authorised and authenticated.¹

The first principle we can deduce from Dodd's comments here is that Dodd accepts the authority of the NT because these writings adequately make sense of the genesis of the Christian Church; they are authenticated by the experience of the Church in matters of faith and practice; and they were collected into a canon.

But Dodd qualifies this authority by contrasting it with the premise of biblical absolutism that the NT, as the Word of God, stands over against every word of man, since man's reason, impaired by original sin, is unable to comprehend the revelation of God by his natural faculties. Consequently, man can only accept uncritically and with total submission the truth of the Bible. The danger of this argument, warns Dodd, is two-fold: it can set up a dualism between "our reasonable thinking about the world and that which we accept as revealed truth," and it can unveil a double standard of truth. The upshot of this is that the truth of God is one, and that if we accept this proposition, then the revelation in the NT must make sense in the context of our total experience of the world and of ourselves. "It must, therefore, be intelligibly related to our judgments in every field of human activity, however temporary and relative such judgments may be."²

A second principle we can deduce from this discussion is that the authority of the NT must be corroborated by the authority of personal and corporate experience. Thus the biblical theology of the NT, if it is to bear its full authority, must be checked by

¹Ibid., 220.

²Ibid., 221.

our total experience, our philosophy of life,¹ and where these areas confirm one another, that is where the authority of the NT lies. Although Dodd does not discuss the doctrine of the verbal infallibility of the Bible in this essay, it is clear that, because there may be certain statements recorded in Scripture which may not be authenticated by our experience, and because the truth of God is always one, he gives no credence to this dogma.

It is this canon, this Bible, that all Christian traditions look to, even if they do not all agree on the nature of its authority or on the principles of interpretation. In this regard, Dodd says that it is only within the context of the Church that we can know the Bible for what it is. "Each several writing has a significance which belongs to it within the unity of the Canon, and the definition of the Canon is the witness of the Church to the Scriptures."²

The Rejection of the Traditional Doctrine of Biblical Authority

In the second edition of *The Authority of the Bible* (1938) Dodd continued his rejection of the old dogmatism with no change from the first edition. He carried on this rejection in his book *The Bible To-day*. Here he restates his opinion that the Reformation hindered a true reading of the scriptures with its equation of the Bible with inerrant authority.³ The writers of scripture were not infallible because they, like all men, are fallen creatures whose point of view lies within a fallen world.⁴ We must

¹Ibid., 219: "Theology therefore cannot dispense with philosophy, which is the attempt to make sense of our experience as a whole."

²C. H. Dodd, "The Biblical Basis for Christian Unity," *World Christian Education* 3 (1948): 1.

³Much of the discussion in section one above was taken from *The Bible To-day*.

⁴C. H. Dodd, "The Theology of Christian Pacifism," *The Bases of Christian Pacifism*, a collected work, with C. E. Raven and G. H. C. Macgregor (London: Council of Christian Pacifist Groups, [1938], 5.

recognize the "inevitable presence in such a record [as the gospels] of human fallibility. Even if we were disposed in the interests of a theory to deny it, the observation that the four Gospels often differ both in matters of fact and in interpretation of fact is enough to show that their record is not in any case inerrant."¹ But we have to recognize that these writers did write in good faith.² In the *Dictionary of National Biography*, Dodd writes that one of the great merits of A. S. Peake was Peake's ability to help those who had been nurtured on the old dogmatism to make the difficult transition to the new look on the Bible. Peake did the Congregational Churches a great service by saving them "from the baneful effects of 'Fundamentalist' controversies."³

The Revision of the Traditional Doctrine of Biblical Authority

Although the second edition of *The Authority of the Bible* still sets out Dodd's revision of the old dogmatism in terms of his analysis of religious genius and of personal and corporate experience, there is a new justification for the triumph of the critical method. During the Cambridge years, he stressed the importance of revelation in history, in *Heilsgeschichte*—history as a process of divine revelation.⁴ For example, he writes in *The Bible To-day*, "The Scriptures of the New Testament, or in other words, the documents of the New Covenant, are the authoritative record of that act of God by which He established relations between Himself and the Church."⁵ He writes

¹C. H. Dodd, "The Gospels as History: A Reconsideration," *BJRL* 22 (1938): 127.

²Dodd, *How to Read the Gospels*, 24; idem, "Unpublished Paper on Presuppositions."

³C. H. Dodd, "Peake, Arthur Samuel," *DNB* 1922–1930, ed. J. R. H. Weaver, (Oxford: The University Press, 1937), 658.

⁴Dodd, "Constructive Theology. x. Revelation," 448; idem, review of *The Fourth Gospel: Its Significance and Environment*, by R. H. Strachan, and *Christianity According to St. John*, by W. F. Howard *JTS* 44 (1943): 307–9; idem, *History and the Gospel*, 23; idem, "The Kingdom of God and History," 23–27.

⁵Dodd, *BibT*, 8.

a few pages further that “the Bible is a unity of diverse writings which together are set forth by the Church as a revelation of God in history.”¹ That this is a radical departure from the old liberal position of his 1928 work on the authority of the Bible is evident in the new preface he wrote for the 1938 edition, in which he delineates the idea of an inner core of history, “sacred history,” in which the divine meaning of all history is disclosed.² No doubt this revision has taken place in Dodd's thinking because of his understanding of the kerygma as “the authoritative tradition to which an appeal can be made.”³

The Authority of Jesus Christ

We can see this revision in Dodd's thinking as we examine what he has to say about the authority of Jesus Christ. To be sure Jesus demonstrates authority when He speaks and heals,⁴ but His authority is much more pronounced because of the attention Dodd gives to the death and resurrection of Christ as a new locus of revelation.⁵ Jesus is much more than an outstanding Personality; His life, death, and resurrection constitute the crisis in which God's revelation is made known: “Thus the historical situation in which Christ lived and died is also the moment at which what is beyond

¹Ibid., 14.

²Dodd, *AuthB* 2nd ed. (1938),

³Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 71; idem, *ApostPD*, 127-29; in the second edition of *The Authority of the Bible*, 299, he writes, “In the New Testament it is the witness to the evangelical facts, as experienced in history by the first believers, that is regarded as constant and unchanging. Their interpretation is subject to development.”

⁴Dodd, *ApostPD*, 111; idem, “The Centre of Christian Experience,” 82; idem, *How to Read the Gospels*, 10; cf. idem, “Matthew and Paul,” *NTStudies*, 56. In “The Founder of Christianity,” TMsS, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College, Oxford, Dodd says that Jesus was put to death because the Roman government understood him to be a king. “Kingship means authority, and the issue between Jesus and the Jewish priests and doctors of the Law was one of authority.” See also Dodd's sermon, “Mark XV.21, 1962 (?)” TMs, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

⁵Dodd, *BibT*, 109.

history fully takes command of history, and gives it an ultimate or 'eschatological' character."¹ This idea is expounded by Dodd in an unpublished letter. Commenting on the "earth-shaking effects" of the life of Jesus upon the people, he says:

I don't think it is quite enough to attribute everything directly to the indefinable impress of [Jesus'] 'personality', though that no doubt remains in the last resort the factor we must assume to have lain behind everything. But what cleared the way was, as it seems to me, the proclamation of the Kingdom of God as the eschaton. When once people believed that a new age had dawned, that the whole past had been wound up, that there was a fresh beginning, a clean sheet upon which anything might be written, a world of unimaginable possibilities within reach—then their minds were open to receive whatever impression the teaching and the personality of Jesus might make upon them. And for the first disciples His death and resurrection made the clean break.²

Dodd justifies the use of the critical method in studying this historical situation by the fact that Christianity is an historical religion. Christ came in history. It is incumbent upon the biblical critic to get back as early as he possibly can to the fountain of the tradition, to those who stood nearest to the facts, whose life and outlook had been moulded by them.³ Therefore, a study of the kerygma is most instructive, as well as Mark and Q.⁴

¹Dodd, review of Strachan and Howard, 308.

²C. H. Dodd, letter to "My dear Dean," 15 March 1937, TLS, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford. In this letter Dodd says that he is about to write a small life of Jesus in an American popular series. The book was never completed, but in the collection of Dodd Papers at Mansfield College there are scattered sheets of Dodd's first draft of this book, which he titled *The Founder of the Christian Religion*. He says that the purpose of the book "is to give some account of Jesus in the historical role in which he actually appeared, of his personality, the principles he stood for, and (so far as our information admits) the course of his career—without prejudice to any further meta-historical or even metaphysical interpretation that may seem to be indicated, of which I may have to say something about before the book is finished." A comparison of these sheets with Dodd's book *The Founder of Christianity* reveals very similar wording and outlining. It is therefore possible that what we have is a rough draft of *The Founder of Christianity*.

³C. H. Dodd, review of *The Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. C. W. Dugmore, *JTS* 46 (1945): 207; idem, *ApostPD*, 129; idem, *History and the Gospel*, 71.

⁴Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 85.

Dodd's Views on Biblical Authority during His Retirement

C. H. Dodd retired from the Norris-Hulse chair in 1949 and began a twenty-four year retirement from active teaching. His retirement, however, did not restrict his literary productivity, for in addition to his duties as head translator of the New English Bible, he wrote sixty-four books, articles, and book reviews, an average of two and a half pieces of theological literature a year.¹

The Authority of the Canon

In his essay "The Jews and the Beginning of the Christian Church," Dodd reviews an old theme we have noticed in previous writings that the unity of the early church was witnessed to and safeguarded by the bishops, by the "Rule of Faith," and by the acceptance of the Canon of Scripture. He says that the Canon was a generally agreed list of authoritative writings to which appeal might be made. Dodd comments that at the close of the second century there were twenty of our twenty-seven books in the Canon with virtually universal acceptance, with the nucleus being the four gospels, the Pauline writings, and a few other writings.² Thus during his retirement he still had the utmost respect for the canonicity of scripture because these writings are the

¹In a letter to Mr. Kennedy-Bell written in 1961, Dodd comments that his work on the NEB and his preparation of scripts for the BBC take a lot of time and energy. He says in addition that this intrusion into his writing time has delayed his completion of *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*; C. H. Dodd to Mr. Kennedy-Bell, 13 May 1961, TLS, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

²C. H. Dodd, "The Jews and the Beginning of the Christian Church," *The European Inheritance*, ed. Ernest Barker, G. Clark, and P. Vaucher, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954): I:304–305. See also idem, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, (Cambridge: The University Press, 1963), 10–11.

scriptures common to us all¹ and are a tremendous asset to a divided church which reads the same Bible and acknowledges its authority in faith and practice.²

The Rejection of the Old Doctrine of Biblical Authority

During this period of Dodd's life, he could take it for granted that the old dogmatism was dead. He does not spend energy attacking inerrancy and infallibility; he just assumes that they are no longer worthy of discussion. In "The Relevance of the Bible," he still bemoans the fact that there are still attempts to set the authority of the Bible over against that of the Church, and the authority of the Church over against that of the Bible. All this simply results in obscuring the nature of biblical authority, which, he says, resides in the Church and in the scriptures.³

The Revision of the Old Doctrine of Biblical Authority

Dodd's beliefs on the legitimacy of the critical method perhaps ~~are~~ best put forth during this period of his life in the following:

The biblical documents have never, even for so long as one week, in all the centuries that have passed since the canon of Scripture began to be formed, been out of touch with the changing experiences of the people of God. A truly historical understanding of them will recognize this fact, with its consequence in the accumulation^{of} layers of meaning, which, rightly and critically considered, should enrich and not distort our understanding of their original purport.⁴

¹C. H. Dodd, "The Gospel According to John: A Review Article," *The Ampleforth Journal* 77 (1972): 17.

²C. H. Dodd, "Christ, the Hope of the World," *We Intend to Stay Together*, a collected work, with G. K. A. Bell, E. H. Robertson, and R. C. Mackie, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1954), 14.

³Dodd, "The Relevance of the Bible," 157; idem, "Thirty Years of New Testament Studies," 325.

⁴Dodd, "A Problem of Interpretation," 17.

Dodd reveals two key affirmations in this quotation. First, he stresses the relevancy of the scriptures—they speak to us today just as they spoke to the original hearers. They thus are worthy to be studied using the best critical methods available.¹ Second, he recognizes that the scriptures, especially the gospels, have several layers of meaning. Through the study of the kerygma, the testimonia, and liturgy of the early Church, the meaning behind these layers will become clear. Criticism need not be radical or overly sceptical, but sober and imaginative.²

The Authority of Jesus Christ

During his retirement days Dodd continued to stress the authority of Jesus Christ. He says that the death and resurrection of Christ was a single event, epoch-making, in which the power of another world broke into our world.³ The total picture of Jesus presented in the gospels was such that

where Jesus was, men were aware of a centre from which extraordinary vitality and force radiated. Sometimes, apparently, it exhibited itself in abnormal, or praeternormal, ways. Where the Gospels speak of miracles worked by the power of God, ancient Jewish (and hostile) sources, speak of sorcery. Both mean that there was a disturbing *something* there that they did not understand. But over and above this dim, instinctive reaction, and more

¹Cf. C. H. Dodd, "Christianity and the World's Challenge," *Current Religious Thought* 14 (1954), 11. Dodd can say this because he believes that in essentials, the first-century world was not very much unlike ours.

²C. H. Dodd, "The Historical Problem of the Death of Jesus," *MNTStudies*, 90; idem, *The Old Testament in the New* (London: Athlone Press, 1952), 4. Dodd now speaks of the authority of the apostolic kerygma in the church (idem, "The Appearances of the Risen Christ," *MNTStudies*, 127) since "the boney structure on which the Gospels are all framed can be traced to the most primitive tradition" (idem, "Results of Recent New Testament Research," *The Listener* [26 July 1951]: 185); the kerygma contains the "groundplan" of Christian theology (idem, "The Foundations of Christian Theology," *ThT* 7 [1950]: 308; idem, "Die Grundlagen der christlichen Theologie," *ET* 12 [1952]: 443; idem, *According to the Scriptures: The sub-structure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet & Company, 1952), 12); and the kerygma gives the New Testament a unity of theme (idem, "The 'Message' in the Gospels and Epistles," *The Ministry of the Word*, ed. Paulinus Milner, Congress Books, (London: Burns & Oaks, 1967), 45.

³Dodd, "Christianity and the World's Challenge," 12.

importantly, the presence of Jesus evoked an overwhelming sense of authority.¹

In "The Portrait of Jesus in John and in the Synoptics," Dodd discusses the authority of Jesus to judge. Although those around Jesus acknowledged His authority when He healed or when He spoke, Jesus spoke of His authority to judge. In John 5:22,27 and in Mark 2:10 par., Jesus says His authority has been given to Him by the Father and that as Son of Man He has authority to forgive sins. This authority is presupposed, Dodd says, in the whole presentation in the Synoptics, in the actual shape of the sayings of Jesus with respect to the dialogues, the pronouncement-stories, and in the ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν sayings. In addition,

it is presupposed no less in stories which turn upon his power to kindle faith, or to inspire his followers to stake their lives upon an enterprise whose purpose they only imperfectly understood. And indeed it becomes clear that the conflict in which he met his death was a conflict of authority, and he died as a defeated king. Here is a trait which cannot be eliminated from the portrait of Jesus in the synoptics, and it is the same trait that is delineated in the Fourth Gospel in formal dogmatic statement.²

In *The Founder of Christianity* Dodd often speaks of Christ's authority. He says that Jesus exercised the authority of God,³ did not disavow the authority that went with the name Messiah,⁴ and spoke with the authority of Moses.⁵

The Approach to Biblical Authority

Writing in *The Bible To-day*, C. H. Dodd made it clear what he believed to be the proper approach to the Bible:

¹C. H. Dodd, *Three Sermons* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1954), 13; idem, "The Jews and the Beginning of the Christian Church," 295.

²C. H. Dodd, "The Portrait of Jesus in John and in the Synoptics," *Christian History and Interpretation* (Studies presented to John Knox), ed. W. R. Farmer, C. F. D. Moule, and R. R. Niebuhr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 192-93.

³Dodd, *Founder*, 50.

⁴Ibid., 102.

⁵Ibid., 147-49.

I should be sorry to say that the only way to an understanding of the Bible lies through the latest refinements of critical scholarship. But the problems with which criticism is concerned are problems that face any reader who wishes to understand the Scriptures, and the critical *method* as a means of approach to the Scriptures, is acutely relevant to any serious study of the Bible as a religious book.¹

Indeed, he assumes that if one would offer himself as a guide to those who wish to understand the Bible, he must have a complete mastery of the critical method.² "Be suspicious," he warns, "of any suggestion that we can afford to by-pass criticism."³ So a fundamental presupposition of Dodd's hermeneutics is that the faithful and diligent use of the critical method will yield an interpretation of the biblical texts that is relevant and authoritative for the twentieth century. And in this chapter we shall discuss Dodd's justification for using the critical method for elucidating this relevance and authority.

The Qualifications of a Biblical Interpreter⁴

As someone who had chosen to devote his life to the study of the NT, Dodd was well aware that, if the critic is to do an accurate job of interpreting these documents, he must meet certain qualifications. The first one is humility. By this he means, first of all, that the biblical critic must take what the writers of Scripture say at face value. He explains:

The writer may speak for himself, and say to us exactly what he meant to say to his first readers. We require no crude attempts to 'modernize' his words. We listen to him with the humility which will not interrupt him in order to square what he says with what we think he ought to have said. We shall allow him to

¹Dodd, *BibT*, 27. Note that the title and argument of Chapter Two of this book, "The Approach to the Bible," is similar to the Hibbert Lectures of 1921 of James Moffatt, Dodd's colleague at Mansfield College, entitled *The Approach to the New Testament* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1921).

²Dodd, *Christian Beginnings*, 15.

³Dodd, *BibT*, 27.

⁴Cf. Raymond F. Surburg, "The Moral and Spiritual Qualifications of the Biblical Interpreter," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 22 (1951): 472-99.

give his own answers to his own questions, and not insist that he must always be answering ours.¹

Those who hold to the belief in an inerrant Bible insist that the Scriptures must be read in the light of this system of thought. Consequently, much is lost because the reader has assumed that the biblical writers have infallibly set forth the truth. Difficulties are passed over, and inconsistencies are harmonized. Thus, if the critic were sincerely humble, says Dodd, then he would circumvent any attempt to interpret Scripture in the light of a pre-conceived system in order to maintain that system for its own sake, such as the Fundamentalists maintain with their doctrine of inerrancy.² The critic takes pride in his particular system, but by doing so, he has disallowed the biblical writers to speak for themselves. In addition, Dodd lists humility as a qualification because of the temptation of methodological provincialism, which always accosts every interpreter. There is the danger that the critic is convinced that his particular interpretive method is the only legitimate one, with the result that he either ignores or disqualifies the methods of others.³ This attitude is inexcusable, warns Dodd, because the critic requires "accurate information,"⁴ which can only come from the "co-operation of specialists."⁵

In the introduction to *The Roads Converge* he writes about the gains that have been won for biblical scholarship because of the inter-confessional conferences among Catholic and Protestant scholars, and he suggests that those with different viewpoints read each other's work "with a genuine intention of being instructed" instead of

¹Ibid., 30; see also idem, review of *The Interpretation of the Bible*, 209; idem, "The Relevance of the Bible," 160; idem, "The New Testament," 222. Dodd is not always consistent on this point. For example, in *The Bible To-day*, 125, he writes, "In any field of thought, to put the question rightly is to go a long way towards the right answer."

²Dodd, *AuthB*, 9-13; idem, *BibT*, 22.

³Dodd, *Christian Beginnings*, 15.

⁴Dodd, *Present Task*, 9.

⁵Dodd, introduction to *The Roads Converge*, 3.

searching for material for controversy.¹ The critic must learn to admit his mistakes and to revise his conclusions—only humility and honesty can grant him this ability.

The second qualification of an interpreter is responsibility, which means that he must approach the task of interpretation with persistence balanced by patience, recognizing that there are no short-cuts and no easy answers. He must be held accountable for his handling of the evidence.² In fact, some of Dodd's sternest words are for those who, in his opinion, interpret the Bible irresponsibly.

For example, in a review of Ch. Guignebert's *Jesus*, he criticizes the author for his irresponsible and thoroughly sceptical treatment of the Gospel sources and warns, "To set out with a rooted contempt for your authorities may give results in the end as misleading as the determination to believe everything they report, however inconsistent or unlikely."³ Likewise, in his review of W. E. Barnes' *The Rise of Christianity*—probably his most outspoken and critical article⁴—Dodd accuses Barnes of the most blatant mishandling of the evidence. Barnes' claim that he speaks for "analytical critics" is exaggerated;⁵ his investigation of the Pauline Epistles becomes "completely airborne";⁶ his knowledge of textual criticism is "amateurish";⁷ his critical estimates of the authenticity of the Gospel records are "sometimes ill-conceived

¹Ibid., 2–4.

²Dodd, *Christian Beginnings*, 10, 12–14; idem, *BibT*, 2. In *The Bible and Its Background*, 33, Dodd suggests that the critic who approaches the JEDP problem must work in the same way that Sherlock Holmes disentangles the evidence of a crime or the way that a reader works out the plot of a detective novel by following up the clues and weaving the different strands of evidence together.

³C. H. Dodd, review of *Jesus*, by Ch. Guignebert, *HibJ* 34 (1936): 465.

⁴So thinks Dillistone, *Dodd*, 225.

⁵Dodd, *Christian Beginnings*, 5.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., 8.

or ill-informed";¹ and his misrepresentation of the teaching of Jesus, particularly of the kingdom of God, is inexcusable for one who claims to be an impartial historian.² The responsible critic, on the other hand, should exercise "common sense,"³ "sobriety of judgment,"⁴ and "that without which learning goes lame, the wisdom to discern significance."⁵

The third qualification of an interpreter, Dodd maintains, is that he must have the ability to "live himself into the biblical history."⁶ What does Dodd mean by this idea, and how does the interpreter put it into practice? According to Dodd, this phrase is his own translation of the German *sich hineinleben* and involves a two-step process. First, the interpreter can enter into the spiritual life of the time and think and feel as one of those to whom the Gospel first came.⁷ By accustoming himself into the ways of Hellenistic thought, for example, the interpreter should be able to put himself temporarily in the place of those Greeks to whom Paul preached the foolishness of the cross, and to feel just how foolish this "word of the cross" (I Cor. 1:18) must have sounded.⁸ What Dodd seems to say is that the interpreter, through a detailed

¹Ibid., 11.

²Ibid., 12–15.

³Dodd, "The New Testament," 237.

⁴Dodd, *Christian Beginnings. A Reply to Dr. Barnes' 'The Rise of Christianity'* (London: Epworth Press, [1947]), 15. Cf. Dodd's more favourable comments on the following scholars: "The Present Position of the Synoptic Problem," *CongQ* 111 (1925): 207 (a review of B. H. Streeter's *The Four Gospels*); "Peake, Arthur Samuel," 658; review of *Jesus and His Sacrifice*, by Vincent Taylor, *HibJ* 36 (1938): 471–74; and his remarks on F. C. Burkitt in *Present Task*, 5–6.

⁵Dodd, *Present Task*, 5–6.

⁶Dodd, *AuthB*, 295; idem, *BibT*, 156–57.

⁷Dodd, "The New Testament"; idem, *Present Task*, 6.

⁸Ibid.; cf. *BibT*, 137. In *History and the Gospel*, 28, he writes, "The best historian of the past is one who has so familiarized himself with this period that he can feel and judge its significance as from within." Although Dodd expresses great confidence in the historian's ability to do this, others are not so certain—see below, pp. 115–120.

grammatico-historical study of the documents of the ancient world, must be able to put himself in the place of one living at that time and understand the questions and answers of that period in their own terms.

Second, “to live oneself into the biblical history” means that that history can only be properly understood by one who is living the life of the Church. He explains:

As the New Testament was produced within the Church, so it is to be understood in the last resort only within the Church. While the subsidiary disciplines of our study can be practised, not without success and profit, in detachment from the Christian context to which the New Testament belongs, the interpretation of its contents as a biblical theology is the work for those who are living the life of the Church. That life is continuous with the life depicted in the New Testament.... Within the Church, where the Gospel is preached and heard, where the law of Christ is acknowledged, and where we share in an ordered fellowship of prayer, worship, and sacrament, the essential clue to the biblical revelation is held. For we believe that as the fact of Christ was made known to apostles and evangelists by the Spirit, so the same Spirit in the Church is guiding us into all truth. ‘He shall take of mine and shall declare it unto you.’¹

Elsewhere, he comments, “The Bible depicts God’s ways with man in the ‘large letters’ of the history of a community. If we can spell them out, we shall also read his ways with us individually. It is a matter of ‘living ourselves into’ the biblical history, which is the story of Everyman—and therefore of each of us.”² In this matter Dodd was clearly influenced by his Congregational background; and this principle, as we have seen in chapter one, was one of the four important principles listed by him in his 1920 article. But here he goes a step beyond Congregationalism and holds this principle true, not primarily on the basis of ecclesiastical *dogma*, but on the basis of his understanding of the biblical concept of the people of God as a continuous community through history, interpreted in the light of God’s covenant with man. It is important to note here that Dodd believes the divine pattern of the covenant, with its two aspects of judgment and forgiveness, reached its fulfilment in Christ, and that in the church, the outcome of this

¹Ibid., 243; idem, “The Relevance of the Bible,” 160; cf. George Eldon Ladd, “History and Theology in Biblical Exegesis,” *Interp* 20 (1966): 54.

²Dodd, *BibT*, 156–57.

fulfilment, these aspects : "In the life of the Church, this pattern recurs. The Church continually stands under the judgment of God, *and* praises him for his great salvation."¹ Therefore, says Dodd, "It is within this structure of divine revelation—Heilsgeschichte re-constituted in the *koinonia* of the Church—that the warnings, precepts and promises of Scripture take effect. Outside this *koinonia* they are in danger of being misinterpreted and misapplied."² So Dodd insists that the ideal interpreter must be one who is living within the life of the Church, who recognizes the biblical history as complementing his own, and, with humble reliance upon the Holy Spirit, seeks for the *testimonium spiritus sancti internum* to guide his interpretation of the biblical revelation.³

The History of the Critical Method in the Church

Believing that "biblical criticism is a legitimate, and even useful, branch of scientific study," and that "we should be suspicious of any attempt to by-pass criticism,"⁴ Dodd is constrained to justify the use of the critical method by showing that the Church used this method during the early stages of her history and that the demise of biblical criticism during the Middle Ages and the Reformation necessitated its modern revival.

¹Dodd, "The Relevance of the Bible," 158.

²Ibid., 160. In *BibT*, 157–58, he explains, "That which gives meaning to the biblical history also gives meaning to our individual lives. The biblical history is meaningful, because of the interpretation of the events supplied by the Word of God through prophetic men—an interpretation which, as we have seen, is itself creative of events. The same interpretation applied to our lives will make them meaningful also. This interpretation always rests upon an encounter with God. As the story comes alive in us, we too encounter God, and our lives gain meaning."

³Ibid.; see further Dodd's comments on the *testimonium spiritus sancti internum* in *AuthB*, 296–97.

⁴Dodd, *BibT*, 27.

The Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Age

Biblical criticism was not an invention of the "Age of Reason"; in fact, writes Dodd, "the foundations of biblical criticism were laid in the first four centuries of the Christian era."¹ In the third century Origen of Caesarea, "a first-rate theological thinker,"² produced a critical edition of the text of the OT. Questions concerning the authorship of the biblical writings and the alleged contradictions and divergences in them were raised and answered by such Greek scholars as Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria, who, by comparing Revelation with the Gospel of John, argued that the Apostle John could not have written the former. He notes that modern criticism has yet to refute the Bishop's conclusion.³ In addition to these questions, early Christian scholars gave careful attention to the problems of biblical interpretation, particularly of the re-interpretation of the Old Testament in light of the New. Where in certain sections of the Bible the real meaning intended by the biblical author is not the literal sense of the words, they made rigorous use of an allegorical method of interpretation. Two examples of this are the allegorical interpretation of the Song of Solomon⁴ and Augustine's famous interpretation of the parable of the Good Samaritan.⁵ This method "gave freedom from the tyranny of already antiquated forms of thought; freedom from the necessity of accepting at their face value, as part of a divine revelation, puerile and sometimes revolting survivals from primitive times. It gave an opening, of which

¹Ibid., 15; cf. idem, "The Foundations of Christian Theology," 308-9; idem, *AccordSS*, 111-13.

²Dodd, "The Jews and the Beginnings of the Christian Church," I:303.

³C. H. Dodd, "A Vision of Triumph," *An Outline of Church History: From the Acts of the Apostles to the Reformation*, vol. IV, *Life and Letters of the Early Church*, ed. Edward Shillito, 4 vols. (Woking, England: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1939), 40. In idem, *EpistsJohn* Dodd calls the bishop "a very judicious critic." See also idem, *Historical Tradition*, 45.

⁴Ibid., 15-16.

⁵Dodd, *Parables*, 11-12.

some of the finest minds took full advantage, for a genuinely imaginative treatment of the Bible.”¹

The Middle Ages

During the Middle Ages, these interpretive principles of the early period crystalized into a general schema, which determined the study of the bible. It was based on a particular view of biblical history in which the OT appears as a series of prophecies and types which are fulfilled in the NT. Furthermore, the actions which comprise OT history foreshadow the action as well as the thought of the NT.² This structure of history is rounded off by the Creation at the beginning and by the Last Judgment at the end, with prominence given to the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. Having identified this schema, Dodd then proceeds to describe how it provided a framework for Christian thought and worship all through the Middle Ages, as is evident from the stained glass windows of the medieval churches. He concludes that whatever knowledge the laypeople had of the Bible was communicated to them through this schema, “Broadly speaking, it is probably true to say that the church was more concerned to communicate the schema to the laity than the Bible itself; but in doing so it insured that whatever of the biblical material became available...was seen in a well-defined perspective.”³

The Renaissance

A movement for the popularization of the Scriptures began during the Renaissance. One result in England was the first complete English translation of the

¹Dodd, *BibT*, 18.

²*Ibid.*, 19.

³*Ibid.*, 20; cf. *idem*, review of *The Interpretation of the Bible*, 206–7.

Bible. It was inspired by John Wycliffe, who contended that the laity, as God's vessels, should have private access to His law.¹

The Reformation

In the sixteenth century, we come to the Reformation, and Dodd has several things to say about this movement. Positively, the reformers restored the Bible to the laity. With the new emphasis on the Bible as God's revelation to man, they reasoned that every man had the right to read it for himself, and not to be dependent upon the indirect channels of Church tradition. Consequently, they admitted the right of private judgment in interpreting the Bible. This in turn produced "an outburst of spiritual spontaneity" among the people. "The enthusiasm with which the Bible was read, and its sublime utterances greeted, by those to whom they came for the first time in their own tongue, as something fresh, set free spiritual energy in creative ways. Parts of the Bible which under the rigidity of the traditional schema had lost vital interest now seemed to disclose unsuspected wealth of meaning to awakened and liberated minds."² Negatively, the Reformers' claim that the Bible could be read just as it was, "without note or comment," exposed it to the dangers of what Dodd calls "chaotic individualism." There became a fine line between a responsible and an irresponsible interpretation of Scripture. As an extreme example of the latter, Dodd demonstrates how the apocalyptic writings of Daniel and Revelation have become "the licensed playground of every crank."³ This assertion could be supported only if it be granted that equal and absolute authority should be given to each and every part of the Bible since, it was reasoned, all of the Bible was verbally inspired. This understanding

¹Ibid., 37; idem, "English Translators of the Bible," TMs, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

²Ibid., 22-23.

³Ibid., 23. A less extreme example was that it often led to a loss of a just perspective and distorted the proportions of the biblical picture.

impaired a proper interpretation of the Bible because the Bible was taken to be a source of proof-texts to certify a system of theology; and Dodd is unequivocal in his abhorrence of such a hermeneutic.¹

Nineteenth-Century Liberal Protestantism

The modern period of biblical criticism had its roots in the Renaissance, with the revival of classical studies. And it was during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that biblical criticism re-established itself. Dodd discusses the aims and achievements of the nineteenth-century critics in several of his writings. He comments that, "if we are bound to criticize the great critics of the last century, we are also bound to confess that where we have gone beyond them is by standing on their shoulders."² He is well-qualified to speak about this period of liberal Protestantism because, as we have seen, he was educated in that tradition at Mansfield College and because he had obtained a first-rate acquaintance with the liberal masters in Germany.³

Dodd lists three characteristics of the older liberalism. First, it was analytical in approach.⁴ With microscopic precision it analyzed and classified the anatomy of Scripture into its various elements. The Synoptic Gospels, in particular, were given special attention, since they are directly concerned with the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Dodd avers that the solution of the Synoptic problem was the most conspicuous and spectacular success of analytical criticism, and he predicts that we are not likely to go back upon its fundamental conclusion that "the earliest Gospel is Mark, written

¹See the discussion in chapter two above, pp. 48–50, 61–62, 75–76, 80–81.

²Dodd, *BibT*, 27. Note that for Dodd the nineteenth century ended with the start of World War I in 1914, idem, "A Problem of Interpretation," 7.

³See above, pp. 21–29.

⁴Dodd, introduction to *The Roads Converge*, 4; idem, "Recent Developments in New Testament Studies. New Testament Criticism: A Fresh Approach," 14.

about A.D. 65–70; that Matthew and Luke used Mark as a source; that they also used a further source—whether it was a single document or more than one—which critics are accustomed to indicate by the non-committal symbol ‘Q’; and that Q was about as old as Mark, or a little older.”¹

Second, it was concerned with the quest of the historical Jesus. Dodd writes in *History and the Gospel* that

the aim of nineteenth century criticism was defined as ‘the quest of the historical Jesus’. Its method was the minute analysis and assessment of the Gospels as historical documents. Its assumption, avowed or implicit, was that this method would succeed in eliminating from the records a mass of intrusive material due to the faith and thought of the early Church (*Gemeindetheologie*). When this was done, the residue would lie before us as a solid nucleus of bare fact, upon which we might put our own interpretation, without regard to the interpretation given by the early Church in the documents themselves. Christianity might be reconstructed upon a basis of historical fact, scientifically assured.²

In particular, the nineteenth-century critics played down the eschatological element in the Gospels, favouring an interpretation which would show it to be “in some way peripheral and inessential”³ to the message of Jesus. Having accepted the theory of evolution as scientific fact, they viewed the world in terms of a theology of divine immanence, thus ruling out any reference to the supernatural. And since they had rejected this reference, they also had to play down the role of eschatology because any favorable interpretation of the eschatological references in the Gospels must presuppose a theology of divine transcendence.⁴ Consequently, the nineteenth-century lives of

¹C. H. Dodd, “New Testament Scholarship Today,” 81. For a full discussion of Dodd's views on the Synoptic Problem, see below, pp. 189–98.

²Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 12; idem, *Founder*, 38.

³Dodd, introduction to *The Roads Converge*, 7.

⁴Ibid., 6; idem, *History and the Gospel*, 12; cf. idem, “Things Most Certainly Believed. III. God in Christ,” 115–17.

Jesus, as documented by Albert Schweitzer's book, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*,¹ were portrayed according to the fancy of the critic, and, writes Dodd, "we were left with a picture of 'the Jesus of History' on the one hand, and a picture of the early Church on the other, which appeared to have little to do with each other."² In a BBC radio broadcast, Dodd comments that

broadly speaking, that was the method of nineteenth-century criticism: strip off anything that can reasonably be attributed to the beliefs of the early Church, and what you have left is pure matter-of-fact. Many 'Lives of Jesus' were written, ostensibly based on the final residue of hard fact. But looking back we can see that these lives of Jesus were produced by an imaginative filling-up of the gaps—the gaps left after pruning away the beliefs of the early Church. And they were filled in, inevitably, out of the beliefs of the critics themselves. That is not to say that they are valueless, but their claim to reveal 'what actually happened', or to show the portrait of Jesus 'in his habit as he lived' cannot be sustained.³

Now, because of Schweitzer's contribution, it was no longer possible to ignore or dispose of the difficult eschatological passages in the Gospels. It is in this area of Gospel criticism that Dodd made his most distinctive contribution with his theory of realized eschatology.

Third, later nineteenth-century criticism, which extended until the outbreak of the First World War, was influenced by the results of the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*. By using the comparative method, its members endeavoured to place early Christianity in its primitive setting among the religious and philosophical movements of the first century. Having combed through almost all the literature of the Hellenistic

¹Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of Its Progress From Reimarus to Wrede*, trans. W. Montgomery, (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1910).

²Dodd, *Present Task*, 240–41; idem, *Historical Tradition*, 2, "A survey of the long series of failures, or dubious successes, in the effort to solve [the historical problem in the Gospels], as they lie embalmed in the mortuary chambers of Schweitzer's *Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung*, is not encouraging."

³C. H. Dodd, "The Christian Religion and Its Philosophy: 6. Jesus: Good Man or God Incarnate? 22 October 1963," TMs, BBC Radio Broadcast Transcript, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

and Near Eastern religions, the *Religionsgeschichtler* accumulated a mass of impressive parallels with biblical words and ideas. Although Dodd is critical of this school in certain points, he comments that its members have made the most distinctive contributions toward our understanding of the milieu of Christianity during the first quarter of this century, and he congratulates them for giving the NT scholar fresh material to work with.¹

Twentieth-Century Criticism

With the passing of World War I, Dodd contends that biblical study moved into a new period which he describes as “post-liberal,” but not “post-critical.”² Characteristic of this modern period is the revolt against what was called “historicism.”³ To the surprise of those British theologians who had kept up with German scholarship, the Germans seemed to have lost all interest in the documentary analysis of the Gospels. The quest of the historical Jesus was abandoned as a hopeless enterprise because the Gospels, so they argued, were religious, not historical documents, and to seek in them historical information was to misunderstand the intention of their authors.⁴

¹Dodd, introduction to *The Roads Converge*, 7; *Present Task*, 15.

²Dodd, *BibT*, 26.

³Dodd, “Present Tendencies in the Criticism of the Gospels,” 247: Historicism is “the view that the essence of Christianity (*Das Wesen des Christentums*) can be determined by recovering the precise facts regarding the words and deeds of the Founder, and that anything which His followers made of those facts must be regarded as more or less corruption of the pure Gospel.”

⁴Dodd, “The Gospels as History: A Reconsideration,” 122–23; idem, *History and the Gospel*, 11–13; idem, “Thirty Years of New Testament Study,” 324–25; idem, *Historical Tradition*, 1; N.B., idem, “A Problem of Interpretation,” 7, “The most influential factor, in determining the direction of biblical studies during the last thirty years or so has been the revolt against ‘Historismus’ and the demand for a ‘theological’ understanding of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.” See further James Luther Mays, *Exegesis as a Theological Discipline*, Inaugural Address delivered April 20, 1960, in Schauffler Hall, Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia.

*An Evaluation of Dodd's Views on
Biblical Authority*

In his essay "The Biblical Basis for Christian Reunion" Dodd writes a sentence which will serve as the basis of our evaluation of his views on biblical authority. Dodd writes, "One thing that we as Christians can do for our distressed world is to accept our responsibility to God, and submit our whole way of life, realistically and intelligently, to critical examination by His word in the Scripture, which is explicit and pointed enough."¹ This quotation reveals several things about Dodd's views on biblical authority. First, it means that Dodd acknowledges the authority of the Bible. It is the Bible, not the Koran or the Book of Mormon, in which God's word resides; it is to the Bible, not to the Pseudepigrapha, that we are to submit our lives; and it is the Bible, not the works of Shakespeare, that give us our responsibility before God. Therefore, the canon of Scripture, as contained in the sixty-six books of the Bible, is the record to which we appeal and by which we live. Second, it means that Dodd realizes that the Bible must address us, in our place in history. That is to say, the Bible has a relevance for us today, especially in an age in which Christian reunion is a possibility. We must let the Scriptures address us before we can address the Scriptures. Third, it means that Dodd understands that the Scriptures must be analyzed and addressed in a certain way. The key words in Dodd's quotation are "realistically" and "intelligently." And it is those two words that encapsulate how Dodd approaches the subject of biblical authority.

Because the Bible is the product of a long period of development, the progressive nature of revelation needs to be emphasized. Certain things are in the Bible, Dodd believes, that are in themselves false and wrong. Moreover, some things are even non-Christian, if taken at face value, and would be wrong to apply to our situation in the twentieth century. Because the Bible is supposed to appeal to our intelligence, a certain approach to biblical authority must be granted, which is through the critical method.

¹Dodd, "The Biblical Basis for Christian Unity," 23.

Consequently, the critical method, as used by Dodd, corrects the disharmonies within Scripture by setting the books of the Bible in their proper historical sequence. When this is done, the result is that a proper perspective is gained by the reader by which to interpret events, beliefs, and stories which seem unrealistic. One can recognize that the earlier portions of Scripture contain myths and legends and are not to be taken literally. But these things are in the Scriptures, and Dodd says that they have to appeal to our intelligence. It is to his credit that Dodd tries to do just that, for he relates those portions to the broader picture of the biblical philosophy of history and to the continuity of the human spirit throughout the ages.

In this evaluation, we shall concentrate our attention in three areas. First, we must recognize and explore the fact that Dodd's views on biblical authority are in conformity with Non-conformist beliefs. Second, his views on the critical method will be examined. And third, his use of the Pauline chronology as an affirmation of biblical authority will be probed.

Conformity with Non-conformity

When Dodd wrote *The Authority of the Bible* in 1928, there was a crisis of biblical authority in the churches.¹ Selbie writes how the Puritan movement, in spite of all its excesses, carried forward the Reformation principle of *sola Scriptura* into the very fabric of English life. Biblical ideas such as the sovereignty of God, the value of the individual, and the liberty of the Christian man altered the whole social, religious, and ecclesiastical outlook of the British people. Changes were made in every realm of public and private life.² "Even in circles that were not definitely Christian, reform measures in politics and industry based on the Biblical conception of man and society

¹Cf. Matthews and Robinson, general introduction to *The Authority of the Bible*, by C. H. Dodd, v; see P. T. Forsyth, *The Principle of Authority* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910), 1-4, for a discussion of the crisis of authority in the social and political life at that time.

²W. B. Selbie, "The Bible in English Life," *Religion in Education* 15 (1938); 4-5.

met with considerable support, and for the reason that they had a Biblical sanction."¹ Selbie gives further examples of biblical influences upon political and social changes in the nineteenth century, then he concludes soberly that

this year we are to celebrate the fourth centenary of the Reformation and of the English Bible. The object of the celebration is to bring our people back to the Book. This will be no easy task. There is a widespread suspicion that the Bible, whatever it may have been in the past, is no longer relevant to the needs and conditions of this modern world. Certainly the way in which it is often handled in the churches does nothing to allay that suspicion. It should always be remembered that the Bible speaks primarily to the heart of man, and the heart does not change with his changing environment. Rightly interpreted, the Bible has a message for this age, and it is the message which of all others our age sorely needs.²

Dodd would agree wholeheartedly with his friend and former professor. Dodd and Selbie admit that the authority of the Bible will ring true to any generation as long as the Bible is rightly interpreted. And coming out of the Non-conformist background, Dodd interprets biblical authority using the categories of Congregationalism. In this respect, he is remaining true to his ecclesiastical heritage. There are several direct resemblances between Dodd's principles of Congregationalism discussed in chapter one and Dodd's views of biblical authority as expounded in *The Authority of the Bible* and in other works.

The Authority of Individual Experience

As discussed in chapter one, Dodd believes that "religion begins in experience, not in the sense that a movement on our part initiates anything, but that the act of God must enter our experience in order to be a fact of life to us."³ All religious truths must be tested by our experience in order for them to become truths for us. Dodd carries this idea over into *The Authority of the Bible*. In that book, he maintains that the ultimate

¹Ibid., 6.

²Ibid., 9.

³Dodd, "Realities," 124.

authority is truth itself and that we apprehend that truth when it makes sense of our total world view as we see it in our experience.¹ Dodd makes use of the category of “religious genius” to show that not everyone has experienced truth at the same level of intensity. Since that time, however, the concept of religious genius, as an explanation of biblical inspiration, has lost favour with many scholars.² Indeed, Dodd moves from using this concept in 1928 to making the statement in 1946 that in the NT “it is never suggested that the Church of God's ‘elect’ consists of people with a natural genius for religion. Quite the contrary.”³

The Authority of Corporate Experience

This religious experience is authoritative not only for the individual in that the truth of God must strike home to him personally; it is also authoritative to the individual as a member of the corporate body of mankind. Dodd writes in *The Meaning of Paul for To-day* that “the new life in Christ, while it rests upon a most intensely individual experience, is yet a life in which no man is an individual.”⁴ This principle is carried over to *The Authority of the Bible*, in part two “The Authority of

¹See *idem*, *The Authority of the Bible*, *passim*.

²James D. Smart, *The Interpretation of Scripture* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), 217–19, argues that this approach to inspiration is fraught with problems in that it is naturalistic and unbiblical. He writes (p. 219), “It is obvious that ‘religious genius’ is not a Biblical category but one drawn from the general observation of human life to explain unusual human achievements. It points to innate qualities of the human person that make the unusual insight, ideas, or creative works possible. Its inappropriateness when used in relation to prophets, apostles, or Jesus himself is evident in their insistence that all they know or speak or do comes from a source beyond themselves. The man is lost in the message. What constitutes Paul an apostle is not the genius that resides in him but the fact that Jesus Christ calls him, commissions him, and abides in him in the power of his Word and Spirit, so that men through him know Jesus Christ.” See also *idem*, *The Past, Present, and Future of Biblical Theology*, 75. For a defense of religious genius, see George Adam Smith, “The Hebrew Genius as Exhibited in the Old Testament,” *The Legacy of Israel*, eds. Edwyn R. Bevan and Charles Singer, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), 3–28.

³Dodd, *BibT*, 106.

⁴Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 138.

Corporate Experience.”¹ In that part, Dodd argues for the religious unity of mankind and that the subject matter of religious thought must comprise what we think as members of the historic society of mankind.² True to his Congregational heritage, Dodd believes with John Robinson that “the Lord hath more light and truth yet to break forth out of His holy word.”³ And one way that that truth may break forth is in the principle of Congregationalism that the fellowship of the local congregation, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is able to find and declare truth.⁴ Therefore, it is recognized that Dodd is faithful to his ecclesiastical beliefs in his defense of biblical authority and that his defense would have been congenial to those who held the same principles that he did.⁵ This idea of the corporate nature of faith, of truth, and of the Body of Christ is one of the guiding stars in Dodd's biblical theology.

Correction of Old Liberalism

Another consequence of Dodd's views on biblical authority is that Dodd sought to correct some of the misinterpretations and misconceptions of the old liberalism. As we saw in chapter one, Dodd was trained in this theological viewpoint at Mansfield College. Elements of the old liberalism are recognizable in many of his early writings, especially those written during his Oxford and Manchester years. But with the genesis of the biblical theology movement, Dodd's views on old liberalism changed to some degree in that he placed the emphasis of biblical authority more on the mighty

¹Dodd, *AuthB*, 133–90.

²*Ibid.*, 138.

³Quoted by Dodd in *ibid.*, 300.

⁴See above, pp. 48–49.

⁵Dillistone, *Dodd*, 126–27, comments that the sense of community which Dodd enjoyed during his early years is reflected in part two of *The Authority of the Bible*. He also notes that, in his opinion, this section fails to carry as much conviction as the first part on the authority of individual experience because “it failed to communicate the sense of *authority* which it was his chief purpose to convey.” This criticism is well-taken.

acts of God in history recorded in the Scriptures and not on the individual and corporate geniuses in biblical history. This change occurred while he was working on his theories of the apostolic kerygma and on the testimonies and is reflected in certain changes Dodd made in the second edition of *The Authority of the Bible* (1938) and in *The Bible To-day*. This correction can be best seen, perhaps, if we put Dodd in his place in the biblical theology movement.

Neill writes that the old liberalism represented by Harnack and others “contained within itself the seeds of its own dissolution.”¹ Some of these seeds, which were laid down as axioms and postulates, were the philosophical ideas of the nature and existence of God, the moral freedom and responsibility of man, and the immortality of the soul. To these three principles of Harnack, Manson says, we must add the doctrines of the universal reign of natural law and of biological evolution.² Thus the characteristic of the age of Liberalism was the belief in progress.³ In his review of *The Interpretation of the Bible*, Dodd agrees with Manson on the fate of liberalism. “Liberal criticism did not in fact start (as it liked to think it did) without presuppositions; its presuppositions, however, were not those native to the Bible or to Christian theology; they were the axioms of a supposedly ‘scientific’ materialism.”⁴ In addition, the old liberalism tended to obscure the divine element in Scripture. While it devoted time and energy in pursuing the human factors of date, authorship, and composition, it

¹Neill, *The Interpretation of the New Testament: 1851–1961*, 191.

²T. W. Manson, “The Failure of Liberalism to Interpret the Bible as the Word of God,” *The Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. C. W. Dugmore, (London: SPCK, 1944), 92–93.

³William Neil, *The Rediscovery of the Bible*, reset edition, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1958), 31.

⁴Dodd, review of *The Interpretation of the Bible*, by C. W. Dugmore, 208.

neglected the supernatural factors so that the place of theology was replaced by the history of religion.¹ Grant puts the issue well in his analysis that

the nineteenth-century critical movement was not simply a movement in the history of interpretation, but (like every other exegetical school) had its own theological axes to grind. It stood for liberalism in theology.... Today, after two world wars we are less optimistic about the possibility of a Christian world, and after nearly a half-century of further criticism we begin to realize human potentialities for error and the limitations of the historical method. As pioneers the old critics cut down forests with abandon. The axe of criticism will be only one of the tools we employ.²

The finger of the First World War punched a hole in the dike of liberalism, and with a vengeance liberalism lost its strength. The belief in progress, in the goodness of man, and in the imminent Kingdom of God on the earth faded as people watched the reservoir of liberalism pour through the dikes. On the continent, Karl Barth preached the Word of God in power and conviction and launched the neo-orthodox movement which dismantled continental liberalism.³

While Dodd is critical of certain elements in the old liberalism, he also praises many of its accomplishments and argues that "if we are bound to criticize the great critics of the last century, we are also bound to confess that where we have gone beyond them is by standing on their shoulders."⁴

One area in which we have gone beyond liberalism is in the rise of the biblical theology movement. In this movement, there was a new emphasis on the transcendence of God and an openness to the supernatural aspect of revelation. In Great Britain, many scholars such as Hoskyns and Dodd offered viable alternatives to

¹Raymond Abba, *The Nature and Authority of the Bible* (London: James Clark and Co. Ltd., 1958), 61; cf. Lampe, "The Bible since the Rise of Critical Study," 138-39.

²Grant and Tracy, *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*, 117-18.

³See A. M. Hunter, "Modern Trends in New Testament Theology," *The New Testament in Historical and Contemporary Perspective: Essays in Memory of G. H. C. Macgregor*, eds. Hugh Anderson and William Barclay, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), 134-35.

⁴Dodd, *BibT*, 27.

the old liberalism.¹ Neill credits Hoskyns' book *The Riddle of the New Testament* with providing a good example of what is called "Biblical Theology." Neill says that there are three principles Hoskyns put forward that may characterize this movement: the recognized unity of all the NT witnesses, amid all their great variety in detail; the distinctiveness of the NT witness, as against everything which surrounds it both in the Jewish and the Gentile worlds; and the essential relationship between the OT and the NT.² These three components of Hoskyns' contribution to Biblical Theology are also reflective of Dodd's contribution to the movement and are instrumental in his understanding of biblical authority.

Unity in Diversity

In his inaugural lecture at Cambridge University in 1936, Dodd emphasizes the original unity of the NT underlying the diversity of the individual writings. This unity is displayed in the form of the canon of Scripture. Analytical criticism of the previous generation had so dissected this unity that "in the end [it became] more difficult to understand the New Testament as a whole, and left the mind bewildered by its diversity."³ Dodd proposes a methodology to reverse this process. Since the NT is the product of historical men writing about "that significant phenomenon in history which is early Christianity,"⁴ he stresses that the approach must be historical. In the next chapter of this thesis, it will be demonstrated that Dodd carries out this program through his contention that the Bible has its own philosophy of history, which has as its

¹See E. C. Hoskyns, "The Christ of the Synoptic Gospels," *Essays Catholic and Critical*, ed. E. G. Selwyn, (London: SPCK, 1926), 151-78; E. C. Hoskyns and Francis N. Davey, *The Riddle of the New Testament* (London: Faber and Faber, 1931; revised edition, 1936); King, "E. C. Hoskyns and C. H. Dodd," 1-8. See Hunter's comments in "Modern Trends in New Testament Theology," 135, 140-41.

²Neill, *The Interpretation of the New Testament: 1861-1961*, 218-19.

³Dodd, *Present Task*, 32-33.

⁴*Ibid.*, 37.

presuppositions that God has spoken through the events of biblical history and that this history has continuity. Dodd believes that the historical order is a unity and that the occurrences in history have meaning. Another consequence of Dodd's proposal is the search for the apostolic kerygma as "the authoritative tradition to which appeal could be made."¹ Dodd's understanding of the kerygma plays a major roll in his understanding of biblical authority because the kerygma itself is authoritative. Therefore, the unity of the NT canon gives it authority.

Distinctiveness in Diversity

The era in which the NT books were written saw an outpouring of literary compositions. Hellenistic writers produced philosophical pamphlets, and Jewish authors composed many writings. What makes the NT distinctive in the midst of all this diversity of first-century literature? Dodd argues that the canon of the OT and the NT stands "spiritually, intellectually, and aesthetically, on an altogether higher plane"² than these writings. The canon of the NT came together as "an expression of a distinctive movement of life and thought,"³ which is to say, the canon is the product of the Christian Church in history. Jewish and Hellenistic writings of the time may help elucidate portions of the NT, but they are not accorded the status of "Sacred Scripture." Therefore, the distinctiveness of the NT canon gives it authority.

The Old Testament in the New Testament

A consequence of the distinctiveness of the canon is the question of the relationship of the OT with the NT. The earlier nineteenth-century criticism often spoke of the unity of the testaments, but it was the diversity, not the unity, that was

¹Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 67.

²Dodd, *AuthB*, 196.

³Dodd, *Present Task*, 16.

stressed.¹ Dodd argues for the unity of the OT and the NT in many of his writings. Certain specific emphases stand out. First, Dodd sees the unity of the people of God in both testaments. Second, he notes that the questions left open in the OT are answered in the NT. Third, he shows that the theologians in the NT sought confirmation of their use of the kerygma in the OT. These three elements will be investigated in the relevant portions of this thesis.

Conquest of the Critical Method

If, as Dodd contends, the Scriptures are to be approach “realistically” and “intelligently,” and if biblical authority is to be characterized by the adjectives “realistic” and “intelligent,” then it is necessary that these writings be addressed by using the critical method. This method of study has proven itself amid attacks by fundamentalists, misuse by old liberals, and misunderstandings by laypeople. In short, it has conquered all attempts to oppose it. Indeed, just after the Second World War, the critical method, as Krentz points out, “was firmly established, not to be dislodged by any attack.”²

Dodd shows in *The Bible To-day* how the critical method works without guess work. It is not a “hit or miss” method, but one which employs “scientific methods of observation, analysis, hypothesis and verification, which are well tested in other fields of study.”³ It is not one hundred percent accurate in its conclusions, but that is due to the nature of its subject-matter. “Uncertainty,” Dodd says, “does not discredit the method.”⁴ Moreover, the critical method gives high priority to the evidence at hand. It looks at the phenomena of Scripture and asks questions based on the phenomena.

¹Abba, *The Nature and Authority of the Bible*, 69.

²Edgar Krentz, *The Historical-Critical Method*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 33.

³Dodd, *BibT*, 25.

⁴Ibid.

The results may be challenged on this point or that: it is a matter of evidence and of the competence of the person who is dealing with it. As a special branch of study it aims at being objective, rational, scientific. Its methods may in future be improved, its presuppositions revised, but it stands firm as a self-justifying part of the reasonable search for knowledge, and its abandonment would be a 'flight from reason'.¹

Clarification of the Critical Method

In chapter four of this thesis, a study will be made of Dodd's use of the critical method. It will be our purpose in that chapter to define and illustrate each of his procedures in the critical process. But at this point of the thesis, we have to ask for a clarification of the critical method.² The phrase "the critical method" can be used as an umbrella term to designate the critical approach as a whole, or it may be used in a more narrow sense to designate certain critical methodologies that are historical in approach, thus excluding structuralism, linguistics, and possibly form criticism.³ In his definition of "criticism," Bruce writes that it is

a comprehensive term embodying a number of techniques employed in the study of (among other things) written documents in order to establish as far as possible their original text, the literary categories to which they may be assigned, their sources, mode of composition, date, style, authorship, purpose, and so forth.⁴

The Ecumenical Study Conference held at Wadham College, Oxford (1949), which Dodd attended, produced a listing of the steps which should embrace the critical method: (1) the determination of the text; (2) the literary form of the passage; (3) the historical situation, the *Sitz im Leben*; (4) the meaning which the words had for the original

¹Ibid.; Cf. Paul J. Achtemeier, *The Inspiration of Scripture: Problems and Proposals* BPCI, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980), 41-50.

²Cf. Peter Stulmacher, *Historical Criticism and Theological Interpretation of Scripture*, trans. and with an introduction by Roy A Harrisville, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), 21.

³Richard Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, Second Edition, Revised and augmented, (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981), 87.

⁴ISBE, s.v., "Criticism," by F. F. Bruce, 1:817.

author and hearer or reader; (5) the understanding of the passage in the light of its total context and the background^{framing} which it emerged.¹

In his inaugural lecture at Cambridge University and in his essay "The New Testament," Dodd outlines his critical method using similar categories which Bruce and the editors of *Biblical Authority for Today* used.² Conservative scholars such as Ladd argue that the critical method as such is not hostile to an evangelical faith, as long as certain presuppositions are not used as handmaidens with the method.³ For example, Johnson, in his article, "The Historical-Critical Method: Egyptian Gold or Pagan Precipice?" claims that there are five objectionable presuppositions to be eliminated from the critical method: historical skepticism (the unjustified assumption is that the Biblical text is errant until proved right rather than the opposite), antisupernaturalism (the exclusion on principle of supernatural causation in history is arbitrary), separation of history and theology (sundering theological affirmation from historical event in the Biblical records denies the reality of divine revelation in history and in the writings), denial of the unity of Scripture (there is no need for an emphasis on diversity to the point of affirming self-contradiction within the canon without any affirmation of an overarching unity of truth), and noncognitivism of divine revelation (an unwarranted rejection of cognitive divine truth content in Scripture as the essential basis of Biblical religion is unnecessary).⁴

¹Alan Richardson and W. Schweitzer, eds., *Biblical Authority for Today* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1951), 241–44. Dodd contributed the essay "The Relevance of the Bible" for this symposium.

²See chapter four below.

³George E. Ladd, *The New Testament and Criticism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), 11.

⁴Alan F. Johnson, "The Historical-Critical Method: Egyptian Gold or Pagan Precipice?" *JETS* 26 (1983): 10.

Were these “objectionable presuppositions” part and parcel of Dodd's critical method? In order to demonstrate that Dodd's critical method is an *affirmation* of biblical authority and not a *denial* of biblical authority, it will be helpful to examine briefly his method in the light of Johnson's categories.

Historical Skepticism?

Johnson's first point is that it is a false presupposition to reason that the biblical texts are errant unless proven otherwise. He labels this fallacy as “historical skepticism.” As has been shown in the first part of this chapter, Dodd does not hold the view that the Bible is inerrant. He argues for this position by asserting that the Bible has no doctrine of its inerrancy, by maintaining that the biblical authors, who were fallible human beings, were subject to the same limitations of personality and environment, and by citing many examples of problem passages, which, taken in their plain meaning, pose problems for the doctrine of biblical inerrancy. To counter Dodd's arguments with a defense of biblical inerrancy will prove fruitless because the matter is a closed case for him. However, because Dodd does not believe in inerrancy, it does not follow that he be accused of historical skepticism. In spite of some harsh words about biblical inerrancy in *The Authority of the Bible* and in some other early writings, it needs to be pointed out that Dodd is reacting against fundamentalists who use this position to justify every statement in Scripture in order to make them relevant and authoritative for us today. What Dodd does *not* do is to assume that every statement is errant unless proven otherwise. This distinction needs to be made clear. As we will demonstrate in chapters four and five, Dodd approaches the biblical texts with an appreciation for their trustworthiness. Although he applied form criticism to his study of the Synoptic Gospels, he never used the more radical methods of this discipline. Earlier in this chapter we mentioned Dodd's review of Guignebert's *Jesus*. In that review he criticizes Guignebert for approaching the Gospel sources with skeptical and

contemptible presuppositions. Therefore, a proper presupposition of Dodd's critical method might be "historical caution," but *never* "historical skepticism."

Antisupernaturalism?

Johnson's second point is that it is a false presupposition to reason that supernatural causation must be excluded on principle from the Scriptures. This presupposition was characteristic of nineteenth-century historicism, which worked under the influences of the natural sciences and assumed that the world is a world of strict law and that individual occurrences are intelligible only as they are understood as instances of a general law or class.¹ Furthermore, historicism operated on the assumption of a particular view of cause and effect. Bultmann made this assumption a key part of his program of demythologization. He writes that "modern science does not believe that the course of nature can be interrupted or, so to speak, perforated, by supernatural powers."² Bultmann, therefore, would qualify for Johnson's second presupposition, antisupernaturalism.

What about Dodd? Is antisupernaturalism a presupposition of his critical method? Dodd believes that the first Christians "had a sense of living, morally and spiritually, in a supernatural environment. That sense of a supernatural environment coloured their whole reaction to life."³ A consequence of this belief was that the earliest Christians believed that the center of this supernatural order was Jesus Christ Himself and that His coming as Lord of the New Age was the ultimate miracle. In discussing the miracle stories of the Gospels, Dodd says that these stories must be interpreted "in the light of the intention of the authors of the stories, of their

¹See Hinderliter, "Biblical Interpretation and Historical Method," 153.

²Bultmann, *Jesus Christ and Mythology* (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1958), 15.

³Dodd, "Miracles in the Gospels," 505.

environment, and of the ideas that controlled their writing.”¹ All of the Gospel strata record that Jesus did miracles; all of the Gospel writers, when they recorded the miracle stories, believed that they were recording facts; and, Dodd says, “apparently, therefore, we must add that Jesus too believed that He worked miracles.”² The point Dodd makes about interpreting the miracle stories is that it is necessary to see the symbolic meaning of the story as a statement of the fundamental conviction of those who told it and to recognize the implications of the stories for the total effect produced by the personality of Jesus upon those who knew Him.³

In stating these principles, is Dodd ruling out the supernatural? Is his critical method to be charged with antisupernaturalism? Apparently not. In the same article, he writes

The question we have to ask is whether there is reason to believe that such a higher order exists and impinges on the order of Nature. The question is answered in the affirmative for religious persons who believe in a God who is not only immanent in the order of Nature, but transcends it. Unless expressions like ‘the grace of God,’ ‘divine guidance,’ ‘answer to prayer,’ are mere figure of speech, they mean that a higher order impinges upon our life within the order of space, time, and matter, and produces effects within that order. It does not suspend the operation of any biological or psychological law, but it introduces a fresh factor.⁴

Thus the miracle stories move within an historical setting in which the supernatural is a real factor. If this be true, then every event may have a double aspect.

It exhibits the working of ordinary natural laws, but it exhibits it sometimes in unusual combinations due to a supernatural factor. In studying the record of the events, we shall try as far as possible to understand the natural laws of work, as, for instance, the known laws of psychological suggestion. But we shall not proceed with the cast-iron assumption that in these unusual combinations we shall always be able to account for the whole fact on the basis of our present knowledge, or that we must reject the story if we cannot.⁵

¹Ibid., 506.

²Ibid., 507.

³Ibid., 509.

⁴Ibid., 508.

⁵Ibid.

It seems clear from this discussion that Dodd's critical method is *not* governed by the presupposition that the supernatural is to be ruled out on principle. Although Dodd is cautious in his treatment of the factuality of the miracle stories, he is concerned that their factuality not be given prior importance over their interpretation. He has room for the supernatural in his critical method.

Separation of History and Theology?

Johnson's third point is that it is a false presupposition to divide theological affirmation from historical event in the biblical record. Furthermore, to do so would amount to a denial of the reality of divine revelation in history and in the Bible. On any reading of Dodd's works, it is discernable that this presupposition plays no part in his critical method. Dodd never denies the reality of divine revelation in history. In fact, he never divorces the historical study of the NT from the theological study. For example, he writes that "the more seriously we aim at a theological interpretation of the Bible, the more important it is that we should study it historically."¹ In Dodd's opinion, the Bible is unique in that "it stakes everything upon the assumption that God really did reveal Himself in particular, recorded, public events."² The historical-theological method of biblical interpretation, whose aim is "to recover and illuminate the Gospel, in its whole scope, as fact and as meaning, through a true understanding of what was written by the first witnesses to the Gospel, and authenticated by the common voice of the Church as a Canon of Holy Scripture,"³ results in a sound, cohesive interpretation of the Bible.⁴

¹Dodd, "A Problem of Interpretation," 9; idem, "The New Testament," 219.

²Dodd, *BibT*, 145.

³Dodd, "The New Testament," 223.

⁴Dodd, "A Problem of Interpretation," 7.

Denial of the Unity of Scripture?

Johnson's fourth point is that it is a false presupposition to deny the unity of Scripture. Again, it is clear from any reading of Dodd's works that he affirms the unity of Scripture. His investigation in the relationship between the OT and the NT reveals a unity of the testaments. His discovery of the apostolic kerygma, to his satisfaction, emphasized the unity of the NT. And in fact, as early as 1933, Dodd could write that "the lost unity of the New Testament is being brought back by a more thorough application of the critical methods which seemed for a time to have broken it."¹

Noncognitivism of Divine Revelation?

Johnson's fifth and final point is that it is a false presupposition to reject the cognitive divine truth content in Scripture as the basis of Biblical religion. While it is not clear exactly what Johnson means by this, it must be pointed out that Dodd affirms that the Scriptures are the basis for our religion. The revelation of God in history and in the Scriptures is a cognitive revelation. Dodd understands this revelation in terms of the divine purpose, confronting men in judgment and mercy. That one intelligible event in history, the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, makes all other events intelligible, and it is from this center, that the kingdom of God has come upon us, which "we interpret our intuitions of the immanent Spirit in man and the world, and of the transcendent Power above us, whose purpose gives meaning to the whole."²

The only conclusion to be made is that Dodd's critical method is not characterized by the "objectionable presuppositions" proposed by Johnson. To that end, Dodd used this method as an affirmation of biblical authority.

¹Dodd, review of *Living Issues in the New Testament*, by C. A. Anderson Scott, 362.

²Dodd, "Things Most Certainly Believed. III. God in Christ," 117.

Case Study: The Pauline Chronology

In many of his writings Dodd justifies the critical method because it helps to put the books of the Bible in their proper chronological sequence. He holds to the critical chronology of the OT books and uses this chronology to account for some of the moral difficulties within the OT. Moreover, Dodd agrees with the common chronology for the Synoptic Gospels. Mark was written first; then Q was compiled; then Matthew and Luke wrote their Gospels using Mark, Q, and other special sources.¹ In these matters, Dodd was hardly original in his contributions; however, it is in his study of the Pauline chronology that he made a distinctive contribution to the study of Paul and to biblical authority. Therefore, we are compelled to examine this contribution in some detail in our evaluation of Dodd's views on biblical authority.

The Chronology of the Pauline Epistles

In 1934 Dodd published one of the most important and original essays of his literary career, "The Mind of Paul: Change and Development."² His thesis is that Paul changed his mind with respect to eschatology and that this change can be charted from the early letters of Paul to the later letters. It is especially significant that Dodd has his own chronology of the Pauline epistles, for it is upon this chronology that he is able to draw his conclusions.

Since this article is so pivotal in Dodd's thinking, it may be helpful to investigate his views on the Pauline chronology before the publication of that article. In "Pauline Illustrations from Recently Published Papyri," Dodd calls the author of II Timothy 4:13 "Paul" and he notes that Paul wrote Philippians.³ That same year, in a collective work, Dodd notes that the authenticity of Ephesians has been cast in doubt by

¹See below, pp. 204–11.

²First published in *BJRL* 18 (1934): 69–110; reprinted in *NTStudies*, 83–128, as "The Mind of Paul: II." All references will be from the latter.

³Dodd, "Pauline Illustrations from Recently Published Papyri," 292, 294.

some, but the thought of the letter "is simply the full development of a strain which is present in Paul's thought almost all through."¹ Two years later, in 1920, Dodd published *The Meaning of Paul for To-day*. In the preface he states his scholarly conviction that these letters are authentic and are in the order of composition: I Thessalonians, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Galatians, Romans, Colossians, Philemon, and Philipians. He also writes that the balance of probability should include II Thessalonians and Ephesians, which is a circular letter and is an "important statement of the Pauline philosophy of life in its most developed form." I Timothy, II Timothy, and Titus in their present form are not from the hand of Paul, although they contain Pauline elements.²

In 1931 Dodd published "Chronology of the Acts and Pauline Epistles."³ In this little essay he places the Pauline epistles in the following chronology: Galatians, I and II Thessalonians (AD 50–51); I and II Corinthians, and Romans (AD 53–56); Philipians, Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians ([60], 62); I Timothy, Titus (62); and II Timothy (64).⁴ What is interesting about Dodd's chronology is that he places Galatians first and that he regards the Pastoral Epistles as authentic and written before AD 70. No explanation is given by Dodd in the brief summary.

¹Dodd, *The Gospel of the Cross*, 62, n. 1.

²Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 8. See also idem, "Communism in the New Testament," 60 (Paul wrote II Thessalonians); idem, "From St. Paul to the Reign of Constantine," 441, 452 (the Pastorals are unauthentic and date in the early second century); idem, "Ephesians," *ABC*, 1223 (Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon are authentic); idem, *AuthB*, 208, n. 2 (II Thessalonians accepted as authentic; Ephesians, if not from Paul's hand, represents the final development of his thought); idem, *Romans*, xxviii (Philipians written from Rome); idem, *The Background of the Bible*, 90; idem, "The Church in the New Testament," 14 (emphasis on the unity of the church in Ephesians counts against authenticity, but if the letter was written during an imprisonment which resulted from Paul's devotion to the idea of such unity, it is thoroughly consistent).

³C. H. Dodd, "Chronology of the Acts and Pauline Epistles," *Helps to the Study of the Bible*, [ed. by the Bishop of Bradford], (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1931), 195–97.

⁴*Ibid.*, 195–96.

With this survey of Dodd's positions on Pauline chronology written before 1934, we are now ready to examine his article "The Mind of Paul: II." In this essay, he posits the earliest Pauline letter to be I Thessalonians, written in the spring of AD 50. II Thessalonians is probably a genuine letter and could be dated before I Thessalonians, but Dodd thinks that it was written a few weeks after it. Galatians is a difficult letter to date, and Dodd finds general agreement with Burton's argument that the letter was written sometime between AD 54–57. I Corinthians was composed in AD 57, and II Corinthians, in AD 57–58. Paul wrote Romans in the spring of AD 59. Dodd argues against Duncan that the prison epistles were written from a Roman imprisonment and not from an Ephesian.¹ He accepts the authenticity of Philippians, Philemon, Colossians, and Ephesians,² but he rejects the authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles.³

Having given this chronological pattern of Paul's letters, Dodd then sets out in the rest of the article to demonstrate that Paul's thought changed based on a shift in eschatological thinking. Dodd believes that at Paul's conversion Paul accepted the Jewish eschatological viewpoint represented in the Book of Enoch, the Apocalypse of Baruch, and especially in the Apocalypse of Ezra (II Esdras).⁴ When Paul became a Christian, he fitted his new beliefs into this framework and made use of its apocalyptic imagery. Fifteen years later, he still expected an early advent when he wrote his first letter, I Thessalonians (I Thess. 4:13–17).⁵ Seven years later, at the writing of I Corinthians, Paul still holds to his early conviction of an imminent advent of the Lord (I Cor. 15:51–52) and that "the time is short" (I Cor. 7:29). Dodd notices a slight change

¹Dodd, "The Mind of Paul: II," 85–86.

²Ibid., 86.

³Ibid., 85.

⁴Ibid., 109.

⁵Ibid.; idem, *ApostPD*, 65.

in emphasis between the writing of these two letters because “whereas in I Thessalonians it is distinctly exceptional for a Christian to die before the Advent, in I Corinthians he has to assure his readers that *not all* Christians will die. He himself, with others, will survive to the advent.”¹

At this point in Paul's life, Dodd contends, a change was taking place. Paul was a masterful and original thinker, and “the apocalyptic imagery of the earlier days tended to disappear at least from the foreground of his thought, and more and more his mind came to dwell upon the gradual growth and upbuilding of the Divine Commonwealth.”² This process came to fruition about the time Paul wrote II Corinthians.³ Dodd writes

After I Corinthians we hear no more of that confident expectation, so far at least as Paul himself is concerned. On the contrary, in II Corinthians he has faced the fact that it is possible or probable that he will ‘go to stay with the Lord’ through death. His ‘outward self’ is decaying, but his ‘inward self’ is being renewed, and he has a ‘house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens’ with which (by a mixture of metaphors) he will be ‘clothed’ when his earthly ‘tabernacle’ is dissolved. It is possible that when he says ‘Death works in us but life in you,’ he means that though he will die, his readers will survive until the Advent. In any case, the Advent is no longer to be in his lifetime. It seems probable that the extreme danger of death in which he had recently stood had helped to alter his outlook in this respect. Logically this should make no difference to his conviction that the Lord will soon come; but psychologically, an event which lies beyond the limits of one's own reasonable future, in which years and centuries are alike, has ceased to be in any vital sense imminent. And we do in fact find that in subsequent epistles the thought of the imminence of the Advent retires into the background.⁴

Dodd notes several passages which prove his point. In Romans 13:11–14, which is, in Dodd's opinion, an afterthought appended to the epistle, he observes that the tone of urgency is missing when compared to I Thessalonians 5:1–11. “Instead, we have a

¹Ibid., 110.

²Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 41.

³Dodd, “The Mind of Paul: II,” 114; idem, *ApostPD*, 148–49.

⁴Ibid., 110–11.

greater emphasis than ever before upon the idea that the Christian, having died and risen with Christ, is already living the life of the new age.”¹

Likewise, in the prison epistles this early expectation of Paul's previous letters is missing. In Colossians it is omitted; in Philippians 3:20–21, the old expectation recurs but without the earlier insistence on the imminence of the change; and in Philippians 4:5, the words “the Lord is near” are reminiscent of Psalm 145:18 and in the context of the letter mean that the Lord is near “to hear and answer prayer.”²

On the basis of Dodd's rendering of the Pauline chronology, he concludes that a definite change in Paul's eschatological outlook may be charted. Such change may seem insignificant to some, but Dodd sees real importance in it because if the Advent is expected in the near future, then the present dwindled in importance since “the mind is set wholly upon glories to come. But, if the Advent is deferred to an indefinite future, then the present gains in significance.”³ This change has occurred in Paul's thinking, Dodd believes, because

it is in the epistles of Paul, therefore, that full justice is done for the first time to the principle of ‘realized eschatology’ which is vital to the whole *kerygma*. That supernatural order of life which the apocalyptists had predicted in times of pure fantasy is now described as an actual fact of experience.... In masterly fashion Paul has claimed the whole territory of the Church's life as the field of the eschatological miracle.⁴

Conclusion of the Case Study

Several comments are in order concerning this case study. Positively, Dodd has sought to defend biblical authority by his chronological arrangement of the Pauline epistles. He has tried to deal honestly with the apocalypticism of the early Paul and the

¹Ibid., 111; but cf. idem, *Romans*, 209.

²Ibid., 111–12.

³Ibid., 112–13.

⁴Dodd, *ApostPD*, 154–55; see also idem, *Meaning of Paul*, 39; idem, “Colossians,” *ABC*, 1252; idem, *Romans*, xxxiii; and idem, “The Kingdom of God and History,” 30.

universalism of the mature Paul. He has tried to let Paul speak for himself, and he has given his reader a fascinating theological essay to feast upon. Finally, he has tried to analyze Paul by using some of the insights of the new psychology movement, thereby making use of every tool of criticism he can use in the service of biblical interpretation. On these points Dodd deserves high marks.

On the other hand, Dodd's chronological rearrangement with the resulting development of Paul's theology has its problems and its critics. It is not our purpose to correct Dodd and offer an alternative; others have done so satisfactorily.¹ What may be stated here, however, is that the question must be put to Dodd concerning his use of realized eschatology as a part of his critical method. It seems that Dodd has used the principle of realized eschatology in the service of a canon-in-the-canon methodology in the treatment of the Pauline epistles. Dodd clearly favours the later epistles of Paul, especially Ephesians. Although Ephesians is regarded as unauthentic by many scholars, Dodd opts for its authenticity because its message is a key, not only to his theory of realized eschatology, but also to his biblical theology in that it sets forth the universality of the church. This idea will be examined further in the conclusion to the thesis.

¹See J. Lowe, "An Examination of Attempts to Detect Developments in Paul's Theology," *JTS* 42 (1941): 129–42; J. W. Drane, "Theological Diversity in the Letters of Paul," *TynB* 27 (1976): 3–26; Hamilton, *The Holy Spirit and Eschatology in Paul*, 61–64; C. F. D. Moule, "The Influence of Circumstances on the Use of Eschatological Terms," *Essays in New Testament Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 184–99; and Guthrie, *New Testament Theology*, 809–10.

CHAPTER THREE
THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE BIBLE

When C. H. Dodd was a student at University College, Oxford, he received a thorough grounding in the Greek and Latin classical literature. As we pointed out in chapter one, a part of this grounding was in the philosophies of those periods.¹ Thus Dodd was at home discussing Platonism, Neo-platonism, Cynicism, Stoicism, as well as many other philosophies, both ancient and modern.

In the previous chapter we have demonstrated that Dodd believed that the biblical picture must be related to all of our life and must make sense of our philosophy of the world. In this chapter we will discuss his contention that the Bible has its own philosophy, namely, in its portrayal of history and of history's relationship to the gospel, and that this philosophy justifies the historical study of the NT.

Dodd's Understanding of History

A fundamental aspect of Dodd's hermeneutical program is his understanding of history. He contends that the Bible has its own philosophy of history and that the biblical critic must himself understand that philosophy if he is to make sense of the Scriptures.²

¹See above, 15-16.

²C. H. Dodd, "The Philosophy of the Bible," TMs, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College, Oxford.

The Meaning of History

The Relevance of History

The Recoil from Historicism

Our evaluation of Dodd's views on the authority of the Bible in the last chapter showed that a clear change in his thinking occurred during the last few years of his professorship at Manchester. With the publication of *The Parables of the Kingdom* he demonstrated the importance of understanding history "as the vehicle of the eternal,"¹ and of his affirmation that "the conviction remains central to the Christian faith, that at a particular point in time and space, the eternal entered decisively into history. An historic crisis occurred by which the whole world of man's spiritual experience is controlled."²

Part of this new tenet in Dodd's thinking was the return to a theology of transcendence. The revolt against *Historismus*, he says, led theologians from immanence to transcendence. This shift affected the way they now read the Bible. Thus, if one were persuaded that the divine is to be identified by an immanent factor in the historical process, then "all that theology needs is to understand that process by purely 'scientific' methods, which assume the homogeneity of the process in all its parts."³ There would be no place for special revelation, which presupposes what Dodd has said above, namely, that the eternal has entered history. To the critics of the nineteenth century, all accounts in the gospels professing anything of the sort were merely *Gemeindetheologie*.⁴ This return to a theology of transcendence has invigorated gospel studies. There is no longer the need to study the documents as a repository of bare 'facts' because it was not the intention of the authors to merely record

¹Dodd, *Parables*, 197; cf. idem, "Miracles in the Gospels," 506.

²Ibid., 202-3.

³Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 12.

⁴Ibid., 13.

bare facts. They bore witness to the revelation of God. In this regard, they are Christian documents. Dodd has been quoted many times when he writes that "it belongs to the specific character of Christianity that it is an historical religion."¹ And the most important sense in which this statement is true is that Christianity "rests upon the affirmation that a series of events happened, in which God revealed Himself in action, for the salvation of men."²

Christianity and Other Religions

To clarify this affirmation, Dodd contrasts Christianity with two other types of religion which have held sway over the history of man, mysticism and nature-religion. In one of his earliest theological articles, "The Eschatological Element in the New Testament and Its Permanent Significance,"³ Dodd says that many people have accepted the flux of events as an unintelligible succession of momentary states possessing no unity or meaning beyond themselves. Others admit the flux and constant change, as well as the reality of the phenomena; but the succession of different states and the entire series of phenomena are not devoid of meaning. This latter view of history may be divided into a view which conceives history as moving gradually in an evolutionary process to a conclusion, or it may be thought of as suddenly coming to an end. According to the evolutionary view, there is a gradual improvement leading to a consummation, which is represented by mysticism. According to the eschatological⁴

¹Ibid., 15.

²Ibid.

³Dodd, "The Eschatological Element in the New Testament and Its Permanent Significance," 14-24.

⁴Dodd, "Hellenism and Christianity," *Independence, Convergence, and Borrowing in Institutions, Thought, and Art*, (Harvard Tercentenary Publications, 1937), 115, defines eschatology as "an attempt to conceive God's relation to the world in terms of the time process considered as real in itself." Cf. idem, *BibT*, 61, where Dodd defines eschatology as "the doctrine about the End." As is well known, Dodd redefines the traditional definition of eschatology. George B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible*, 243, notes that the term 'eschatology' has been redefined so many times that "it no longer has the clarity of definition." See also J. Carmignac, "Les dangers de

view, history comes to a sudden and unexpected end, at which time the meaning of the entire process will finally be revealed.

Mysticism. The true mystic abhors the phenomenological aspects of human existence as a mere illusion. Nature, world, space, and time are dangerous to the soul aspiring to be in touch with Absolute Being, however that Being may be comprehended. "For pure mysticism history is at best irrelevant, at worst a pernicious interference with the ascent of the spirit to the Absolute. For history is essentially in time, and the mystic aspires to the eternal."¹ In addition, Dodd says that mysticism, "a term used loosely in English,"² is not distinctively Christian because it has lost the living link with history.³

Nature-religion. In contrast to mysticism, nature-religion acknowledges the phenomenological world as a possible medium of the divine. Found among primitive peoples and among moderns who uphold the deism of the eighteenth century and the pantheism of the nineteenth century, nature-religion is based upon the "numinous" or awe-inspiring quality of natural phenomena, whether terrifying or recurring.

Dodd shows that these two types of religion are often mixed in the higher religions of mankind. Christianity, to be sure, has traces of mysticism with its sacramental view of the world but is distinct from mysticism in that it is an historical religion. Likewise, Christianity has affinities with nature-religion in that it affirms the natural revelation of God but goes beyond nature-religion in postulating the special revelation of God in history. Dodd writes:

But when all this is said, it remains true that Christianity, if it is to be characterized by its classical documents, the Scriptures of the Old and New

l'eschatologie," *NTS* 17 (1971): 365–90; David E. Aune, *The Cultic Setting of Realized Eschatology*, *NovTSup*–28 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), 1–2; and I. Howard Marshall, "Slippery Words. I: Eschatology," *ExpT* 89 (1977–1978): 264–69.

¹Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 23; idem, "The Kingdom of God and History," 23

²Dodd, *InterpFG*, 198.

³Dodd, "The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament," 79.

Testaments, finds in history the primary field of revelation, because it is the field of divine action. It is from this vantage point of an historical revelation that we can look both inwards upon the life of the spirit and outwards upon the world of nature and discern in both the vestiges of the Creator.¹

Definition of History

Dodd defines history in the following words: "History in the full sense consists of events which possess not merely a private but a public interest, and a meaning which relates itself to broad and permanent concerns of human society."² The terms which stand out in this definition are "events," "public interest," and "meaning." In addition, he argues that events differ in their intensity of meaning. The more intense the meaning, the greater the degree of interpretation. This idea may be illustrated, for example, by the bare chronicling of a scientific invention as compared with the interpretation of the beginning of the Reformation. There may even be events in which the interpretation is of greater significance than the happening, and highly important events, such as the call of Isaiah and the conversion of St. Ignatius Loyola, in which "practically nothing at all happened, in the ordinary external sense of happening."³

An historical event, Dodd says, is "an occurrence *plus* the interest and meaning which the occurrence possessed for the persons involved in it, and by which the record is determined."⁴ This definition is important for his understanding of the biblical history because he argues that events are relative to the mind active in them. Since the meaning or significance which the mind discerns in experiencing the event

¹Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 23.

²Dodd, "The Gospels as History: A Reconsideration," 124.

³*Ibid.*, 125.

⁴Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 27; cf. *idem*, *The Gospel of the Cross*, xi; *idem*, *BibT*, 99; *idem*, *Founder*, 27–28: "The truth is that the attempt to make a sharp division between fact and interpretation and set them over against one another is misguided, whether it takes the form of seeking to establish the facts by eliminating the interpretation, or of attending exclusively to interpretation, and dismissing the question of fact as irrelevant. To the serious historian (as distinct from the mere chronicler) the interest and meaning which an event bore for those who felt its impact is a part of the event."

is a part of the event itself, he argues that the best interpretation of the meaning of the event is one that is discerned from within the event and not from the outside. That is why Dodd listed as a qualification of a biblical interpreter the ability to "live oneself into" the biblical history. He must be able to go "there and back again" to bring us a word of the significance of the biblical story.¹

In line with this thinking Dodd argues that Christianity as an historical religion attaches itself to a particular series of events in which a unique intensity of significance resides. He then uses the category of "the particular," or "the unique," to show that one event exceeds another in significance, and if that assumption be true, then it follows for Dodd that there may be a unique event which may give a unique character to the whole series of events to which it belongs. Dodd illustrates this from the prophetic writings. The prophets declared that the purpose of God was revealed in His mighty acts through the call of Abraham, the Exodus and the giving of the Law, the conquest of Canaan, the kingdom of David, the Captivity and the Return. He surmises that God's purpose was not completely revealed in this prophetic history because "the complete revelation waits for the end of the historical process—an end which most of the prophets conceive to be close at hand. The more difficult it became to trace the hand of God in the successive disasters and oppression which His people suffered, the more intensely did religious minds concentrate their attention on the great consummation, the Day of the Lord."² In the apocalypses the writers advance the thinking of the prophets by interpreting contemporary events as signs of the coming Day of the Lord. They exaggerate the prophetic interpretation of history to show that "the ultimate power

¹Ibid., 28, "The best historian of the past is one who has so familiarized himself with his period that he can feel and judge its significance as from within." In making this point Dodd is admitting the subjectivity of the interpreter. R. G. Collingwood in his *The Idea of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946), 213–28, 282–302, also stresses the inside and the outside of events as a historical unity. He says that historical investigation must begin from the inside of the event (the subjective response of the person involved in the event) and then work toward the outside of the event. For him history is the history of thought, and the historian's task is to rethink the past.

²Ibid., 33.

in history comes from beyond.... The expected Day of the Lord is not the ultimate issue of tendencies embedded in the process, but a final act of God from His throne on high.”¹

Dodd concludes that the prophetic and apocalyptic interpretations of history agree in that they affirm the reality of God's mighty acts, and in order to affirm those acts they postulate a “mighty act” which has not yet happened. Thus, when the OT closed, there were threads left to be tied by the NT writers. These writers of the new covenant took over the general scheme of eschatology and declared that this expected event had happened in the coming of Jesus Christ. His coming, death, and resurrection are, in Dodd's definition, eschatological events in the sense that they are unique and final events, never to be repeated.²

The Interpretation of History

The Christian gospel is the story of what God has done in Jesus Christ. Because the events in this story are eschatological, there is, in Dodd's opinion, an historical and a super-historical aspect of this story. What he means is this. In one sense the gospel is timeless in that it can be preached everywhere at all times because the purpose of God is eternal.³ In another sense, the gospel is particular in that it narrates “the singular, unrepeatable events in which the saving purpose of God entered history at a particular moment, and altered its character.”⁴ Furthermore, “the episode of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus is history, but it is *Endgeschichte*, eschatological history, history with its full meaning revealed.”⁵ The consequences of such a view for Dodd are that

¹Ibid., 34.

²Dodd, *ApostPD*, 206–10.

³Dodd, “The Kingdom of God and History,” 37: “The kingdom of God is not something to come. It came with Jesus Christ, and its coming was perceived to be eternal in quality. That eternal quality is manifested in time by the continuous life of the church, centered in the sacrament in which the crisis of the death and resurrection of Christ is perpetually made present.”

⁴Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 37.

⁵Dodd, “The Kingdom of God and History,” 33.

the historical order is important. And since the gospel was given in history, it follows that

we must seek the meaning which Christianity attaches to history by an examination of the events which it declares most fully to reveal that meaning, that is to say, by an investigation of the historical episode of the coming of Jesus Christ, His death and resurrection. This at once raises the whole problem of the historicity of the Gospels, with which New Testament criticism has so long concerned itself; and that problem cannot be set aside by assertions that the Gospels are not historical but religious documents. They are both, if the Christian assumptions are true.¹

The gospel is embedded in what Dodd calls the "kerygma,"² which contained

in the most concise form possible adapted for memorizing, a bald recital of the main facts concerning Jesus Christ; it gave some indication of the significance of those facts as the fulfillment of God's purpose declared by the prophets and ended with an appeal for repentance and the offer of forgiveness and new life within the Christian society. This broad general formula 'proclamation' can be shown to be presupposed, and alluded to in almost every New Testament writing; it is the basis of their unity in diversity.³

It is easy to see that Dodd's view of history is teleological. He has rewritten the definition of teleology to refer no longer to end-time in the sense of chronology, but of significance. There is no final event at the end of history as occurs at the end of a series. The finality of history is eschatologically placed in the coming of Christ,⁴ and

¹Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 37–38. In *The Gospel and the Law of Christ* (Longmans, Green and Company, 1947), 5, Dodd defines the gospel as "essentially a story—a history of things that happened, with the meaning that they bore."

²Dodd, *Gospel and Law*, 9; idem, *ApostPD*, 5–6.

³C. H. Dodd, "Recent Developments in New Testament Studies. New Testament Criticism: A Fresh Approach," *The Listener* (2 August 1951): 114. See also idem, "The Gospel Preached by the Apostles," *Man's Dilemma and God's Answer*, a collected work, with Paul Roundtree Clifford and others, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1944): 49–68; idem, "New Testament Scholarship Today," *The Listener* (19 December 1946): 80–81; idem, "The World of the New Testament. II. The New Faith and Its First Preaching," *Religion in Education* 14 (1947): 39–43; and idem, "Results of Recent New Testament Research," *The Listener* (2 August 1951): 183–85.

⁴Dodd, *ApostPD*, 208–10. After quoting Matt. 12:28; Acts 2:16; II Cor. 5:17; Col. 1:13; II Cor. 3:18; Titus 3:5; Heb. 6:5; I Peter 1:23; and I John 2:8, Dodd concludes that "from these and many similar passages it is surely clear that, for the New Testament writers in general, the *eschaton* has entered history; the hidden rule of God has been revealed; the Age to Come has come. The Gospel of primitive Christianity is a Gospel of realized eschatology." See also idem, "The Kingdom of God and History," 33: "[The *eschaton*

the pattern of history in which God confronts men in judgment and mercy is revealed in the way men respond to Christ.¹ He sought confirmation for his teleological understanding of history in the writings of Arnold Toynbee. Toynbee, in his *Study of History*, compared the mythology of various cultures and noted that they were bound together by a recurring theme, the struggle between two supra-historical persons or forces which issues in a challenge to persons. He proposed that the theme of challenge and response accounts for the rise of civilization.² Thus Dodd viewed biblical history as the process of God's challenge (in judgment and mercy) and man's response (in faith and obedience). This "two-beat rhythm"³ of judgment and mercy was characteristic of the Word of God as it came to men throughout history.⁴

is] the qualitatively final or...ultimate into the midst of history in a decisive crisis by which the meaning of the whole is determined."

¹Dodd often speaks of the pattern of history in his unpublished writings. See especially "Christianity and History"; idem, "The Philosophy of the Bible"; "EVERYMAN'S BOOK The Call of God 3. How Can We Arrive at Faith in God?" TMs BBC Radio Broadcast Transcript (n.d.), Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

²Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, vol. 1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), 271–302.

³Dodd, *BibT*, 120; idem, "The Philosophy of the Bible," Dodd writes, "This two-beat rhythm—judgment and forgiveness—marks the whole movement of biblical history.... In the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and His resurrection (*sic*), the word of God as judgment, and as power of renewal, entered history decisively, and established a centre from which the whole of history bears witness to the sovereignty of God. From this centre we look back over the biblical history, for this is its (*sic*) goal. From the same centre we look out on the history that is here and now in the making. We begin to understand its meaning, and learn how to shape its course, under God." See Nineham's comments here in *The Use and Abuse of the Bible*, 236–37.

⁴In this context Dodd defines the Word of God as "the supra-historical factor which [enters] into the course of history and [directs] it," (p. 105). Dodd takes the category of myth and uses it to show that the Creation and the Last Judgment are symbols of events which lie outside of space and time. He argues that while at one time the revelation of God came to one people and not to others, it was the intention that it should extend to all mankind. "As the myth of the Creation and the Fall universalizes the experience of Israel in history, so the symbolism of the Last Judgment universalizes the experience of those who found themselves judged by Christ," 117. This supra-historical framework of Creation and Last Judgment "universalizes the meaning of the revelation which was given to particular people at particular times," 119.

An Evaluation of Dodd's View of History

In our evaluation of Dodd's view of history we shall concentrate our criticism in two areas: his use of historiography as criticised by Rudolf Bultmann and the New Questers,¹ and his use of historiography as criticised by T. A. Roberts.²

Dodd and Bultmann

Without a doubt the dominant influence upon twentieth-century theological study has been Rudolf Bultmann. Taking the categories of existentialism as used by Martin Heidegger, Bultmann understands history in terms of personal existence, and he posits that we should understand the biblical history in terms of anthropology.³ He uses the category of encounter when he defines historical knowledge as "existential knowledge."⁴ What matters is how we hear the claim of history on the decisions of the present as we have a personal encounter with them. Thus the meaning of history is not related to some future goal but is always in the present. This recognition always involves an attempt to live life responsibly in authentic existence. Like Dodd, Bultmann redefines eschatology and strips it of any futuristic connotations. He writes:

The one concern in [Jesus' teaching] was that man should conceive his immediate concrete situation as the decision to which he is constrained, and should decide in this moment for God and surrender his natural will. Just this is what we found to be the *final significance of the eschatological message*, that man *now* stands under the necessity of decision, *that his 'Now' is always for him the last hour*, in which his decision against the world and for God is demanded, in which every claim of his own is to be silenced.⁵

¹Rudolf Bultmann, "The Bible To-day und die Eschatologie," *BNTE*, 402-8.

²T. A. Roberts, *History and Christian Apologetic* (London: S. P. C. K., 1960).

³Rudolf Bultmann, *History and Eschatology*, 40-45; idem, *Theology of the New Testament*, vol. 1, rev. ed., trans. Kendrick Grobel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), 190-269.

⁴Bultmann, *History and Eschatology*, 119-122.

⁵Rudolf Bultmann, *Jesus and the Word*, trans. Louise Pettibone Smith and Erminie Huntress Latero (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), 131.

In his 1954 article "History and Eschatology in the New Testament," Bultmann argues that Paul and John correctly interpreted the kerygma away from futuristic eschatology and toward eschatological existence. Hence, history was no longer the story of a nation or the course of human events but was the story of each individual person. "History," he says, "is swallowed up by eschatology."¹

Bultmann contributed an article to Dodd's Festschrift entitled "*The Bible Today und die Eschatologie*," in which he accused Dodd of espousing a philosophy of history rather than a theology of history. He writes:

Aber sind hier nicht theologische und geschichtsphilosophische Betrachtung eigentümlich vermischt? Ist nicht Gottes Plan zu einer geschichtsphilosophischen Idee gemacht: Ist die eschatologische Vollendung wirklich als eschatologische verstanden, wenn sie als der Höhepunkt der geschichtlichen Entwicklung und damit als ein Phänomen der Geschichte selbst verstanden wird: Daß der Verfasser sie so versteht, scheint mir daraus hervorzugehen, daß er die geschichtlichen Leistungen der Kirche als einen Beweis für die Richtigkeit der Behauptung ansieht, daß der Plan Gottes mit Christus und der Kirche zur Erfüllung gekommen sei.²

In making these criticisms Bultmann contends that Dodd joins faith to history when in Bultmann's opinion they should be separate. Thus while Dodd assumed the objectivity of the biblical revelation and laid the burden of proof upon those like Bultmann who argue that there is little material of historical value in the gospels, Bultmann assumed the legitimacy of the existential approach to the biblical revelation and laid the burden of proof upon those like Dodd who argue for the historicity of the gospels.³

The scepticism with which Bultmann regarded the possibility of finding the historical Jesus⁴ was not shared by some of his disciples, and in October 1953 Ernst

¹Rudolf Bultmann, "History and Eschatology in the New Testament," *NTS* 1 (1954): 5-16.

²Bultmann, "*The Bible Today und die Eschatologie*," 404.

³Dodd, "Paper on Presuppositions"; idem, *InterpFG*, 123. Dodd's main concern in this section of *InterpFG* is with Bultmann's theory of a pre-Christian Mandaean myth underlying the Fourth Gospel.

⁴Bultmann, *Jesus and the Word*, 8: "I do indeed think that we can now know almost nothing concerning the life and personality of Jesus, since the early Christian sources

Käsemann originated the so-called "New Quest" in his famous address to the old Marburgers published as "Das Problem des historischen Jesus."¹ Käsemann accuses Bultmann of undue scepticism and of harboring close to docetism in his "failing to grasp the nature of the primitive Christian concern with the identity between the exalted and the humiliated Lord."² There are still pieces of the synoptic tradition which Käsemann acknowledges as authentic information. He is eager to show that, contrary to Bultmann, the preaching of the historical Jesus was in continuity with the preaching of the church's proclamation.

James M. Robinson, in his book *A New Quest for the Historical Jesus*,³ continues the New Quest begun by Käsemann, Bornkamm, Fuchs, and others. He is concerned about the link between Jesus and the proclamation of the church about Him, but he uses existential categories in his methodology. The problem with nineteenth century historiography is that it attempted to reproduce the past in Rankean terms *wie es eigentlich gewesen ist*, that is, in terms of positivism. External facts do not concern the modern historian because such a quest for facts is now obsolete. Robinson maintains that the gospels are theological, not historical, documents, and so a search for facts about Jesus is an impossible endeavor. In his book Robinson proposes that the historian must be interested, not in external facts, but in internal reflections. Thus he still uses Bultmann's existential interpretation to aid him. For Robinson the details of

show no interest in either, are moreover fragmentary and often legendary; and other sources about Jesus do not exist."

¹The English translation is published as "The Problem of the Historical Jesus," *Essays on New Testament Themes*, trans. W. J. Montague (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1964), 15-47.

²*Ibid.*, 46. Hugh Anderson, *Jesus and Christian Origins*, 51. Van A. Harvey, *The Historian and the Believer: The Morality of Historical Knowledge and Christian Belief* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1967), 164-67 points out that the New Quest began with dissatisfactions with Bultmann's position.

³James M. Robinson, *A New Quest for the Historical Jesus* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1959).

Jesus' life are not important. What really counts is a grasp of Jesus' understanding of Himself and of His assumption of eschatological self-hood.

Robinson makes several criticisms of Dodd philosophy of history. For one he accuses Dodd of being a positivist.¹ Many times in Dodd's writings he states that the biblical critic must ask the historian's question, *wie es eigentlich gewesen ist*,² and this admission is unsettling to him. Because of this positivistic bend in Dodd, Robinson criticises him for including in his formulation of the apostolic kerygma an historical section containing information concerning the historical Jesus. Robinson does not deny that there is historical information in the kerygma, but he argues that it is incidental information because it is there only to accent the self-understanding of Jesus as pictured in the kerygma.³

But to accuse Dodd of positivism is, in a real sense, to misunderstand him. Of course, when Dodd quotes or alludes to Ranke's famous dictum, he indicates he is interested in the facts of the biblical narrative. But, as we have seen, he is also interested in the subjective aspect of the narrative: an historical event is "an occurrence *plus* the interest and meaning which the occurrence possessed for the persons involved in it, and by which the record is determined."⁴ Thus to accuse Dodd of being interested only in bare facts is to misread him severely. Furthermore, the

¹Ibid., 49,51,56.

²See, for example, "Sermon on Mark xv.21": "We are entitled, even obliged, to ask the historian's question, 'How did it actually happen?'" idem, "THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION AND ITS PHILOSOPHY Portrait of Jesus 6. Jesus: Good Man or God Incarnate, 22 October 1963" TMs BBC Radio Broadcast Transcript, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford: "Some of these modern critics run to extremes, and tell us that the question 'what actually happened' is not important, and anyhow probably can't be answered"; idem, *InterFG*, 447: "It still remains, however, a part of the task of the student of history to seek to discover (in Ranke's oft-quoted phrase) 'wie es eigentlich geschehen ist'—how it actually happened." Cf. idem, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, 2.

³Robinson, *A New Quest for the Historical Jesus*, 48–55.

⁴Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 27.

existentialist approach of Bultmann and Robinson is not without criticism. In addition to the criticism that existentialism employs "portentous vocabulary,"¹ it can be shown that the existentialist interpretation of history is methodologically inept because, as Harvey points out, it is weakest at the point it claims to be strongest. The data with which the existentialist has to work with are objective data, and

by regarding historical inquiry as culminating in claims about a person's existential selfhood, it defines historical knowledge in terms of the weakest of its epistemological links. This cannot fail, generally, to lead to cynicism about the possibility of historical knowledge at all, on the one hand, or to highly artificial attempts to justify it as knowledge, on the other. In the case of theology, it leads to an intolerable state of mind in the believer, because the believer's religious certitude must rest on those historical judgments which are least capable of sustaining that certitude.²

For Dodd, Christianity is an historical religion, and the facts of this history are relevant for faith. For Bultmann and Robinson, Christianity is an historical religion, and the facts of this history, even if they could be shown, are not relevant to faith. Faith cannot rest on objectivity.

C. H. Dodd and T. A. Roberts

If from an existentialist perspective, Bultmann and Robinson criticise Dodd for being a positivist, then from a positivist perspective T. A. Roberts, in his book *History and Christian Apologetic* criticises Dodd for being an idealist.

Roberts levels two criticisms at Dodd. First, he takes issue with Dodd's definition of an historical event as event plus meaning and argues that that understanding of event is utter nonsense. "Explanation," he writes, "or if Dodd prefers to use the word 'meaning,' is not something that inheres to or in an event, like the core of an apple reached by peeling away the skin."³ Events are not "things to which their

¹C. H. Dodd, review of *Interpreting the Scriptures: The Art and Truth of the Parables*, by Geraint Vaughan Jones, *View Review* 15 (1964): 6.

²Harvey, *The Historian and the Believer*, 187–88.

³T. A. Roberts, *History and Christian Apologetic* (London: S. P. C. K., 1960), 92.

meaning or explanations are attached as with a label.”¹ He understands Dodd to say that every past event is not historical since some events survive without meaning attached. To illustrate the fallacy of Dodd's definition, Roberts uses an example of an unsolved murder which cannot be an historical event on Dodd's terms because no one knows by whom or why the subject was murdered.² But has he really understood Dodd? Dodd says that the participants in any event experience the meaning of that event for themselves. That means that the murderer, the victim, the survivors, and the witnesses, if any, experienced the meaning of that event. Roberts wants to understand the meaning of the murder as an observer from the outside looking in, like a detective trying to solve the murder. But this is not what Dodd is trying to say in his definition of an event.

Second, Roberts criticises Dodd for saying that there was only one meaning of the life of Jesus—that of the Christian church imposed upon it. When Dodd makes the assumption that those who were closest to the gospel events are the most qualified to relate the meaning of those events, Roberts responds that Dodd has overlooked the fact “that participants in events are too near and too much taken up in them to realize or to be able to access their full significance.”³ Moreover, Roberts says that events have no meaning in and of themselves.⁴ But this is simply not true. Events qua events are always understood by people, or they do not exist as historical, that is, documented, events. Roberts' whole discussion of Dodd is marred by his insistence that historical investigation must be subject to the canons of verification. Such a criterion is more than history can offer.

¹Ibid., 93.

²Ibid., 87.

³Ibid., 90.

⁴Ibid., 87.

Therefore, Dodd's view of history as occurrence plus meaning justified his use of the critical method as a means to study the biblical narratives to ascertain their meaning. It was his belief that because Christianity was an historical religion, the historical method could be used. Dodd expanded his interpretation of history, as we saw above, to include his interpretation of the kerygma, and to this investigation we must now turn.

Dodd's Understanding of the Kerygma

The gospel is the main theme of the NT¹ and underlines the aim of Dodd's critical method, which is "to recover and illuminate the Gospel, in its whole scope, as fact and as meaning, through a true understanding of what was written by the first witnesses to the Gospel, and authenticated by the common voice of the Church as a Canon of Holy Scripture."²

The Content of the Kerygma

The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments

In 1936, Dodd published *The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments*, a book in which he set forth his classic statement concerning the kerygma and thus changed the course of NT studies for several decades.³ A study of the Pauline writings would reveal several fragmentary statements which compose the Pauline kerygma:

The prophecies are fulfilled, and the new Age is inaugurated by
the coming of Christ.
Christ was born of the seed of David.
He died according to the scriptures, to deliver us out of the present evil age.
He was buried.
He rose on the third day according to the scriptures.
He is exalted at the right hand of God, as Son of God and Lord of the quick and
the dead.

¹C. H. Dodd, "The Gospel of the Glory of God," *ExpT* 63 (1951–1952): 383; idem, "The New Testament," 223.

²Dodd, "The New Testament," 223.

³Hugh Anderson, review of *Kerygma and Didache*, by James I. H. McDonald, *New College Bulletin* (Edinburgh) No. 12 (September 1981): 8–9.

He will come again as Judge and Savior of men.¹

If we investigate the speeches in the book of Acts (2:14–36, 38–39; 3:12–26; 4:8–12),² we can find the following fragmentary elements of the Petrine or Jerusalem kerygma:

The age of fulfilment has dawned.
 This has taken place through the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus.
 By virtue of the resurrection, Jesus has been exalted at the right hand of God.
 The Holy Spirit in the Church is the sign of Christ's present power and glory.
 The Messianic Age will shortly reach its consummation in the return of Christ.
 An appeal for repentance, the offer of forgiveness and of the Holy Spirit, and the promise of salvation.³

Dodd believes that these speeches have their origin in material that came from the Aramaic-speaking Church in Jerusalem and therefore predate by some time the actual period in which Acts was written.⁴ By comparing the Pauline kerygma with the Petrine, he finds that the Pauline has three elements which are not found in the Petrine: the designation of Jesus as "Son of God"; the assertion that Christ died "for our sins"; and the affirmation that the exalted Christ intercedes for His people. Otherwise, the two cover the same ground.⁵

Cambridge Lectures of 1940

In Lent Term 1940, Dodd taught a series of lectures on "Theology and Ethics of the New Testament II. Method and Content." He began these lectures with a

¹Dodd, *ApostPD*, 28.

²*Ibid.*, 36–37, Dodd writes, "The second account of the arrest in v. 17–40 is probably a doublet from another source, and it does not betray the same traces of Aramaism. The speech said to have been delivered on this occasion (v. 29–32) does no more than recapitulate briefly the substance of the previous speeches. The speech of Peter to Cornelius in ch. x. 34–43, is akin to the earlier speeches, but has some special features, and in it the evidence for an Aramaic original is at its strongest."

³*Ibid.*, 38–47.

⁴*Ibid.*, 35.

⁵*Ibid.*, 47–50.

discussion of the apostolic kerygma in which he summarized the Petrine and Pauline, as well as some elements in I Peter and Revelation, in the following nine articles:

The prophecies are fulfilled.
 Proclamation of Jesus as Messiah, etc.
 His works of power and His teaching.
 His death and burial.
 His resurrection.
 His exaltation to the right hand of God.
 The Spirit is given by Christ to His church.
 Proclamation of forgiveness and salvation in the church through Christ.
 His second coming as Saviour and Judge.¹

Dodd says that the first of these nine articles is decisive for the rest. The first task of Christian thinkers was to search the scriptures to justify the kerygma from the OT. He then goes on to explain how they did that.² No other cataloging of kerygmatic articles is mentioned in these lectures.³

The Johannine Epistles

In 1946 Dodd published his commentary on the Johannine Epistles in which he expounded on the kerygma:

The crisis of history has arrived; the prophecies are fulfilled; and the 'Age to Come' has begun.
 Jesus of Nazareth, of the line of David, came as God's Son, the Messiah.
 He did might works;
 gave a new and authoritative teaching or law;
 was crucified, dead and buried (died for our
 sins);
 rose again on the third day;

¹Dodd, "Theology and Ethics of the New Testament. II. Method and Content (Lent Term 1940)."

²See below, pp. 150–57.

³Ibid. During Easter Term 1940, Dodd gave a course of lectures entitled "Historical Sources for a life of Jesus." In these lectures he surveys the Pauline epistles, Hebrews, I Peter, II Peter I Timothy, Acts, and the Gospels for evidence concerning the historical Jesus. With respect to Paul, Dodd says that these writers, for the most part, were original writers, but they developed their writings out of a tradition which they held in common with all other Christians (I Cor. 15). Paul can assume a central deposit of belief which depends on the historical Jesus, consisting of kerygma and didache; I John 1:1–2 confirms this with almost Synoptic language.

Third, the author has nothing to say about the mighty works of Christ's ministry because they were "hardly germane to his purpose,"¹ but his authoritative teaching is insisted upon. In addition, the ethical teaching of Jesus becomes a part of the gospel, since "it is evident from the whole New Testament that the message of the Church was conceived as having two main aspects: the Gospel of Christ, the theme of preaching (*kerygma*), and the Law or Commandment of Christ, the theme of teaching (*didache*)." ²

Fourth, with respect to soteriology, Dodd states that the author of I John stays close to the primitive kerygma when he speaks of the death of Christ for our sins (I John 1:7; 2:2; 4:10), but when he has no direct allusion to the resurrection of Christ, he departs from the original kerygma.³ Dodd accounts for this by asserting that in I John 3:8, 4:4, and 5:4-5 the author proclaims the good news of a conquest achieved over all forces in the universe that are alien to the purpose of God. All who accept the lordship of Christ share in this victory which presupposes the resurrection of Christ. "Seated at the right hand of God" is predicated upon "raised the third day."⁴ The parousia is affirmed in the Johannine Epistles in two ways. First, the coming of Christ as Judge sharpens the sense of moral responsibility but does not cause us to fear (I John 4:14-18). Secondly and most importantly, the main thing is that it is Jesus Christ Himself who is to appear (3:2) and His appearing encourages moral endeavor.⁵

¹Ibid., xxxi.

²Ibid. Concerning the authority of Christ's teaching, Dodd doubts how far this point was included in the kerygma. Only in Acts 3:22 does the record say that Christ was the second and greater Moses, prophet, teacher, and lawgiver.

³Ibid., xxxiii.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid., xxxv-xxxvi. Dodd says, "The writer has here put in the simplest possible words, not indeed the whole content of Christian eschatology, but the controlling conviction which gives character to any eschatology which is to be distinctively Christian. From it he proceeds to draw consequences directly relevant to the ethical life of a Christian man: we cannot see Christ as He is without being like Him; and this prospect must powerfully stimulate moral endeavour (iii.2-3)."

Sixth, there is an emphasis on the church as the people of God. In I John the word "church" is absent, but in III John it is used three times in verses 6–10. Dodd gives evidence from I John that the author is aware of the importance of the church in terms of the fellowship that the people of God have with the Father (1:3, cf. 5:6) and of the contrast that the people of God have with the world (2:7–17).¹

Lastly, Dodd shows how the author of I John has reinterpreted the concept of eternal life—"life of a particular quality, lived in union with God"—in terms of the present. It is a life which is realized here and now, is ethical, is characterized by the love of Christ, and is societal.²

The Bible To-day

In a series of open lectures delivered in Cambridge and published in 1945 as *The Bible To-day*, Dodd devotes considerable space to the kerygma. The NT is a collection of writings by many different authors. Some are occasional writings, designed for some emergency in the early church. Although analytical criticism has in recent time emphasized their differences, a second reading of these writings will reveal that these writers share a common fundamental outlook, common thematic interests, and certain accepted patterns of thought.³ This pattern, Dodd contends, was embodied in what was known as "the Proclamation." This kerygma "was not rigidly stereotyped; it had no fixed verbal form; but with some freedom of variation in details it preserved a common and generally recognized pattern."⁴ This pattern had a four-point scheme: fulfilment (God's long-awaited climax of the history of His people,

¹Ibid., xxxvi–xxxvii.

²Ibid., xliii–xliv.

³Dodd, *BibT*, 73.

⁴Ibid., 74.

disclosed by the prophets, has arrived, and the kingdom of God is at hand);¹ the story (a review of the important facts of the life and ministry of Jesus which constituted the fulfilment of God's purpose in history);² the consequences (the emergence of the church as the "new Israel, the gifts of the Spirit, the primacy of love);³ and the appeal (to adhere to the message, to repent and trust in God, and to receive baptism in the fellowship of the church).⁴ "In this 'proclamation', then, we have the shape into which the formative convictions of Christianity were cast by its first exponents. It underlies every part of the New Testament."⁵

The Gospel and the Law of Christ

In 1947 Dodd published *The Gospel and the Law of Christ*, in which he gave "in barest outline" what he considered to be the pattern of the apostolic proclamation:

Jesus of Nazareth, anointed with the Holy Spirit, went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil;
 He went up with His followers from Galilee to Jerusalem, was betrayed, condemned, crucified and buried;
 On the third day he rose from the dead;
 He was exalted to the right hand of God; from thence He rules His people through His Spirit until at the end He shall be revealed as Judge and Saviour of men.
 These events are...the fulfilment of God's purpose declared by ancient prophecy.
 In them His Kingdom has come upon men.⁶

¹Ibid., 74–75.

²Ibid., 75–76.

³Ibid., 76–79.

⁴Ibid., 79. This four-fold schema is also presented in much the same terms in Dodd's 1947 article, "The World of the New Testament. II. The New Faith and Its First Preaching," 41.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Dodd, *The Gospel and the Law of Christ*, 5.

“Le Kerygma apostolique dans le quatrième évangile”

In 1951 Dodd published “Le Kerygma apostolique dans le quatrième évangile.” Here he stated that “le contenu du *kerygma* primitif proclamait ou annonçait au monde en général. Quant à la forme, c’est bien un *kerygma*; quant au fond, au contenu, c’est l’Évangile, Εὐαγγέλιον.”¹ These affirmations include the following:

Le temps de l’accomplissement est venu (les temps sont accomplis).
 Dieu a envoyé pour Messie: Jésus,
 Il a réalisé des actes de puissance et enseigné avec autorité.
 Il a été crucifié, il est mort, il a été enseveli.
 Le troisième jour, il est ressuscité des morts.
 Il a été élevé à la droite de Dieu.
 Il reviendra comme juge et sauveur des hommes.
 Ses fidèles sont la véritable *Ecclesia*, ou peuple de Dieu.
 Comme tels, ils ont reçu le don de l’Esprit.

Le *kerygma* s’achève par un appel à la repentance, et par l’offre du don divin de salut et de vie éternelle.²

The Substructure of New Testament Theology

In his Cambridge lectures on theology and ethics in the NT, Dodd makes the point that the first item in the *kerygma*—the prophecies are fulfilled—is decisive for all the rest in the *kerygma*.³ The first task of Christian thinkers was to search the scriptures to justify the κήρυγμα from the OT, e.g., Acts 8:35, 17:2,11, 18:28. This activity must have been the accepted method of preaching, and must have led to the collection of *testimonia* which came from a common stock.⁴ These testimonies, which are much more than elaborate embroidery, supply the key to the “settled plan and purpose of God”

¹C. H. Dodd, “Le Kerygma apostolique dans le quatrième évangile,” *RHPR* 31 (1951): 265.

²Ibid.

³Dodd, “Theology and Ethics in the New Testament”; idem, “The Gospel Preached by the Apostles,” 51. See also especially Acts 26:22,23, where three ζητήματα are mentioned: (1) was Christ to suffer? (2) was He the first to rise from the dead? (3) did He proclaim light to the People and to the Gentiles? Of (1) and (2) there is no systematic investigation, but citing almost every part of the OT. See also I Peter 2:4-10 and Heb. 3:7-4:11.

⁴Dodd, “The Foundations of Christian Theology,” 308

(Acts 2:23); give to the biblical narrative its religious and theological character; determine some of the narrative forms used in the earliest tradition; and must be regarded as the firm scaffolding supporting the structure of the NT theological edifice.¹

The first published collection of these was put out by Cyprian, but he was reproducing a traditional scheme, with traditional contents. Rendel Harris, in two volumes entitled *Testimonies* (1916, 1920), argued for one such composition lying before all NT writers. His reasons were the catenae of texts visible in the earliest writings were at an advanced stage; certain portions of OT tend to recur in NT writings, sometimes not from the LXX; and testimonia from different parts of OT (e.g., Isaiah 8:14; 28:16) are found in conjunction in several writers.² Dodd worked through Harris' theories for many years, and in *According to the Scriptures*, he testifies to the impact Harris' work had on him; however, he concludes that Harris' theory, in his opinion, outruns the evidence.³ In his essay "The History and Doctrine of the Apostolic Age" published in 1939, Dodd gives a concise explanation of this theological enterprise:

¹Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 31.

²Dodd, *AccordSS*, 23–24; idem, *The Old Testament in the New*, 11–12; idem, "Thirty Years of New Testament Study," 330–31.

³Ibid., 25–26. Dodd writes, "In fact it may be said that in Great Britain at least Rendel Harris' book was the starting point of modern study of the use of the Old Testament in the New. It has, I believe, been assumed by most recent British writers that some such anthology of quotation was actually in existence at an early period, and that its use by New Testament writers is the best explanation of the phenomena before us." See idem, "The Present Position on the Synoptic Problem," 208. Robert Hodgson, Jr., "The Testimony Hypothesis," *JBL* 98 (1979): 361, lists E. Hatch, F. C. Burkitt, E. C. Selwyn, J. Moffatt, H. B. Swete, G. Milligan, K. Lake, H. J. Cadbury, and W. Sanday as early advocates of a testimony hypothesis. Burkitt had proposed that Matthew's logia were messianic prophecies collected into a "Testimony Book" for apologetical and doctrinal purposes. Dodd says that this theory has high probability. For further discussion on Harris, see K. Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew and Its Use of the Old Testament* (Lund: Gleerup, 1954), 207–17; E. E. Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House; Twin Book Series, 1957; reprint ed., 1981), 98–103; Richard Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975), 89–90; C. F. D. Moule, *The Birth of the New Testament*, 3rd. rev. and rewritten ed., BNTC (London: A. and C. Black, 1981), 104; Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *The Uses of the Old Testament in the New* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985), 10–11.

The New Testament in almost all its parts bears witness to the diligence with which the earliest work of Christian theological research (if it may be so called) was the collection of 'testimonies' or proof passages from the Old Testament, and that some such collection lay before some of the New Testament writers. The proof from prophecy is often to our minds artificial and unconvincing. But it bears witness at once to the Church's sense of a divine purpose in history, and to the consciousness of a unique fulfilment of that purpose in the coming of Christ. The fact that Christian theology from the first developed with constant reference to the Old Testament was the greatest value in preserving continuity with the religious tradition of Judaism, and in placing limits to the tendency to meet Hellenistic thought half-way. That tendency was in itself inevitable and even beneficial, but there was always a certain danger in it.¹

Dodd writes that it is important to note that when a NT author adduces an OT passage, that author is appealing to an authority. "A quotation may be introduced to provide an unassailable premise upon which an inference may be founded, or to test a conclusion drawn by logical argument or put forth as a corollary of experience."² Therefore, it is incumbent upon the reader of scripture to look into "the propriety of the interpretation offered, and the validity of its application at hand."³

The Old Testament Basis to New Testament Theology

In his Stone Lectures delivered at Princeton University in 1950 and published in 1952 as *According to the Scriptures*, Dodd outlines the program of biblical research followed by the writers of the NT. In the second chapter of the book he examines fifteen testimonies "which, being cited by two or more writers of the New Testament in *prima facie* independence of one another, may fairly be presumed to have been current as *testimonia* before they wrote."⁴ The third chapter is an examination of what Dodd calls "the Bible of the early church." This so-called Bible is an arrangement of those larger portions of the OT which served as the substructure of NT theology and may be grouped

¹Dodd, "The History and Doctrine of the Apostolic Age," 403.

²Dodd, *The Old Testament in the New*, 4.

³Ibid.

⁴Dodd, *AccordSS*, 29. These scripture verses are Psalm 2:7; 8:4-6; 110:1; 118:22-23; Isaiah 6:9-10; 53:1; 40:3-5; 28:16; Gen. 12:3; Jer. 31:31-34; Joel 2:28-32; Zech. 9:9; Hab. 2:3-4; Isaiah 61:1-2; and Deut. 18:15, 19.

h early Christian teachers "searched the Scriptures" for anticipations of Christ and of the Christian era. It is probable that

around three kerygmatic themes: apocalyptic-eschatological scriptures, scriptures of the New Israel, scriptures of the Servant of the Lord and the Righteous Sufferer, and certain isolated texts which, while messianic, do not fit into Dodd's scheme.¹ And in the fourth chapter "Fundamentals of Christian Theology" Dodd attempts to show that the basic and regulative ideas of NT theology—the church, the messianic titles of Jesus, and the doctrine of the death of Jesus—arise out of a certain understanding of these scriptures.²

In his Cambridge lectures given in 1940—ten years before the Stone lectures—Dodd covers very much the same ground as *According to the Scriptures*. These lectures will serve as the basis of our discussion since they are the fruit of Dodd's earlier reflection on the OT in the NT. He organizes his discussion around two themes, the new order and the messianic status of Christ.³

The New Order

This theme is ubiquitous in the NT (Mal. 3:1 = Matt. 11:10, Luke 11:27 [not LXX]; Isaiah 40:3 = Matt. 3:3, Luke 3:4, John 1:23, see also Mark 1:2,3). The context in the OT is important, and the citation of a single clause sometimes points to the whole context.⁴ Malachi 3:1 is part of 2:17–3:7, dealing with the judgment and restoration of Israel, and other themes in it are taken up, e.g., the coming of the Lord to the Temple, and the reference to the covenant (3:1).⁵ Other themes in Isaiah 40 are also taken up, e.g., the ideas of the glory of the Lord and of the Shepherd in John; and Acts 28:28 the

¹Ibid., 61–110.

²Ibid., 111–125.

³Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

⁴Ibid; idem, *AccordSS*, 61–62; idem, "New Testament Criticism: A Fresh Approach," 144; idem "A Problem of Interpretation," 13, "The general impression, I believe, is that the New Testament writers quote as proof-texts tags arbitrarily detached from their context and their original intention and applied to Christian purposes."

⁵Dodd, *AccordSS*, 70–71.

suggestion that this possibly was the character of the Gospel to the Gentiles.¹ Joel 2:28–32 is cited in Acts 2:17–21 and is part of a sustained prophecy which is in the mind of Peter and the church. Judgment and redemption are the fixed features.² Other testimonies apply to the disobedience and rejection of unfaithful Israel³ and the restoration of the people of God.⁴

The Messianic Status of Christ

This is defined and described from the OT. *Χριστός* is only once used eschatologically (Psalms 2:2 cited in Acts 4:26),⁵ but in the period between OT and NT it was applied in a vague way to a person to be sent by God as King and Ruler of a renovated Israel in the New Age (e.g., Ps. Sol. 17:23). Very little of this so-called

¹Ibid., 39–41, 84. Dodd says that this chapter is a "*locus classicus* of the hope of redemption" (p. 84); idem, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

²Ibid., 46–48.

³Isaiah 6:9–10, cited in various forms in Matt. 13:14–15; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10; John 12:40; and Acts 28:25–27. Jeremiah 5:21 and Ezekiel 12:2 are also cited in Mark 8:18; Deut. 29:4 in Rom. 11:8 with Isaiah 29:10 (see context cited in Mark 7:6,7). The rejection of Jesus can only be understood in the light of these passages. Isaiah 8:14 is cited in Rom. 9:33 and I Peter 2:8 not according to LXX. Jeremiah 7:3–15, the central verse 11 is cited in Mark 11:17; cf. also Mal. 3:1. In Romans 9–11 Paul elaborates this theme, citing much more of his own. The climax is a *μυστήριον*—the partial and temporary character of judgment; cf. idem, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

⁴The stone of stumbling is connected with the corner-stone of the new Jerusalem (I Peter 2:6, citing Isaiah 28:16). This is very significant. Connected with this is Hosea 2:23 and Paul in Rom. 9:26 adds 1:10. See also II Cor. 6:16–18 (Ezekiel and Hosea). Isaiah 1:9, 10:22 are also cited. The New Covenant: Jeremiah 31:31–34 = Hosea 8:8–12, cf. I Cor. 11:25, II Cor. 3:6–14, Gal. 4:24. Book of the Covenant: Zech. 9:11 = Mark 14:24; Isaiah 55:3 in context = Acts 13:34. Correlative with the destruction of the temple is the thought of a new temple: Isaiah 56:7 = Mark 11:17. Connected with this is the rebuilding of the temple in three days—Christ's body—the church. This passage implies the incorporation of the Gentiles, cf. Genesis 12:3 = Acts 3:25, Rom. 4:17,18, Gal. 3:1; Isaiah 49:6 = Acts 13:47, Luke 2:32. Amos 9:11,12 = Acts 15:16,17 (LXX: MT different); cf. idem, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

⁵Dodd, *AccordSS*, 105, says that Psalm 2 "was regarded as a description of messiahship, fulfilled in the mission and destiny of Jesus. Of all the scriptures we have seen reason for including in the primary body of testimonies this is the only one except Is. ix. 1–7 which is in the proper sense 'messianic': the only one, except Is. lxi. 1–2, which speaks of 'anointing' at all."

messianic prophecy is exploited; some examples, however, are used much, e.g., Zech. 9:9, II Sam. 7:14, Ez. 34:23,24, Ps. 2:7.¹

It was the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ which had to be emphasized (I Peter 1:11),² and the prophecies properly described as messianic do not talk of a suffering messiah. The church was therefore thrown back on another set of prophecies. From Psalms 118:22 (cited Matt. 21:42, Mark 12:10,11, Luke 20:17, Acts 4:11, I Peter 2:7) the rejection and restoration of Israel is applied to Christ. Jesus as Messiah is the representative head of Israel, having passed through what the prophets foretold for the Jewish people. His death is the culmination of the apostasy of Israel, and the tribulation of the new Israel out of which arises their glory.³

There are two aspects of messiahship. The first is the passion of the messiah, and the scripture passages are: Psalm 22:1 (Mark 15:34); 22:7 (Luke 23:35, Matt. 27:39,43); 22:18 (John 19:24); 22:22 (Heb. 2:12); Psalm 69:4 (John 15:25); 69:9 (John 2:17, Rom. 15:3); 69:21 (Matt. 27:34, Mark 15:36 and parallels, John 19:28,29); Psalm 31:5 (Luke 23:46); 31:13 (Matt. 27:1); Psalm 38:11 (Luke 23:49; cf. Psalm 88:18); and Psalm 34:20 (John 19:46). The context in all these Psalms is important. The resurrection of Israel out of the depths of despair is fulfilled by the sufferings of Christ.

Another group is the servant passages of Isaiah. The explicit references are: Isaiah 42:1–3 (Matt. 12:18–20); 42:6 (Luke 2:32); Isaiah 49:6 (Luke 2:32, Acts 13:47); and Isaiah 53:1 (John 12:38, Rom. 10:16); 53:4 (Matt. 8:17); 53:5,6 (I Peter 2:25); 53:7,8 (Acts 8:32,33); 53:9 (I Peter 2:22); 53:12 (Luke 22:37). And the allusions are: Isaiah 52:13 (Acts 3:13,5:31,2:33; John 12:23; Phil. 2:9); Isaiah 53:3 (Mark 9:12, cf. Psalm 22:6);

¹Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament." In idem, *AccordSS*, 116, Dodd writes, "If we scrutinize the scriptures which formed the main sources of *testimonia*, a remarkably small portion of them are found to be explicitly 'messianic,' either in the sense that they contain the title 'Messiah' ('the Lord's Anointed'), or that they can be shown to have received a messianic interpretation in pre-Christian Judaism."

²Dodd, *The Old Testament in the New*, 23–24.

³Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament"; idem, *AccordSS*, 35–36.

53:11 (Mark 10:45). Philippians 2:6–9 is full of similar allusions, as well as Romans 4:25; 8:3, 34; and Colossians 2:15.¹

Dodd asks the question, Is this application a primitive, or a Hellenistic creation? The LXX does not lie behind most of these citations and allusions.² In any case, how nearly primitive may Hellenistic influences in the church be? Dodd concludes they were there before Stephen—not more than two years after the crucifixion, and it is probable that they go back to Jesus Himself. It is in the light of these passages, Dodd says, we know what Paul means by “He died for our sins according to the Scriptures” (I Cor. 15:3).³

A second aspect of Messiahship is exaltation. The two fundamental texts (Psalm 110:1, Daniel 7:13) are combined in Mark 14:62.⁴ Each occurs elsewhere also:

Daniel 7:13. The vision in Daniel 7 is parallel with that in Daniel 2—successive embodiments of godless power. The stone cut with out_hands stands for the

¹Ibid.

²Dodd notes in “The Foundations of Christian Theology,” 314, n. 6, that the use of the term πᾶς in passages such as Acts 3:13, 26; 4:27, 30, does not imply that this usage is secondary, since it comes out of the LXX, implying a Hellenistic Christianity. The reasons are three-fold: it is impossible, if Acts 6:1 is reliable, to get back to a stage at which there were no Greek-speaking Christians; the identification of Jesus with the Servant of II Isaiah does not depend on the occurrence of the term πᾶς, since the LXX and Paul in Phil. 2:7 also use δούλος for עֶבֶד and it is presupposed in the application of almost every verse of Is. 52:13–53:12, as well as several verses from other servant passages, to Christ, in places covering almost all NT writings.

³Dodd, “Theology and Ethics in the New Testament.” Concerning κατὰ τὰς γραφάς, Dodd writes in “A Problem of Interpretation,” 18, “That statement places the whole event in the context of the massive witness of history and prophecy to the grace and power of the living God to vindicate His creature man against all forces that threaten his destruction”; and in “The Prologue to the Fourth Gospel and Christian Worship,” 19, “To forget those concluding last words is to lose the clue to the meaning both of death and resurrection (as it has sometimes been lost); to remember them is to be committed to history.” Cf. idem, *Historical Tradition*, 35.

⁴See Dodd's comments on this verse in *Parables*, 91; idem, *History and the Gospel*, 102; idem, “The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ,” 388; idem, *About the Gospels*, 8; idem, *The Coming of Christ*, 17; idem, *Historical Tradition*, 414; and idem, *Founder*, 101. Dodd accepts the authenticity of Mark 14:62.

victory of restored Israel.¹ In Daniel 7 the fifth creature (kingdom) is one like a son of man. The coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven stands for the ultimate victory of God's own people. "Son of Man" plays an important part in the Gospels.² Note also Psalm 80, which was clearly in the mind of NT writers, containing the concept of Shepherd, the figure of the Vine (John and Didache), and the man at God's right hand, the latter "providing direct scriptural justification for the fusion of the two figures in Mk. xiv. 62."³ Also Psalm 8, quoted in extensio Hebrews 2:6,7, which speaks to the author of Hebrews of exaltation and universal dominion.⁴ This kind of scripture lies behind "Son of Man" in the NT.

Psalm 110:1. This verse is referred to in Mark 12:36 and parallels; Acts 2:34; Heb. 1:13; see also Col. 3:1; Eph. 1:20,21; Rom. 8:34; I Peter 3:22; Acts 7:56 (probably also 2:33, but cf. Psalm 118); and I Cor. 15:25. The Psalm is about an individual. Mark 12:36 shows that it was taken to be the Davidic and the speaker is taken to the David; it is associated with the general messianic complex of prophecies. But it also shows that it cannot be the Davidic king, because he is superior to David. He is enthroned at God's right hand at God's command. (Note use of κύριος.)⁵ The same is treated differently in Acts 2:24f. It starts from a citation of Psalm 16:8–11; David is speaking of his descendant promised in II Samuel 7:12,13. He is foreseeing the resurrection of the Messiah—not only Χριστός, but also κύριος. There we are on the

¹Luke 20:17–18 has added Daniel 2:45 to corner-stone prophecy. Λικμήσω is used in v. 18.

²Dodd, *AccordSS*, 67–70.

³Ibid., 101–102; idem, "The Foundations of Christian Theology," 311.

⁴Ibid., 131, says that Psalm 8, "as applied in the New Testament...becomes the vehicle of a singularly profound conception of what messiahship means, a conception, we must suppose, strange to the ancient Hebrew poet."

⁵Ibid., 130–31.

track of scripture references to the resurrection of the Messiah, which do not as such occur.¹

But Paul speaks of "the third day, according to the Scriptures." The only possible reference is Hosea 6:1-3, the possible assurance to a dead people that God will restore to life and the knowledge of Himself. Christ rises from the dead as the true representative of the Israel of God (see also Psalm 118:17). "For the resurrection of Christ *is* the resurrection of Israel of which the prophet spoke."² Rabbinic commentators applied this to Israel, and this is exactly the idea behind Ezekiel's dry bones. Dodd then asks, How did these metaphorical passages come to be interpreted literally?

The facts which the church had to explain included an actual resurrection. It is from this point that the consideration of the evidence for the resurrection should begin. Christ's messianic status proceeds from the fact that He fulfills Israel's destiny of death and rising again. This is obviously primitive, and therefore a mystical unity of the church with Christ in His death and resurrection cannot be attributed to Paul.

The exaltation of Christ in these prophecies is represented as having been already achieved by the resurrection. Yet there are some passages where there is a distinction between this and the universal sovereignty to which Christ is destined. This is not always so (see I Peter 3:22). But there is a distinction in Hebrews 2:5-9: the manifestation of universal sovereignty has to wait (see also I Cor. 15:20-28). This is a symptom of reflection in the early church on the postponement of the Second Advent.

Furthermore, there are certain groups of prophecies such that no attempt is made to utilize them as having been fulfilled, e.g., Mark 13:9,19,22; II Thess. 1:8, 2:8 (Isaiah 11:4). This has an important bearing on this historical tradition. Thus certain events

¹Ibid., 106.

²Ibid., 103; idem, *The Old Testament in the New*, 29-30.

have undoubtedly been moulded by prophecy (e.g., the Triumphal Entry in Mark and Matthew).¹

In *History and the Gospel* Dodd has several things to say about the use of these OT testimonies by the theologians of the NT. First, these theologians do not attempt to exploit the whole body of messianic prediction. Elements such as the purely supernatural traits are missing from the gospel accounts, as well as the whole conception of the Messiah as king, warrior, judge, and the vindicator of the righteousness of God.² Second, not every detail in these testimonia is claimed to have been fulfilled.³ Third, a principle of selection has been at work, "the simplest explanation is that a true historical memory controlled the selection of prophecies. Those were held to have been fulfilled which were in general consonant with the memory of what Jesus had been, had said, had done and had suffered."⁴ Fourth, messianic ideas which were prevalent in Jewish thought of that time play little part in the tradition of the Jesus of history; they were applied to His expected second coming. Many of the scriptures that were considered to have been fulfilled in Jesus, however, were not at the time thought to be messianic at all.⁵

¹Ibid., 127–28; idem, *History and the Gospel*, 60.

²Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 61; idem, *Historical Tradition*, 47–48.

³Ibid.; idem, *Historical Tradition*, 48. For example, Psalm 21 contains verses such as the last cry of dereliction (v. 2), the division of the garments among the enemies (v. 19), and the wagging of heads (vv. 8–9). All three are expounded in the gospel Passion stories. But the same psalm speaks of the sufferer as beset by bulls, lions, and dogs (vv. 13, 17, 22). The gospel accounts do not mention these elements. See also Psalm 69 and Isaiah 11:1–9.

⁴Ibid., 61–62.

⁵Ibid., 62; cf. idem, "The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ," 382.

An Evaluation of Dodd's Views on the Kerygma

In *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments*, Dodd states that the kerygma was the organizing principle behind the unity of the NT.¹ With this assertion he changed the course of NT studies and had scholars talking about the kerygma as one of the theological canons of modern discussion.²

The Speeches in Acts

A key criticism of Dodd's construction of the kerygma is leveled at his belief that the speeches in Acts are part of an early tradition originating in the Jerusalem church which represents an accurate portrayal of the preaching of the apostles. Dodd, in agreement with C. C. Torrey, believes that these speeches are translations from an Aramaic source.³

Gasque, in a perceptive essay, has traced the criticisms of Dibelius and his disciples against the historicity of Acts and the accuracy of the speeches.⁴ Schweizer argues that the speeches in Acts are Lukan compositions which reflect his theology and are not historical narration.⁵ And Haenchen dismisses Dodd's argument with the

¹Dodd, *ApostPD*, 177.

²E.g., see the optimistic comments by A. M. Hunter, *Interpreting the New Testament: 1900-1950* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1951), 34-36, 72. Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1970), 293, n. 108, lists the following scholars who find basic agreement with Dodd's thesis: A. M. Hunter, J. N. Sanders, F. V. Filson, C. S. C. Williams, F. F. Bruce, O. Cullmann, O. Bauernfeind, E. Stauffer, M. Goguel, and L. Cerfaux. See also Wilfred L. Knox, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948), 17; I. Howard Marshall, *The Acts of the Apostles*, TNTC (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), 39-40; and R. McL. Wilson, "Mark," *PCB*, 799.

³Ibid., 35, "I cannot resist the conclusion that the material here presented existed in some form in Aramaic before it was incorporated in our Greek Acts."

⁴W. Ward Gasque, "The Speeches in Acts: Dibelius Reconsidered," *New Dimensions in New Testament Study* ed. M. Tenney and R. N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Book House, 1974), 232-41.

⁵Edward Schweizer, "Concerning the Speeches in Acts," *Studies in Luke-Acts*, ed. L. Keck and L. Martyn (New York: Abingdon, 1968), 208.

comment that "Ulrich Wilkens...has proved against Dibelius and Dodd that Peter's speeches in the first part of Acts do not contain any old pattern of Jewish-Christian missionary preaching."¹ Some scholars have dismissed the supposition that there is a Semitic background to the speeches, while others have allowed for varying Semitic elements.²

Depending upon how one reads the evidence for the speeches of Acts, Dodd's arguments for the apostolic kerygma in Acts stand or fall.³ A trenchant criticism is provided by Ruth Page:

The Paul-Acts 'agreement' forms the basis of Dodd's demonstration, but his method may be questioned as well as his content. He takes two bodies of primitive preaching, which do not exactly match and form only a part of what their respective authors had to say. From their area of near-coincidence he deduces a formula to which he attributes normativeness. But it is not evident that such a method will produce a characteristic basic affirmation from which everything else must be regarded as development. It is not easy to know whether affirmations in one source or more than one are characteristic of one or more groups among the first Christians. Nor can he show that the clauses of his kerygma are of equally early origin.... Dodd thus allows for omission and supplementation among his sources. But this manner of mutual support permits vagueness of correspondence and an accumulation greater than any individual source warrants, which is odd in view of the normativeness he assigns to his kerygma.⁴

¹Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, trans. B. Noble, G. Shinn, R. McL. Wilson (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971), 129–30.

²D. F. Payne, "Semitisms in the Book of Acts," *Apostolic History and the Gospel*, ed. W. Ward Gasque and R. P. Martin (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), 136–50 gives a good overview. Not all scholars, however, will jettison all scraps of possible Semitisms—see G. N. Stanton, *Jesus of Nazareth in New Testament Preaching* SNTMS—27 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 70. Stanton argues on pages 70–85 that Luke possibly was using traditional material in the speeches. See also F. F. Bruce, "The Speeches in Acts—Thirty Years After," *Reconciliation and Hope: New Testament Essays on Atonement and Eschatology* (FS for Leon Morris), ed. R. Banks (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), 53–68; and Marshall, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 39–42.

³C. F. Evans, "The Kerygma," *JTS* n.s. 7 (1956), 25–41; Robert C. Worley, *Preaching and Teaching in the Earliest Church* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967), 41–56; cf. Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 60–63.

⁴Ruth Page, "C. H. Dodd's Use of History Critically Examined," *Theology* 39 (1976): 333.

The Points of the Kerygma

Another objection to Dodd's theory is that scholars cannot agree as to the number of points in the kerygma. Craig, Hunter, and Mounce reduce Dodd's number to three, but they do not agree on the three.¹ Filson has four points,² and Glasson has five.³

The Circumstantial Nature of the Kerygma

Since Dodd's day, NT studies have shown that much of the NT preaching was circumstantial.⁴ Dodd in his inaugural lecture at Cambridge rightly sought for the unity of the data in the face of great diversity; today emphasis is placed upon the diversity of the data. That is, instead of one kerygma, we have kerygmata.⁵ To be sure

¹C. T. Craig, "The Apostolic Kerygma in the Christian Message," *JBR* 20 (1952), 182; A. M. Hunter, *The Message of the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1944), 29–30; Robert H. Mounce, *The Essential Nature of New Testament Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1960), 77–87. See further Greene, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 60.

²Floyd V. Filson, *Jesus Christ the Risen Lord* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), 41–57.

³T. Francis Glasson, "The Kerygma: Is Our Version Correct?" *HibJ* 51 (1952–1953): 129–32.

⁴See C. D. F. Moule, "The Influence of Circumstances on the Use of Christological Terms," and "The Influence of Circumstances on the Use of Eschatological Terms," *Essays on New Testament Issues* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 165–83, 184–99.

⁵James D. G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament*, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1977), but see the penetrating criticisms of Dunn's work by D. A. Carson, "Unity and Diversity in the New Testament," *Scripture and Truth*, ed. D. A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1983), 65–95. Eugene D. Lemcio, "The Unifying Kerygma of the New Testament," *JSNT* 33 (1988): 4, draws attention to the fact that Wilhelm Heitmüller, "Zum Problem Paulus und Jesus," *ZNW* 13 (1912): 320–37, set in motion "the prevailing tendency to speak of the kerygmata of the New Testament." Lemcio argues against Dunn that there is a kerygma in the NT that is not abstract or reductionist, and that is comprehensive enough to be considered a core component in the NT. His methodology corrects Dodd's in that there is no need to harmonize the kerygmatic "forms" from various parts of the NT. Lemcio postulates a core kerygma consisting of six constant items, usually prefaced by a statement that what follows is kerygma, gospel or word about: (1) God who; (2) sent (Gospels) or raised; (3) Jesus. (4) A response (receiving, repentance, faith); (5) towards God; (6) brings benefits (variously described). This core kerygma consists of the following: Acts 5:30–32; 13:30–32, 37–39, 43; Rom. 10:8–9; Col. 2:12–13; I Thess. 1:5–10; Titus

Dodd recognizes the diversity within the NT, but he only recognizes the diversity of the interpretation given to the kerygma. Dodd is correct in affirming that the NT partakes of unity, but he goes beyond the evidence to maintain a single fixed formulation that governs the whole of the tradition. James I. H. McDonald's point is well taken that Dodd's *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments*

had the unfortunate effect of encouraging an inflexible understanding of the *kerygma* in terms of supposedly primitive and relatively stereo-typed confessional formulae.... The rediscovery of the primitive, kerygmatic pattern suggested that the vital clue to the unity of the New Testament and the location of its true focus had been uncovered. The consequence of the inherent rigidity of this position was that the dynamic and fluid activity of preaching was caught and stopped as by a still camera.¹

The Relationship Between Kerygma and Didache

Dodd drives a wedge between kerygma and didache by arguing that "it was by *kerygma*, says Paul, not by *didache*, that it pleased God to save men."² But surely this is incorrect. McDonald points out that the terms are so interrelated that they could pass as synonyms. For example, in Mark 3 the disciples are sent out to "*preach* and...cast out devils," and in Mark 6 they return to "report all that they had done and all that they had *taught*."³ In addition, J. J. Vincent shows that Rom. 2:21, "while you *preach* against stealing, do you steal?" abolishes the idea that didache only represents

3:4–8; Heb. 13:20–21; I Peter 1:18–21, 25; Rev. 12:1–11, 17; Mt. 10:40–41; John 5:24. This line of investigation has promises and deserves further testing.

¹James I. H. McDonald, *Kerygma and Didache: The Articulation and Structure of the Earliest Christian Message* SNTSMS—37, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 3.

²Dodd, *ApostPD*, 6. McDonald, *Kerygma and Didache*, 5, notes that Dodd misquoted I Cor. 1:21.

³McDonald, *Kerygma and Didache*, 6.

teaching.¹ As Dodd was too unbending in his formulation of the kerygma, so was he too rigid in separating kerygma and didache.²

*The Eucharist, the Kerygma,
and Realized Eschatology*

When one reads Dodd's writings, he is impressed by the number of times he speaks of the sacraments, especially the Lord's Supper, or, as he prefers to call it, the Eucharist. In his essay "The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament," he identifies three aspects of the Eucharist. First, it is the remembrance of an historical person—Jesus Christ—and an historical event—the death and resurrection of Christ. Second, it is an act of communion in which Christ himself comes to his Church, and in which, under the sacramental forms of bread and wine, the members feed on him with thanksgiving. Third, the Eucharist is an act of dedication by which the Christian is united to God in an act of worship.³

With Dodd's description of the Eucharist we have no problem; it is ^{in the} way in which he views the Eucharist through the spectacles of realized eschatology that problems arise. A quotation from *History and the Gospel* states his position:

In its central sacrament the Church places itself ever anew within the eschatological crisis in which it had its origin. Here Christ is set before us incarnate, crucified, and risen, and we partake of the benefits of His finished work, as contemporaries with it. We are neither merely expressing and nourishing a hope for the future, but experiencing in one significant rite the reality of the coming of Christ, which is both His coming in humiliation and His coming in glory. It is this that gives character to the Church, that it lives always, when it is its most real self, within the historical moment of its redemption.⁴

¹J. J. Vincent, "Didactic Kerygma in the Synoptic Gospels," *SJT* 10 (1957): 265: "the 'content' of the preacher's preaching (κήρυγμα) is good, solid ethical διδαχή!"

²Worley, *Preaching and Teaching in the Earliest Church*, 30–41, has an admirable survey of scholars interacting with Dodd's kerygma–didache disjunction.

³Dodd, "The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament," 79–82; see also idem, "Eternal Life," *NTStudies*, 172.

⁴Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 163–64; "The Lord's Supper in the New Testament," AMs, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

Dodd is careful to say that this “contemporaneity” must not be confused with the mystical notion of the timeless “now,” but it is difficult not to avoid reaching this conclusion. This assumption is justified when we examine a long quotation from “The Eucharist in Relation to the Fellowship of the Church”:

The Church as the unity of believers is most truly itself in the Sacrament of communion, in which its individual members are nourished with the life of God in Christ which is His common gift to them all. In a particular local congregation the sharing of one Loaf and one Cup establishes the unity of that congregation. That is all it would do, but that the Loaf and the Cup are the means of communion with God in Christ; and as there is one God and Father of all, and one Lord Jesus Christ who once died for us all, whereon the Bread is broken, there is His one body, there is the Catholic Church. Similarly, the single congregation, entering into the Church's corporate memory of its Lord, shares the experience of the whole Body as a living community, continuous and identical in time as well as in space. And as that experience is of the eschatological order, discovering the end in every stage of the process, the congregation knows itself to be in the presence of the whole Church triumphant, and so is lifted above all particularity of space and time. Thus the Sacrament is a witness that the Catholic Church is no aggregate of parts, but lives as a whole in every congregation of Christian people which breaks the bread and pours out the wine with the sincere intention of showing forth the Lord's death until He come and making a communion of His Body and Blood. The Eucharist, rather than the episcopate, is the true *sacramentum unitatis*.¹

The phrase “discovering the end in every phrase of the process” gives Dodd away. Such an interpretation of the sacrament betrays a Platonic understanding of reality which Dodd espouses. He says that realized eschatology lies at the heart of the Gospel.² Realized eschatology also lies behind the kerygma because “the *kerygma*...is the rehearsal of the history of Jesus.... It is designed to place the hearers in the very presence of the historical event, and so to expose them to the power of God which worked in that event.”³ It is instructive, therefore, to observe that Dodd's view of the kerygma,

¹Dodd, “The Eucharist in Relation to the Fellowship of the Church,” 336.

²Dodd, “The Kingdom of God and History,” 27.

³Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 162–63.

like his view of the Eucharist, was shaped by a Platonic philosophical orientation expressed in his theory of realized eschatology.¹

¹Something must be said here about Dodd and Platonism. As we noted at the beginning of this chapter, Dodd received a thorough education at University College in ancient, medieval, and modern philosophy. Consequently, he knew intimately the thought of Plato. And in fact, he uses Platonism in his interpretation of the Bible. Plato's *Timæus*, "the Bible of later Platonism," [C. H. Dodd, "The Dialogue Form in the Gospels," *BJRL* 37 (1954): 61], had a tremendous impact upon Dodd's thinking. Dodd, "The Kingdom of God," 16–17, summarizes Plato's philosophy as follows, "Plato gave classical expression in his doctrine of Ideas, which, whether or not it was understood as Plato intended it, supplied the main pattern of most philosophical thought of a religious kind in the Hellenistic period. It was held that there were two orders of being—the world of thought (κόσμος νοητός) and the world of the senses (κόσμος αἰσθητός). The former consisted of a hierarchy of eternal Forms or Ideas, all summed up in the unity of the Idea of Ideas. The ideas correspond to the universals of thought, but they exist independently of the human mind, which, in rising from particulars as given in sensible experience to the universals in which the meaning of particulars resides, has communion with the κόσμος νοητός. Such communion alone is knowledge properly so called. For knowledge is of that which *is*, and of particulars it cannot be said that they *are*, but only that they are in process of becoming and passing away (γένεσις καὶ φθορά). That alone is fully real which is one and unchanging. All that is manifold and changeable has in it an element of not-being or unreality." For Dodd's thought on Platonism on a popular level, see idem, "Ex Umbris et Imaginibus in Veritatem," *OCH* 4:5–27, and see especially his comments on page 30. In "Hellenism and Christianity," 111, Dodd writes that "a general structure of thought on Platonic lines is the common possession of all serious thinkers in [the Hellenistic period]." Dodd sees Platonic influence in the writings of the *Corp. Herm.*, Philo, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Fourth Gospel [see, e.g., *GospNT*, 5, 93; *AuthB*, 200; "From St. Paul to the Reign of Constantine," 444–45; "The Background of the Fourth Gospel," 336–37; *The Bible and the Greeks*, passim; "Hellenism and Christianity," 113, 123–29; *ApostPD*, 100–101; *InterpFG*, 171; see also *AccordSS*, 136, where Dodd says that he is not persuaded by those "who tell us that the great task of theologians of this generation is to purge Christian theology of the last dregs of Platonism"]. Moreover, Dodd believes that the Johannine dialogues are based on the Hellenistic dialogues, which took their cue from Plato's dialogues ["The Dialogue Form in the Gospels," 60–62]. N. Q. Hamilton, *The Holy Spirit and Eschatology in Paul*, *SJT Occasional Papers*–6, (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1957), 59, comments that Dodd's philosophy of history is congenial with Plato's thought in that they both view history as the incomplete and imperfect striving of this world of time and space after the transcendent absolutes of eternity. Therefore, Dodd is a realist because he believes that the events of the gospel "have the actuality which belongs to the historical process as such," and he is an idealist because "at the same time [these events] possess the absolute significance which belongs to the *eschaton*, the ultimate fulfilment of the divine purpose in history" [*ApostPD*, 97]. See further Ernst Käsemann, *New Testament Questions of Today*, 16; idem, *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen*, Zweiter Band, Zweiter Auflage, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965), 150, who, writing about Dodd and the Fourth Gospel, says that "Dodd bevorzugt sie freilich, um damit die geistige Nähe des vierten Evangeliums zur griechischen Philosophie, genauer zur einem stoisch modifizierten Platonismus, und von da aus eine platonisierende Interpretation zu rechtfertigen." See also the discussion in Thomas E. McCollough, "Realized Eschatology and C. H. Dodd," *Religion in Life* 26 (1957): 428–29.

The Kerygma and the Testimonies

The heart of Dodd's belief in the unity of the NT, as outlined in his Cambridge inaugural lecture, was that the early church developed its theology in relation to the points of the primitive kerygma. The OT citations in the NT are important for the contemporary scholar to recognize because Dodd feels that these scriptures are related to the early church's interpretation of the significance of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Consequently, Dodd concludes his study with the observation that this interpretation was based on the OT view of biblical history, that history is the field of God's challenge and man's response.¹ Consistent with his views of realized eschatology, Dodd finds that this history was fulfilled in the climax of the Christ-event. After reviewing several testimonies in Joel, Zechariah, Daniel, and Malachi, Dodd writes that these scriptures

all have the same general 'plot,' with manifold variations. They describe that supreme crisis of history which Joel, like other prophets, calls the Day of the Lord. It is the intervention of God in history to achieve His purpose for His creation. This intervention takes the form of judgment upon the evil things in history, and the establishment of a people of God, through whom all nations will come under His everlasting and beneficent reign. The employment of these scriptures as testimonies to the *kerygma* indicates that the crisis out of which the Christian movement arose is regarded as the realization of the prophetic vision of judgement and redemption.... But the prophets seriously believed that what they spoke of (in however cryptic terms) would happen. The early Christians believed it had happened, or at least was in the process of happening.²

Dodd summarizes the arguments of *According to the Scriptures* in four propositions. First, these quotations, allusions, and references from the OT are not to be accounted for by the speculation of a primitive testimony book. Dodd argues that this investigation of the OT by the NT evangelists and teachers developed very early; largely employed orally; and found literary expression only occasionally and

¹Dodd, *AccordSS*, 128–30.

²Ibid., 72–73.

incompletely.¹ Second, certain large sections of the OT—Isaiah, Jeremiah, certain minor prophets, and the Psalms—were understood as wholes, and when a verse was quoted from them, it was to be regarded as pointing to the whole context. In the fundamental passages, “it is the *total context* that is in view, and is the basis of the argument.”² Third, these scriptures were interpreted along the lines of Acts 2:23. This “determinate counsel of God” was fulfilled in the gospel facts and fixed the meaning of those facts.³ Fourth, these OT scriptures with their application to the gospel facts are found in all the major portions of the NT, “and in particular it provided the starting point for the theological constructions of Paul, the author to the Hebrews, and the Fourth Evangelist. It is the substructure of all Christian theology and contains already its chief regulative ideas.”⁴ The ideas of kerygma, testimonies, and realized eschatology, therefore, all collaborate and confirm each other in the theology of C. H. Dodd.

Dodd's construction of this substructure of NT theology has won many admirers, but at the same time, his blueprint has been questioned by several architectural exegetes. In an excellent review of recent developments in the study of the OT in the NT, Marshall analyzes Dodd's contributions in this area and the responses to these contributions.⁵ Marshall sees Dodd trying to answer three questions: in what way did the early church develop a theology? (it understood the kerygma in light of the OT); how did the early church find its way round the OT? (it recognizes certain scriptural contexts which were of special theological importance);

¹Ibid., 126.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., 127.

⁴Ibid.

⁵I. Howard Marshall, “An Assessment of Recent Developments,” *It Is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture. Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars*, eds. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 1–21.

and how did the early church use the materials from these scriptural contexts, which Marshall prefers to call "fields?" (it recognized the presence of common themes in these contexts, and it developed its theology in response to OT teaching).¹

Dodd's answer to the first question was responded to by Wilcox in the *Black Festschrift* and taken up later by Black in a lecture for the Hugh Anderson *Festtag* in 1985.² Wilcox congratulates Dodd for stressing that we must take allusions and other quotations without introductory words seriously, for showing that when this was done, the resulting material showed a pattern belonging to wider OT fields, and for insisting that the OT quotations were not as isolated as some would hold.³ But a sore spot for Wilcox in Dodd's theory is that the approach was too heavily dominated by Dodd's view of the kerygma. "That is," argues Wilcox, "[Dodd] assumed that the guiding principle of selection was that of relevance to 'the kerygma'. The view, 'if it is not in the (!) kerygma it does not matter for NT thought' is a value judgment, rather than an empirical statement."⁴ Moreover, he takes issue with Dodd's assumptions that it was the church which began this investigation and that this investigation was rigged from the beginning of finding support for the points in the kerygma.⁵ Wilcox proposes that the OT must be understood in light of the then accepted exegetical traditions. He writes

Far from scouring the OT in search of texts to bolster up the statements of the kerygma, the early church would have needed to start with the exegetical traditions of contemporary Jewish thought concerning the Messiah and the end

¹Ibid., 3. Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 106, uses the term "text-plot."

²M. Wilcox, "On investigating the Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament," *Text and Interpretation: Studies in the New Testament Presented to Matthew Black*, eds. E. Best and R. McL. Wilson, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 231-43; Matthew Black, "The Theological Appropriation of the Old Testament by the New Testament," *SJT* 39 (1986): 1-17. It was my privilege to hear Black's lecture in person.

³Wilcox, "On investigating the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament," 234-35.

⁴Ibid., 235.

⁵Ibid.; cf. Page, "C. H. Dodd's Use of History Critically Examined," 334-35.

events, and then argue that these had found their proper interpretation (and hence 'realization') in the person and role of Jesus of Nazareth. In this way the scripture would have been seen to speak (anew) to the situation now called forth in and by the 'Christ event'. On this analysis the elements of the so-called *kerygma* would appear as an end product rather than a starting point. That such a procedure was not without contemporary models we may see from the Qumran literature.¹

He says furthermore that "when the NT uses the OT in connection with the words of Jesus and/or the basic confessional statement, its justification for so doing lies in its interpreting scripture by current exegetical tradition and by the growingly canonical elements of primitive Christian 'scripture'."²

Marshall shows that Wilcox's proposals are not given in criticism of Dodd's theory but given as an alternative. In answer to the question, did the early church go to the OT to find evidence that "Christ died for our sins" or was it the investigation of the OT which led the early church to *realize* that truth, Marshall says that Wilcox reminds us that both processes went alongside each other dialectically.³

Dodd's answer to the second question, how did the early church find its way round the OT, Marshall points out,⁴ was responded to by A. C. Sundberg, Jr.⁵ Sundberg criticizes Dodd on five points.

First, Sundberg objects to Dodd's concept of the OT exegetical collection passages used as the bible of the early church. He states that "it would seem reasonable to expect a considerable concentration of interest on the part of the New Testament writers in the special Old Testament sections indicated by Dodd."⁶ Moreover, he argues that "a significant predominance, consistent through most of the New

¹Ibid., 236.

²Ibid., 241.

³Marshall, "An assessment of recent developments," 3-4.

⁴Ibid., 5-7.

⁵A. C. Sundberg, Jr., "On Testimonies," *NovT* 3 (1959): 268-81.

⁶Ibid., 271.

Testament authors, of those Old Testament books containing the passages Dodd suggests as part of the “bible of the early church” would tend to confirm Dodd's hypothesis.”¹ To prove Dodd wrong, Sundberg presents two tables with his statistics. In his critique of Sundberg, Marshall shows that Sundberg's methodology is at fault, partly because he worked from the index to the 1948 edition of Nestle's text, which has far more express OT citations than there actually are. The index to the third edition of *The Greek New Testament*, Marshall contends, supplies a better listing. Working with this guide, Marshall shows that Dodd's list of OT books which show the greatest concentration of citations relative to their size only need to include Exodus and Leviticus—the inference being not that Dodd was mistaken, but that his list needed revision in detail. In addition, Sundberg's attempt to list the OT books in terms of the number of citations from each actually supports Dodd.²

Second, Sundberg objects to Dodd's conclusion that NT citation of a verse or phrase from the OT “frequently constitute an intended reference to a larger context in doubly attested passages.”³ What Sundberg fails to notice is that Dodd was talking about the earliest stage of the church's interpretation of the OT. At this stage of enquiry, the fields developed did not impose limits on the NT authors and restrict their looking at other passages. Marshall observes that “Dodd's theory need not require that the early church turned *only* to a limited list of fields.”⁴

Third, Sundberg finds difficulty with Dodd's view that a traditional method of exegesis of OT passages existed prior to the writing of any books of the NT. If this view be granted, then it follows that the same OT passage quoted in the NT had to receive the

¹Ibid., 273–74.

²Marshall, “An assessment of recent developments,” 5–6. The books with the highest rating are Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, the Minor Prophets, Psalms, Proverbs, and Daniel.

³Sundberg, “On Testimonies,” 275.

⁴Marshall, “An assessment of recent developments,” 6.

same interpretation wherever quoted.¹ But the examples Sundberg cites to prove Dodd wrong are not wholly convincing, and Marshall shows that Sundberg ignores the fact that Jewish exegesis could find multiple meanings in any one text.²

Fourth, Sundberg insists that the double citations upon which Dodd builds his case may not have been so primitive; in fact, these passages also relate to what is in Sundberg's opinion "manifestly developed positions in the church." He concludes that a process of development preceded this doubly attested tradition, and he uses as an example the supposition that the Jewish rejection of Jesus (covered in doubly attested passages) could not have existed from the beginning.³ But, as Marshall points out, Sundberg views the evidence in reverse. The fact is that the Jewish rejection of Jesus was a problem from an early date (I Thess. 2:14–16).⁴

Finally, Sundberg turns Dodd's criticism of Harris' theory, that such testimony books, if they existed, should have found their way into the canon, on Dodd himself and concludes, following Kilpatrick, that the only testimony book the early Christians had was the Greek Bible itself.⁵

Dodd's answer to the third question, how did the early church use the material from these fields, again generated a response from Sundberg. Marshall notes that Dodd does not deny that all great literature contains the "potential" for more meaning than the original author intended.⁶ In fact, the OT passages could undergo, in Dodd's words, "a certain shift, nearly always an expansion, of the original scope of the

¹Sundberg, "On Testimonies," 278.

²Marshall, "An assessment of recent developments," 6; see G. J. Brooke, "Qumran Peshet: Towards the Redefinition of Genre," *RevQ* 10 (1979–1981): 354–57.

³Sundberg, "On Testimonies," 279.

⁴Marshall, "An assessment of recent developments," 7.

⁵Sundberg, "On Testimonies," 280.

⁶Marshall, "An assessment of recent trends," 7.

passage.”¹ Sundberg disagrees with Dodd and contends that the meanings given to the citations are not dependent on the context of the original OT passage cited.² Marshall shows that Dodd was trying to argue that “the finding of an appropriate text in part of the OT led the Christians to look in the same context for further appropriate texts, and that in some cases the choice of a text was dependent upon the assumption that the larger passage is christologically orientated.”³ Thus Psalm 69:25 about Judas' defection presupposes the belief that the Psalm had already been labeled “christological” and, consequently, that v. 25 was relevant to the rejection of Christ.⁴

It is to Dodd's credit that he does not reject the possibility of written testimonies—even if they are, in his opinion, small and fragmentary—in the early stages of this interpretive enterprise. The discoveries of 4QTestim and 4QFlor, first published by J. M. Allegro in the middle 1950s,⁵ 4QTan, and 4QOrd revived interest in Harris' theory of testimony books because these documents were themselves excerpt collections of OT citations.⁶ Since Dodd's Stone lectures and the resulting book

¹Dodd, *AccordSS*, 130.

²Sundberg, “On Testimonies,” 277.

³Marshall, “An assessment of recent developments,” 7.

⁴*Ibid.* Sundberg argues, however, that most OT texts are cited atomistically. Kaiser, *The Uses of the Old Testament in the Old*, 11–12, discusses Sundberg's article favourably and concludes that it was Sundberg's merit to move the discussion from Harris' search for an exact source for most of the OT quotations in the NT to a new investigation (led by Stendahl and Lindars) of the manner and purpose of appropriating the OT.

⁵J. M. Allegro, “Further Messianic References in Qumran Literature,” *JBL* 75 (1956): 174–87; *idem*, “Fragments of a Qumran Scroll of Eschatological Midrashim,” *JBL* 77 (1958): 350–54. See Hodgson, “The Testimony Hypothesis,” 361, n. 4. 4QTestim contains Deut. 5:28–29; 18:18–19; Num. 24:15–17; Deut. 33:8–11, and a text from a lost apocryphal book. 4QFlor includes midrashic commentary on three of its quotations, II Sam. 7:10–14; Psalm 1:1; and Psalm 2:1–2.

⁶4QTan contains a series of texts from II Isaiah prefaced by Psalm 79:2–3 and concluded with Zech. 13:9. 4QOrd is a collection of halakah arranged around certain social-ethical themes. See J. A. Fitzmyer, “4Q Testimonia and the New Testament,” *TS* 18 (1957): 527–37; Moule, *The Birth of the New Testament*, 105, n. 1. McDonald, *Kerygma and Didache*, 44.

antedated the discovery of these writings and the *Habakkuk Commentary*, he has had to make further allowances for possible written collections. In fact, in 1970 Dodd wrote a letter to T. F. Glasson, responding to Glasson's queries, "in what conceivable way could this collection of OT material be passed on orally from one to another? How could it adhere through the years?"¹ Dodd's answer was that he conceived "an oral tradition strong enough to hold these passages together—qualified by the allowance for possible written aides-memoire as a practical convenience."² But it should be emphasized that Dodd did not abandon the oral source hypothesis. If he had, he would have done a complete about face with respect to his belief that the early transmission of the gospel was primarily oral!³

¹T. F. Glasson, "Old Testament Testimonies and their Transmission. A Letter from C. H. Dodd to Dr. T. F. Glasson," *ExpT* 87 (1975–1976): 22.

²*Ibid.*

³This assumption governed Dodd's approach in *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, e.g., 424, "That some parts of it may have been written down by way of *aide-mémoire* is always possible, and such written sources may have intervened between strictly oral tradition and our Fourth Gospel. If so, I am not concerned with them." Note especially John A. T. Robinson's comments on this quotation in *The Priority of John*, ed. J. F. Coakley, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1985), 13–14. And in *The Founder of Christianity*, 20, Dodd writes, "The early church was a society which did its business in the world chiefly through the living voice, in preaching, teaching and worship. And it was mainly through the living voice that the sayings of Jesus were first handed down." On the same page Dodd says that Paul knew the sayings of the Lord from word of mouth rather than in writing, although some sayings may have been written down as *aide memoire*. It was only twenty-five years or so after the death of Jesus, he believes, that this collection was in written circulation. See further *idem*, "Thirty Years of New Testament Study," 327, n. 1.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE BLUEPRINT OF EXEGESIS

In Dodd's inaugural lecture at Cambridge University he gave attention to what he called the structural view of New Testament studies. This process, he reasons, falls naturally into various departments which may be ideally arranged as stages in a structure.¹ A few years later Dodd wrote an essay for the compendium *The Study of Theology* in which he sets out his exegetical method. In both studies Dodd covers very much the same ground, discussing the various disciplines he uses to interpret the Bible. It remains for us to examine his critical method and to give examples of each principle he lists. In such an enterprise, keeping in mind the volume of Dodd's writings, we can go overboard with illustrations. Since Dodd uses his critical method to support his theological and philosophical presuppositions, we shall use as many illustrations as possible to show that this assumption is correct.

Textual Criticism

Dodd says that the foundations of New Testament study are laid in textual criticism.² The aim of textual criticism is "to restore the text of the several documents

¹Dodd, *Present Task*, 6-8.

²Cf. K. W. Clark, "The Effect of Recent Textual Criticism upon New Testament Studies," *BNTE*, 51, "The effect of textual criticism upon Biblical studies must be continuous, and the textual critic is called upon at all times to persist in the preparation of a better textual foundation upon which the structure of Christian faith may stand firm." See also the comments of E. C. Colwell, "Biblical Criticism: Lower and Higher," *JBL* 67 (1948): 1-12.

as they left the hands of their authors.”¹ This aim is necessary because we do not have the original autographs of these documents. The remarkable success in finding new manuscripts in the first half of the twentieth-century such as the Chester-Beatty papyri in 1931 and the Rylands papyri in 1935 has bridged the gap between our manuscripts and the original autographs. Concerning these findings Dodd writes, “The Chester-Beatty and the Rylands papyri are perhaps the most spectacular finds in this particular field: not necessarily the most important. Enough at any rate has been discovered to set textual critics to work for a considerable time, and we may hope presently they will produce a text of the New Testament with good claim to be closer to what the authors wrote than any we have yet seen.”² Since Dodd wrote those words, many more valuable

¹Dodd, *Present Task*, 7; cf. Marvin R. Vincent, *A History of the Textual Criticism of the New Testament* NTH (New York: Macmillan Company, 1899), 1–2, “Textual Criticism is that process by which it is sought to determine the original text of a document or of a collection of documents, and to exhibit it, freed from all the errors, corruptions, and variations which it may have accumulated in the course of its transmission by successive copying.... There can be but one text of a document, and that is the body of words written by the author himself. The text of a document, accurately speaking, is that which is contained in its autograph”; Souter, *The Text and Canon of the New Testament*, 3, “Textual criticism seeks...to restore the very words of some original document which has perished, and survives only in copies complete or incomplete, accurate or inaccurate, ancient or modern. If we possessed the twenty-seven documents now composing our New Testament exactly in the form in which they were dictated or written by their original authors, there would be no textual criticism of the New Testament”; Frederic G. Kenyon, *Handbook to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament* 2nd ed., (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1912), 1,6, “The province of Textual Criticism is the ascertainment of the true form of a literary work, as originally composed and written down by its author.... The task of textual criticism, then, in relation to the New Testament, is to try to extract the actual words written by the apostles and evangelists from the great mass of divergent manuscripts in which their works have been preserved.” This aim, which emanates from F. J. A. Hort (*The New Testament in the Original Greek*, [ii], *Introduction* [and] *Appendix* [Cambridge and London, 1896, 1], has been challenged by M. M. Parvis, “The Nature and Tasks of New Testament Textual Criticism: An Appraisal,” *JR* 32 (1952): 165–74, who argues (p. 172) that “there are no spurious readings; all are the product of the tradition of the church, whether they originated in the twelfth century or in the first.” Childs, *The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction*, 518–30, reasons that Parvis and the followers of Hort are wrong by separating text and canon in their methodologies. He says (p. 527) that “the goal of textual criticism, which is commensurate with its canonical role, is to recover that New Testament text which best reflects the true apostolic witness found in the church's scripture.”

²C. H. Dodd, “New Testament Scholarship Today,” 80; “MEETING POINT It's Happening Now—The New English Bible,” TMs BBC Television Broadcast (12 March 1961) Dodd Papers, Mansfield College, Oxford.; idem, *Christian Beginnings*, 8–10. F. G. Kenyon, “After Fifty Years. II. The Text of the Greek New Testament,” *ExpT* 50

papyri have been discovered which scholars believe are earlier than the Chester-Beatty and the Rylands papyri.¹ In his discussion of the production of the New English Bible Dodd says that “it is a *sine qua non* that [the translators] were bound to give a faithful rendering of the best text now available.”²

The translators of the Authorized Version used a printed text which was drawn from manuscripts of late date and employed them unscientifically. The first version to be made from a critically respectable text was the Revised Version of 1881. This version “marked a new departure especially in that it abandoned the so-called Received Text, ...which the advances of textual criticism had antiquated.”³ The period just before that date, which was the publication of Westcott and Hort's text, was the first golden age of textual criticism. It began with Tischendorf's work about 1840. Tischendorf and others of that period gathered up the gains of past periods, discovered fresh materials, laid down principles of criticism, and valid conclusions were reached.⁴ In short, the advance these scholars made over the previous ones was that they no longer followed the text of the majority of manuscripts, which, for the most part, were of late date. They followed a very small group of manuscripts, which in their

Testament,” *ExpT* 50 (1938-1939): 68, writes that “a whole new chapter of textual history has been opened by the discovery of Greek papyrus manuscripts in Egypt.” David Parker, “The Development of Textual Criticism since B. H. Streeter,” *NTS* 24 (1977): 149.

¹Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 280, n. 2, remarks that the Bodmer papyrus \mathfrak{p}^{66} is “now our earliest Ms. of any substantial portion of the Fourth Gospel.”

²Dodd, “The Translation of the Bible: Some Questions of Principle,” 5.

³Dodd, introduction to the New Testament, *The New English Bible*, iii. Michael W. Holmes, “The ‘Majority text debate’: new form of an old issue,” *Themelios* 8 (January 1982): 13, quotes Leon Vaganay, *An Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament* (London, 1937), 173, who writes that the Textus Receptus is “dead at last and, let us hope, forever.”

⁴Dodd, *Present Task*, 9–10.

opinion were the earliest and therefore the best.¹ Dodd writes concerning Westcott and Hort's approach that

the two great manuscripts, the Sinaitic and the Vatican, which are the chief foundation of the text of Westcott and Hort, though they are still pre-eminent, scarcely hold the same exclusive position of authority. Their text is no longer regarded as a 'neutral' text, unaffected by the tendencies which have corrupted other manuscripts, but as the result of a scholarly, and probably conservative, revision. Other groups of manuscripts have acquired a fresh importance, especially the group which Westcott and Hort called 'Western', and the newly recognized 'Caesarean' family.²

In 1950 Dodd says that textual criticism has begun a "remarkable revival" in which constructive achievements were possible. He also says that "textual criticism is a highly specialized discipline, in which, truth to tell, I am not entirely at home."³ In his published writings Dodd has over a hundred references to textual problems. Some of these textual notes are quite detailed and demonstrate that he is well-acquainted with the principles of textual criticism. In fact, he often writes that the biblical critic is compelled to have some knowledge of this discipline.⁴ Although it is impossible to investigate every instance in which Dodd discusses a text-critical problem, we are able to list some of the principles he uses and to illustrate them.

¹Dodd, introduction to the *New English Bible*, iii.

²Dodd, "The New Testament," 226-27. In an unaddressed handwritten letter written in 1934 Dodd writes, "As regards the text of the New Testament, it is true that critical opinion has to some extent moved away from the almost exclusive adhesion to the \aleph B text which Westcott and Hort represent, but not at all in the direction represented at the time by Burgon. No one would think of going back to the Textus Receptus (i.e., the Byzantine text based on Lucian's revision). It is the so-called 'Western' text of D and the Old Latin, the Old (pre-Lucianic) Antiochene text represented by the Old Syriac, and the newly recognized 'Caesarean' text of Θ , and (in part) the Chester-Beatty papyrus, that are claiming attention from scholars at the present time. But I do not think that the position of \aleph and B is very seriously shaken." "Unaddressed Letter 27-28 February 1934," Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

³Dodd, "Thirty Years of New Testament Study," 323.

⁴Dodd, *Christian Beginnings*, 8-10.

The Recognition of Manuscript Corruptions

As a textual critic, Dodd is careful to note details in the textual apparatus which arise from possible errors on the part of the biblical authors or the scribes who copied their writings. These details may be accounted for as unintentional changes and intentional changes.¹

One example of unintentional changes is found in Mark 15:34–36, where the reading ηλι, ηλι in D ⊙ 565 and the Old Latin alone makes sense of Mark's statement that it was misunderstood as the vocative Ἠλεεία because there is little resemblance of ἐλωί to Ἠλεεία.² Dodd notes a possible misspelling in Philemon 9, where πρεσβύτης is only one letter different from πρεσβεύτης. He concludes that either Paul misspelled the word or the manuscripts messed it up.³

Dittography is possible in John 19:23–24. Dodd adopts the reading of one minuscule ὑσσῶ for ὑσσώπω. It is plausible that a scribe saw the letters υσσωπωπερι for υσσωπερι and, seeing the letters υσσωπ, he might have assumed that he had before him the word "hyssop."⁴

Dodd adheres to Bengel's well-known rule *difficilior lectio potior* in his interpretation of the textual evidence for John 3:25. He notes that the weight of authority (⊗ ⊙ ϑ⁶⁶ the Latin versions and the Curetonian Syriac) seems to favour the plural Ἰουδαίων. But the singular Ἰουδαίου, supported by most uncials, is quite unusual in the

¹Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption and Restoration*, 2nd ed., (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 186–206.

²Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 123, n. 1. The passage presents problems which cannot be entered into here.

³C. H. Dodd, "Philemon," *ABC*, 1293; Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1971), 657.

⁴Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 123–24, n. 1; cf. Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic*, 101, n. 1.

Fourth Gospel. The Jews are frequently mentioned in that Gospel as interlocutors, and its "correction" by scribes would be a reasonable explanation.¹

Bengel's other rule, *brevior lectio potior*,² is followed by Dodd in John 14:4. He omits the longer reading $\kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau.\ \omicron\delta.\ \omicron\iota\delta\alpha\tau\epsilon$ of \mathfrak{P}^{66^*} A C³ D Θ Γ ^{1.13} \mathfrak{M} .³

In his magisterial *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, Dodd observes several examples of possible scribal assimilation of parallel passages.⁴ He notes that the textual critic must pay careful attention to such assimilations if he is to ascertain the best possible text. J. K. Elliott agrees, writing that

the main object of textual criticism is to establish as accurately as possible a text approximating to the original words of the original authors. As far as the text of the synoptic gospels is concerned, one of the main problems in establishing the text is the amount of cross-fertilization in the MSS whenever the gospels are in parallel. Scribes were prone to assimilate the gospel they were copying to a parallel text in another gospel.⁵

Finally, Dodd lays down the principle that "MS. evidence is not to be relied on where it is a question of breathing or aspirants." An example of this principle is John 8:44 where the manuscripts vary between $\xi\sigma\tau\eta\kappa\epsilon\nu$ (the imperfect of $\sigma\tau\eta\kappa\omega$) and $\xi\sigma\tau\eta\kappa\epsilon\nu$ (the perfect of $\xi\sigma\tau\eta\mu$). He believes the perfect is the more likely reading.⁶

¹Ibid., 280, n. 2; Metzger, *TC*, 205. It must be noted that Bengel's rule is probably not the only reason for the choice in this passage.

²For a criticism of Bengel's rule, see J. K. Elliott, "Keeping Up with Recent Studies. XV. New Testament Textual Criticism," *ExpT* 99 (1987): 43–44.

³Dodd, review of *TWNT* –V, 246; Metzger, *TC*, 243. See also Dodd's treatment of John 16:17 in *Historical Tradition*, 419, n. 2. Again, it must be noted that Bengel's rule is not the only reason for the choice in this passage.

⁴Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 77, n. 4; 101, n. 2; 101, n. 3; 145, n. 1; 152, n. 1; 163–66; 176, n. 2; 255, n. 2; 307, n. 1; 335–36, n. 4; see also idem, *Parables*, 130, n. 2, and idem, "Behind a Johannine Dialogue," *MNTStudies*, 50–51, n. 1.

⁵J. K. Elliott, "Textual Criticism, Assimilation and the Synoptic Gospels," *NTS* 26 (1979–1980): 231.

⁶Dodd, "Behind a Johannine Dialogue," *MNTStudies*, 54, n. 1; Metzger, *TC*, 226, opts for the imperfect.

The Rejection of the Textus Receptus

As stated in the section above, Dodd, along with many NT scholars, rejects the privileged status of the Textus Receptus¹ and favors readings from earlier manuscripts. Several examples of this principle can be pointed out.

First, Dodd rejects the longer ending of Mark 16:9–20 as “spurious.” The genuine text of Mark, he says, was broken off at 16:8. Thus, the resurrection appearances of Christ listed in these verses were no part of the archetypal text of Mark.² How then does he account for these appearances of Christ in the other manuscripts? In 1938 Dodd states that, although Mark contains no resurrection appearances, the gospel anticipates them in 14:28 and 16:7.³ Later, in a 1957 essay, he makes the point that “as a rendering of the early Christian tradition of the resurrection appearances it demands consideration on its own merits.”⁴ Verses 14 and 15 read like a list, such as Paul’s list of the resurrection appearances in I Corinthians 15:3–8:

“He appeared first to Mary Magdalen”;
 “After this he appeared to two of them as they were journeying
 into the country”;
 “Later, he appeared to the Eleven themselves as they sat at table.”

He notes that the sequence, πρῶτον...μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα...ὑστερον, recalls the εἴτα...ἔπειτα...εἴτα...ἔσχατον πάντων of I Corinthians 15:3–8. Mark 16:14–15 are not

¹In “The Mind of Paul: I,” *NTStudies*, 82, n.1, Dodd says that the Textus Receptus underlying the AV is an “inferior text.”

²Dodd, “The Appearances of the Resurrected Christ: An Essay in Form-Criticism of the Gospels,” *MNTStudies*, 110; idem, “The Close of the Galilean Ministry,” 289. Bruce Metzger, *TC*, 122–6, points out that 16:9–20 are absent from from ⱼ B it^k the Sinaitic Syriac manuscript, about a hundred Armenian manuscripts, and the two oldest Georgian manuscripts. Clement of Alexandria and Origen show no knowledge of these verses, and Eusebius and Jerome state that the verses are absent from the manuscripts known to them. Conversely, Mark 16:9–20 is present in Ɀ A C D K X W D ⊙ Ψ 099 0112 1¹³ 28 33. Irenaeus and the Diatessaron bear witness to part or all verses. See further Hugh Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark* NCBC (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976), 358–62.

³Dodd, “The Gospels as History: A Reconsideration,” 141, n. 1.

⁴Dodd, “The Appearances of the Resurrected Christ,” *MNTStudies*, 110.

derivative from the canonical gospels, but verses 9–13 may be derivative (cf. Luke 8:2, 22:11).¹ He concludes that “the author of the ‘Longer Ending’ is in the main composing freely out of current tradition, but is drawing upon Matthew and Luke for part of his material. As a summary of what happened after the discovery of the empty Tomb it carries no independent authority.”²

Second, Dodd rejects the *pericope adulterae* contained in John 7:2–11 as part of the archetype.³ This pericope is omitted, in Dodd's opinion, from all the best manuscripts, with one single exception. “Of the manuscripts which contain it, some give it in Jn. vii, 53–viii, 11, some at the end of Jn. i, and some after Lk. xxi, 38. The story appears to have been given also in the Gospel according to the Hebrews.”⁴ Dodd concludes that this story was possibly a piece of floating tradition⁵ and a non-Johannine interpolation.⁶

¹Ibid., 130.

²Ibid., 131. Note idem, *Founder*, 181, n. 1, “In most of the ancient manuscripts the Gospel according to Mark ends with 16:8: whether he deliberately stopped there, or meant to write more but was prevented, or did write a conclusion which was afterwards lost, is an open question. The remaining verses are a later addition.” Dodd does not mention the possibility that 16:9–20 may have been mutilated, but he does discuss this possibility with respect to the doxology in Romans 16:25–27, idem, *Romans*, xvi: “We cannot rule out the possibility of accidental mutilation. The end of a papyrus roll was easily damaged, and the loss of the conclusion of a document is an all too frequent phenomenon in ancient literature.”

³Dodd, *InterpFG*, 158, n. 1, 346, n. 1; idem, *Founder*, 174, n. 18. C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978), 589, comments, “It is certain that this narrative is not an original part of the gospel. Its textual history...is decisive on this score.”

⁴Dodd, “The Gospels as History: A Reconsideration,” 137, n.1; idem, *History and the Gospel*, 93, n.1. Metzger, *TC*, 219, says that “the evidence for the non-Johannine origin of the pericope of the adulteress is overwhelming.” See also the evidence as presented in C. E. Hamond, *Outlines of Textual Criticism applied to the New Testament* 5th ed. rev. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1890), 106–8.

⁵Ibid. Barnabas Lindars, *The Gospel of John* NCBC (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972), 305–6, in agreement with Dodd, comments, “By a happy chance this fragment from an unknown work has been preserved in the MS. tradition of John.... There is no reason to doubt that an authentic tradition lies behind this story. It is free from the tendency to incorporate miraculous elements; it simply

Third, Dodd rejects the AV reading of I John 5:7–8, which follows the Textus Receptus, “There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one.” He points out that the sentence about the Three Heavenly Witnesses was first quoted as a part of I John by Priscillian in AD 385. It gradually made its way into the manuscripts of the Latin Vulgate. Interestingly, when Erasmus published his Greek New Testament, he omitted these words but was forced to include them in his next edition because someone produced a poor and late manuscript which had contained these words. Stephanus retained them and so passed them into the Textus Receptus. Dodd comments that “there is no doubt whatever that the words are a spurious interpolation, made first in the Latin version, and that the various forms in which they appear in Greek are all translations from the Latin.”¹

It should be pointed out that Dodd accepts the reading of the Textus Receptus at two points in his writings. Concerning I John 5:9 he says that the best manuscripts read αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία τοῦ θεοῦ ὅτι μεμαρτύρηκε περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ.² The Textus Receptus reads ἦν for ὅτι, which seems to give the simplest sense. He conjectures, following Burney,³ that the Textus Receptus may have confused ἦ as a conjunction (“that”) with ἧ as a relative (“which”). He concludes though that it is possible to read

gives an example of the wisdom of a revered teacher, and as such is rather like some of the stories in the Talmud and other Eastern literature.”

⁶Dodd, “The First Epistle of John and the Fourth Gospel,” 133; idem, *Historical Tradition*, 355, n. 1; Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John AB*, vol. 1, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966), 332.

¹Dodd, *Epistles John*, 127, n.1. See further Metzger, *TC*, 716–18.

²ⱱ^{66,75} Ɀ A B Ψ 33 323 945 1241 1505 1739 2495 lat co. See Metzger, *TC*, 238.

³C. F. Burney, *The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1922), 70, 101. For criticism of Burney see Millar Burrows, “The Original Language of the Gospel of John,” *JBL* 49 (1930): 128–29, and Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* 3rd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 70–81. Burrows and Black do not discuss I John 5:9.

ὅτι with its proper meaning.¹ In *According to the Scriptures* Dodd gives another example. John 12:40 cites part of Isaiah 6:9–10 under the rubric, “Again Isaiah said” [12:39b ὅτι πάλιν εἶπεν Ἡσαΐας], with the additional note 12:41 ταῦτα εἶπεν Ἡσαΐας ὅτι εἶδεν τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ (so \aleph B Θ). This gives an implicit reference to 6:1. Dodd concludes that the Textus Receptus reading ὅτε εἶδεν, “would amount to an explicit indication of the context, as much as to say, ‘in chapter vi,’ where Isaiah's vision is described.”² The obvious conclusion to draw from this discussion is that Dodd accepts the readings of the Textus Receptus when those readings either are corroborated by other weightier manuscripts or are explained by possible mistranslation of the underlying Aramaic.

The Priority of \aleph and B

As we pointed out above, Dodd favors in most cases the weight of authority of \aleph and B because these manuscripts are supposedly among the earliest. Two examples will serve to illustrate this point.

First, in John 9:4a Dodd accepts the reading of \aleph B (ἡμᾶς δεῖ ἐργάζεσθαι) and rejects the reading of A C Θ (ἐμέ) as a correction by a copyist, as well as the ἡμᾶς after the πέμψαντος in \aleph L W. The weight of \aleph and B together is an important combination for Dodd in selecting the first reading, but when \aleph is not corroborated by B, it loses its weight for him, especially when it has a reading that is out of accord with the style of the particular book. For example, he argues that πέμψαντος ἡμᾶς is clearly an impossible reading in view of Johannine usage.³

¹Dodd, “The First Epistle of John and the Fourth Gospel,” 136.

²Dodd, *AccordSS*, 36–37. ὅτε εἶδεν is attested by D Γ^{13} \aleph sy; ἐπαί, by W.

³Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 185, n. 2. Barrett, *The Gospel According to John*, 357, agrees with Dodd, stating that the selected reading is the most difficult (and would be inclined to be corrected by a copyist) and that “it corresponds to other passages (notably 3.11) where Jesus associates with himself the apostolic community which he has gathered about him.” Likewise, Metzger, *TC*, 227; Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, 342; and Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, I:372. According to the apparatus in *GNT*, πέμψαντος ἡμᾶς is the reading of $\mathfrak{P}^{66,75}$ and the original hand of \aleph , but corrected to ἐμέ by a later hand in \aleph . The papyri are not always definitive.

Second, Dodd accepts the reading of \aleph B in Galatians 5:1, the Hebraic sounding $\tau\eta$ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἠλευθέρωσεν.¹ Other manuscripts insert the relative η before or after ἐλευθερίᾳ or transfer οὖν to the preceding clause, possibly to soften the abrupt introduction of exhortations.² He notes that the presence of the article in \aleph B “distinguishes it from the common use of the cognate dative as an equivalent of the Hebrew infinitive absolute in the LXX and the N.T., yet it has a ring of that idiom.”³

The Authority of the Old Latin and Old Syriac Manuscripts

Dodd notes that the Old Latin manuscripts together with the Syriac manuscripts represent “a formidable combination.”⁴ In 1934 he wrote that these manuscripts had been claiming more attention from scholars than the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus uncials.⁵ It is interesting that in his study of the beatitudes Dodd claims the authority of many Old Latin manuscripts and the Curetonian Syriac manuscript in support of

¹Dodd, “Behind a Johannine Dialogue,” *MNTStudies*, 48, n.1.

²Metzger, *TC*, 597. H. N. Ridderbos, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Churches of Galatia* NICNT, trans. Henry Zylstra (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1953), 185, n.1, says, “The fact that η has not a regular recurring position in the manuscripts makes this variant less acceptable. Its insertion before ἡμᾶς may be owing to dittography. Materially, also, the rendering of the best manuscripts is very convincing. By means of asyndetic statement the apostle gives force to his expression of the principle of freedom.” See further Karl Heinrich Rengstorff, “Zur Gal. 5,1,” *TLZ* 76 (1951): 659–62.

³Dodd, “Behind a Johannine Dialogue,” *MNTStudies*, 48, n.1; so also Alan Cole, *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians* TNTC (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), 136.

⁴Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 336. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, 67–68, writes that these ancient versions are valuable for the text critic in that these versions have their origin in the second and third centuries, but he warns that there are several restrictions which should be placed upon their use since some of the translations were prepared by persons who were deficient in their knowledge of Greek. See also Bruce M. Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament: Their Origin, Transmission and Limitations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 3–98, 285–347.

⁵Dodd, “Unaddressed Letter 27–28 February 1934.”

his theory that the makarism of the $\pi\rho\alpha\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ in Matthew 5 is a later addition, since those manuscripts place this makarism as the second instead of the third in the series.¹

The Restraint on Conjectures

Dodd, in a memorandum for the NEB translators, gave his opinion that conjectural emendations should not be admitted to the text.² He is critical of Dr. Barnes' misuse of conjectures and writes:

It is of course open to anyone to conjecture the existence of divergent texts which have disappeared without leaving a trace, and in the nature of the case it is impossible to prove a negative. Conjecture, directed by a trained intuition, and used with discretion, may be admitted when it introduces an hypothesis seeking verification; but the kind of conjecture we have here has no place in responsible criticism.³

The only place in Dodd's writings where he delves into conjectural emendations is in his Romans commentary. Agreeing with Moffatt that the logical position for Rom. 7:25b is before 7:24–25a, although all our manuscripts give it after 7:25a, he conjectures how this order might have happened. It is possible that an early reader jotted down in the margin a more succinct paraphrase of the difficult statement in 7:22–23, and the next copyist wrote the note in the text at the wrong place. Or perhaps Paul had dictated quickly, and the amanuensis got confused. "However this may be," he concludes, "we do seem to have here one of the cases (which all New Testament scholars recognize, occur occasionally) where a primitive corruption of the text has affected all our

¹C. H. Dodd, "The Beatitudes: a form-critical study," *MNTStudies*, 2, n. 2. Dodd discusses this problem in his 1921 Mansfield College Lectures "Teaching of Jesus According to Tradition Common to Matthew and Luke." He says, "Blessed are the meek' appears sometimes as second and third—an erratic passage often a sign of interpolation. Except for $\mu\alpha\kappa\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\omicron\iota$ it is the same as 'the meek shall inherit the land' (Psalm 37:9b). Someone thought this quote from the Psalms helped to elucidate the first beatitude."

²C. H. Dodd, "Joint Committee on New Translation of the Bible: Memorandum for Members of New Testament Panel and Translators, [1951]," TD, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

³Dodd, *Christian Beginnings*, 9–10.

surviving MSS., and we cannot avoid trusting our own judgment against their evidence.”¹

Translation

After the text of a passage has been established as reasonably as possible, the next step in Dodd's edifice is to translate the passage from the source language into the receptor language.²

The Qualifications of a Translator

To be a competent translator of the Scriptures one must have the necessary qualifications. In his writings Dodd seems to give four such qualifications.

First, the translator must have a competent knowledge of the language from which he is translating. A command of vocabulary, idioms, style, and sentence structure of the source language is a given if one is to be a successful translator. Dodd holds a high respect for the Greek language—its genius, clarity, subtlety, and vocabulary—and therefore has made it his life-long task to learn this language so well that he can think as the Greeks did.³ This knowledge is also necessary because, in Dodd's opinion, linguistics precedes the formulation of doctrinal truths.⁴ This principle is his rationale for using the LXX usage of *ἱλαστήριον* as the basis for his translation of *ἱλαστήριον* as “expiation” and not as “propitiation.”⁵

¹Dodd, *Romans*, 115; see idem, “The Mind of Paul: I,” *NTStudies*, 68–69, where Dodd observes the temperamental nature of Paul. This trait could have caused Paul to dictate quickly.

²See David Wallace, “Textual Criticism: Is It Relevant for the Bible Translator?” *Notes on Translation* 4 (1990): 1–18, for an excellent case for an affirmative answer.

³Dodd, *Hellenism and Christianity*, 110.

⁴C. H. Dodd, “The Church in the New Testament,” 3; idem, *Cambridge Lectures on the Church*, 1946.

⁵C. H. Dodd, “*ἸΛΑΣΚΕΣΘΑΙ*, Its Cognates, Derivatives, and Synonyms, in the Septuagint,” 352, “So far as LXX usage underlies the Greek of the New Testament, it has a bearing on the interpretation of Christian doctrine.”

Second, the translator must recognize that translation is an enterprise in which complete success is impossible. The task is fascinating, but elusive, since there is no finality in the finished translation.¹ In his article "The Translation of the Bible: Some Questions of Principle," Dodd makes the statement that "it is a first qualification for a translator that he should know that he practices an impossible art."² And in the introduction to the New English Bible, he writes that "no one who has not tried it can know how impossible an art translation is."³ W. D. Davies tells that when Dodd was writing the introduction to the second edition of the NEB, Dodd asked him whether he should retain the adjective "impossible," which was in the first edition. Some of the committee members had objected to it, but, since Dodd and Davies were bilingual and knew that translation was always a "betrayal," Davies encouraged him to retain it.⁴ Although complete success in translation may not be attainable, it is attemptable.

Third, the translator must let the author he is translating speak for himself, and he must respect that author's intelligence. This qualification is never more imperative than for the translator of the Fourth Gospel. The author of that Gospel has a mind that is "extremely subtle, and is capable of packing much diversity of meaning into a phrase."⁵ The translator must be sensitive to these nuances and must be careful in translating these nuances into English.

Fourth, the translator must possess an accurate knowledge of English style, idiom, grammar, and vocabulary. While it is true that "the business of an exegete is to

¹C. H. Dodd, *for^eward* to *The Testament of Jesus: A Single Narrative of the Great Life*, arranged and translated from the New Testament Records by Arnold & Franceys Longman, (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd., 1955), vii.

²Dodd, "The Translation of the Bible: Some Questions of Principle," 9.

³C. H. Dodd, introduction to the New Testament of the New English Bible, 2nd ed., viii. See also *idem*, *BibT*, 80.

⁴W. D. Davies, "Thirty Years of Biblical Study," *SJT* 39 (1986): 45–46.

⁵Dodd, *InterpFG*, 236.

tell us what the author intended his Greek to mean to Greek readers,"¹ it is also true that the business of a translator is to tell us this original meaning in our own language. The key principle is intelligibility.² As we have already pointed out, Dodd was a master in his use of the English language. Examples of passages of Scripture which Dodd offered his own translation testify to his adherence to this principle.

The Principles of Biblical Translation

In a private interview, George B. Caird remarked that he felt that Dodd's greatest contribution to biblical scholarship lay in his ability to translate the biblical message in terms which could be understood by a "Yorkshire laddie."³ J. K. S. Reid, in another private interview, said that Dodd played a key role in the translation of the New English Bible—so much so that the other translators from time to time wished that Dodd had contributed more "specimen passages" for the committee's consideration than he had done.⁴

Often in his writings—and many times in his BBC radio broadcasts—Dodd discussed his principles of biblical translation and gave examples of these principles. In this section we shall list and analyze them.

Dodd's Problems with Current Translations

As one who had had intimate knowledge of all the available English translations of the Bible, Dodd could comment critically on the merits and pitfalls of each. He deals with three translations in particular: the Authorized Version, Moffatt's translation, and the New English Bible.

¹C. H. Dodd, review of *The Beginnings of Christianity*, 360.

²C. H. Dodd, "Lift Up Your Hearts, 17 March 1961," TMs, BBC Radio Broadcast Transcript, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford; see also Roger L. Omanson, "Translations: Text and Interpretation," *EvQ* 57 (1985): 195–206.

³Interview with George B. Caird.

⁴Interview with J. K. S. Reid.

The Authorized Version

Although for seventeenth-century England the AV was a fine translation of the Bible, it fails as such for the twentieth-century English speaking world. This failure, in Dodd's opinion, is accounted for in four ways.

First, the AV was based on inferior manuscripts. "But while as an English classic," writes Dodd, "the A.V. may hold an unassailable position, it is not necessarily final as a translation. We are bound to ask: Does the A.V. represent the best available text of the Hebrew and Greek originals? Are its renderings of that text always as accurate as they could be? It is no disparagement of the King James' translators to say that Biblical scholarship has not stood still for three centuries and a half."¹ Since this point has been adequately dealt with in the section above, we shall move on to Dodd's next criticism.

Second, Dodd says that the AV uses language that is misleading and unintelligible today. He comments that "today's generation finds older versions strange and unnatural, if not actually unintelligible."² Although the AV is "one of the glories of the English tongue," its archaic language is a barrier between the modern

¹C. H. Dodd, "A New Translation of the Bible," *Religion in Education* 18 (1951): 39; idem, "The Mind of Paul: I," *NTStudies*, 82, n. 1. In addition, knowledge of Greek syntax has advanced since the translation of the AV with the discoveries of papyri and inscriptions. Often the AV translation of a passage is based upon a misunderstanding of the Greek. Dodd points out several instances where this has happened in the AV. For example, in "Pauline Illustrations from Recently Published Papyri," *Expositor* 8th ser., 15 (1918): 295, and in "The New English Bible," Script of Talk by Prof. C. H. Dodd on 24 October 1960, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford, he notes that the papyri give evidence that πληροῦν can mean "to pay a person." If this be granted, then the literal AV translation of the term in Phil. 4:18 "I am filled" is not quite correct. In keeping with the commercial flavour of the context, and in keeping with the meaning of πληροῦν in the papyri, Dodd suggests the translation "I have received payment; my account is settled." Another example concerns the participle ὑποτασσόμενοι in Eph. 5:21, which, as recently discovered papyri have shown, should be translated as an imperative. See C. H. Dodd, "Ephesians," *ABC*, 1235, and idem, "The Message of the Epistles: Ephesians," 65, n.1.

²C. H. Dodd, "The New English Bible," script of talk recorded by Prof. C. H. Dodd on 24 October 1960, BBC Radio Broadcast, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

reader of the Scriptures and the meaning of the Scriptures.¹ For example, the term “saints,” as a translation of ἅγιοι, may conjure up different images for us than it did for the readers of Paul’s writings, and perhaps should be better translated literally as “holy ones.”² Likewise, the term “edifieth,” which the AV translates οἰκοδομεῖ in I Cor. 8:1, in its modern use is thoroughly misleading. Dodd suggests the literal translation, “builds up,” is better.³

Third, sometimes the style of the AV misrepresents the meaning of the biblical author. Dodd says that the AV does injustice to the writings of Paul because of its formal and stately language, and he recommends that the reader read Paul in the original Greek or in a good modern translation.⁴

Fourth, the AV is a poor translation because in many places it misrepresents the Greek. Dodd rejects the AV translation of τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινά in II Cor. 5:17. It does not mean “all things [the same old things] are become new,” but “new things have come into being.”⁵ He expresses his disapproval of the AV translation of Rom. 8:28 and prefers the literal reading “with those who love God, He cooperates in all respects for Good.”⁶ One of the most misleading translations in the AV, Dodd avers, occurs in John 1:12, where ἐξουσία is translated “power,” making it indistinguishable from the term δύναμις. It should be rendered “authority” or “right.”⁷

¹Dodd, “A New Translation of the Bible,” 39.

²C. H. Dodd, “Colossians,” *ABC*, 1252.

³Dodd, *Gospel and Law*, 43, n. 5.

⁴Dodd, *The Bible and Its Background*, 78; idem, *Meaning of Paul*, 10; idem, “The Meaning of the Epistle to the Romans. II. What is Wrong with the World,” *Religion in Education* 16 (1948): 5.

⁵Dodd, “The Biblical Doctrine of the People of God,” *The Doctrine of the Church*, ed. Dow Kirkpatrick, (New York: Abingdon Press, 1964), 33; cf. NEB: “the old order has gone, and a new order has begun.”

⁶Dodd, *Romans*, 138–39.

⁷Dodd, *InterpFG* 270, n. 1.

And the fact that the AV translates πνεῦμα ὁ θεός in John 4:24 “God is a spirit,” is, in his words, “the most gross perversion of its meaning.”¹

Moffatt

Dodd has several things to say about Moffatt's translation of the Bible. Positively, Moffatt succeeded in utilizing the results of biblical criticism in his translation. With respect to the Old Testament, he disentangles the threads of JEDP and prints each separately.² In addition, he shows his knowledge of the New Psychology when he translates φρονοῦσιν in Rom. 8:5 as “have their interests.”³ Dodd appreciates Moffatt's translation so much that he recommends that it be used to read Paul's epistles.⁴ Negatively, Moffatt fails in this translation on some minor points. At times he includes words which are not in the Greek.⁵ Once in Romans 8:14 Moffatt neglects the simple grammatical structure of the Greek and mistranslates the verse by making “sons of God” (which does not have the article in the Greek) the subject instead

¹Ibid., 225, n.1; idem, “New Testament Translation Problems II,” 103.

²Dodd, *The Bible and Its Background*, 32; see Sakae Kubo and Walter F. Sprech, *So Many Versions? Twentieth Century English Versions of the Bible*, rev. and enlarged ed., (Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1983), 37, who comment on Moffatt's procedure that “this unwarranted re-editing of the documents, together with the all-too-free use of emendations is the greatest weakness in Moffatt's translation.” Dodd has a low opinion of the treatment of the Fourth Gospel by some modern translations which attempt to rearrange some of the material in an attempt to improve the order. Such an enterprise is always affected by the “preferences, preconceptions, and even prejudices” of the translator, and Dodd prefers to translate the Fourth Gospel as it has come to us—see idem, *InterpFG*, 289–90.

³Dodd, *Romans*, 122. On page 35, Dodd notes that Moffatt transposes Romans 1:16. He agrees with Moffatt that this transposition is the best way of restoring the text, since 1:16 does not naturally connect with 1:15. But Dodd also wants to account for the possibility that the MSS give the verses in the correct order. Possible explanations are that 1:16 was an afterthought added by Paul in course of dictation, or that 1:14–15 must be regarded as a parenthesis.

⁴Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*; 10; idem, *The Bible and Its Background*, 78.

⁵See, e.g., Dodd, *EpistsJohn*, 1. Moffatt inserts in I John 1:1 “with our ears.” Dodd says Moffatt does this perhaps out of inadvertence.

of the predicate.¹ Finally, Dodd notes that Moffatt disguises the similarity of language in his translation of the Fourth Gospel and the First Epistle of John, and of the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptic Gospels. It would be a help to the biblical reader if these similarities were brought out and not hidden.²

The New English Bible

The New English Bible, “an authoritative translation, sponsored by the major Christian bodies—other than the Roman Catholic—in the British Isles,”³ did not escape the criticisms of C. H. Dodd, although he had more of a hand in its formation than anyone else. This is partly true because the NEB was a committee translation, subject to approval by the translation committee and by the literary committee.⁴ And as such Dodd was free to disagree with some of the renderings of the NEB.

At many points the NEB clearly shows the influence of Dodd. The translation “the facts” about Jesus for δ in I Cor. 15:3⁵ and the translation “expiation” for

¹Dodd, *Romans*, 128.

²Dodd, *Epistles John*, xxxviii, n. 1, 62–63. Dodd (p. 1) notes “that the Moffatt version smooths over some difficulties of construction (as one must do if the translation is to be readable), and gives a fairly clear sense, which may be that intended by the author.” It is interesting to note that several reviewers of Dodd’s commentaries in the Moffatt series have observed that Dodd often rejects Moffatt’s translation for one of his own—see, e.g., D. R. Riddle, review of *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, by C. H. Dodd, *JR* 13 (1933): 368; Otto A. Piper, review of *The Johannine Epistles*, by C. H. Dodd, *TT* 5 (1949): 140; and W. F. Howard, review of *The Johannine Epistles*, by C. H. Dodd, *JTS* 48 (1947): 89.

³C. H. Dodd, *Handbook to the New English Bible*, 15; C. F. D. Moule, “The New English Bible,” *Cambridge History of the Bible: The West from the Reformation to the Present Day*, ed. S. L. Greenlade, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 380; J. K. S. Reid, “Concerning the New Translation of the Bible,” *ExpT* 73 (1952): 172–76.

⁴C. H. Dodd, “The New English Bible: 4. What is the NEB Like?” BBC Radio Broadcast (n.d), Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford; idem, “The New English Bible”; idem, “A New Translation of the Bible.” Kubo and Sprecht, *So Many Versions?*, 198–212.

⁵Norman Perrin, review of *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, by C. H. Dodd, *JR* 44 (1964): 335; cf. Dodd, “The ‘Message’ in the New Testament,” 49. Interestingly, in *Founder*, 28, Dodd translates τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ in Acts 18:25 “the facts about Jesus,” whereas the NEB in both editions translates the phrase “in the way of the Lord.”

ἱλαστήριον in Rom. 3:25, have been recognized as Doddian influences by almost everyone.¹

One way in which Dodd's disagreements with the NEB can be illustrated is by comparing Dodd's translations of the New Testament recorded in *The Founder of Christianity*, a book published after the publication of the second edition of the NEB, with those of the New English Bible. In the first five chapters of *The Founder of Christianity*, Dodd has exactly one hundred quotations from the New Testament. Twenty five of these quotations show differences with their equivalent New English Bible translations. These differences can be analyzed in the following manner.

In two instances Dodd prefers a different rendering of a verse because he selects a different textual variant than the choice of the NEB committee.² His translation of Mark 11:28 ("who gave you this authority?") omits the phrase ἕνα ταῦτα ποιεῖς, which the NEB translates ("who gave you this authority to act in this way?").³

¹John H. Skilton, review of *The New English Bible: New Testament*, *WTJ* 25 (1961): 73: "Not strangely, in line with the well-known views of Professor Dodd, the term 'propitiation' is missing from Romans 3:25, I John 2:2, 4:10." For more documentation of Dodd's views, see Dodd, "History and Doctrine of the Apostolic Age," 407; idem, review of *Les Sacraments dans l'Évangile Johannique: la vie de Jésus et le culte de l'église primitive*, by Oscar Cullman, *JEH* 3 (1952): 220; and idem, *Three Sermons*, 22. For criticisms of Dodd's translation and for an analysis of the LXX evidence, see Nico Fryer, "The Meaning and Translation of *Hilasterion* in Romans 3:25," *EvQ* 59 (1987): 99–116; Kenneth Grayston, "*Hilaskesthai* and Related Words in the LXX," *NTS* 27 (1981): 640–56; David Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 23f.; Innes Logan, "The Strange Word 'Propitiation'," *ExpT* 46 (1934–1935): 525–27; Leon Morris, "The Use of *hilaskesthai*, etc. in Biblical Greek," *EvQ* 62 (1951): 227–33; idem, "The Meaning of ἱλαστήριον in Romans iii.25," *NTS* 2 (1955): 33–43; idem, "The Wrath of God," *ExpT* 63 (1951–1952): 142–45; Roger Nicole, "C. H. Dodd and the Doctrine of Propitiation," *WTJ* 17 (1955): 117–157; Norman Young, "C. H. Dodd, 'Hilaskesthai' and His Critics," *EvQ* 48 (1976): 67–78; idem, "'Hilaskesthai' and Related Words in the New Testament," *EvQ* 55 (1983): 169–76.

²For instructive reviews of the Greek text of the NEB, published in *The Greek New Testament*, ed. R. V. G. Tasker, (Oxford and Cambridge: The University Press, 1965), see Frederick W. Danker, review of *The Greek New Testament*, ed. R. V. G. Tasker, *Concordia Theological Monthly* 37 (1966): 681–82; Ian A. Moir, review of *The Greek New Testament*, ed. R. V. G. Tasker, *SJT* 18 (1965): 184–85; and John Reumann, review of *The Greek New Testament*, ed. R. V. G. Tasker, *JBL* 84 (1965): 100–101.

³Dodd, *Founder*, 49; NEB, 2nd ed., 79.

Although the second question in Mark 11:28 as a whole has textual difficulties, the phrase ἵνα ταῦτα ποιῆς by itself is not suspect. Nevertheless, Dodd chose not to translate it. Another example is the translation of Matthew 19:28. He translates the second part of the verse "sitting on twelve thrones as judges," and the NEB translates it "where you will sit as judges." In the Nestle textual apparatus, there are three variants: καθήσεσθε (Ⓝ B X D Θ f¹³), καθ(σε)σεθε (D* K Γ 33. 565. 700), and καθεσθήσεσθε (Z f¹). Dodd selected the present tense of the verb as the basis for his translation, and the NEB committee chose the future tense of the verb.¹

Some of Dodd's differences with the NEB concern translation style. He translates ἐλθών in Matt. 5:24 as "come"; the NEB, "come back."² For βληθήσῃ in Matt. 5:26, he renders "you may be," whereas the NEB renders "you will be."³ In Luke 14:9, he translates τόπον as "place"; the NEB, "seat."⁴ Dodd is less verbose than the NEB in translating Mark 2:17 "healthy people don't need a doctor; sick people do." The NEB translation "It is not the healthy that need a doctor, but the sick" is less effective as an example of good style.⁵ In two places Dodd gives a more literal rendering of the Greek than does the NEB. Romans 14:14 contains the expression ἐν κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ. Dodd translates it "on the authority of the Lord Jesus." The NEB translates it more freely "as a Christian."⁶ Although Dodd prefers his translation, he remarks that the NEB has probably gotten the correct meaning of the phrase in its translation.⁷ In Mark 9:24, he

¹Ibid., 92; NEB, 2nd ed., 36.

²Ibid., 39; NEB, 2nd ed., 9.

³Ibid., 41; NEB, 2nd ed., 9; see also Luke 11:20, John 3:19, and Mark 4:29.

⁴Ibid., 126-7; NEB, 2nd ed., 127.

⁵Ibid., 44; NEB, 2nd ed., 60.

⁶Ibid., 74; NEB, 2nd ed., 275.

⁷Ibid., 175-6, n. 41.

translates ἀπιστία literally as “faithlessness.” The NEB expands the translation “where faith falls short.”¹

This discussion of Dodd and the New English Bible shows that on the whole he was pleased with the NEB translation, but often he preferred a rendering of his own. These renderings were not major changes. They reflected a difference in opinion, in style more than substance, tone more than theology.

Dodd's Principles of Biblical Translation

What were some of the principles Dodd used when he set out to translate a passage of Scripture? In his writings we can delineate ten principles.

1. Establish the Unit of Translation

Contrary to popular belief, the word is not the unit of translation. There is no such thing as an exact equivalence between word A in Greek and word A in English. “Each word is the centre or focus of a whole circle of meaning, and the circles in the several languages overlap but seldom coincide.”² Dodd says that the context of the word in question may vary according to the subject matter; therefore, the sentence is the normal unit for translation.³ This principle does not mean, however, that the syntactical structure of the Greek sentence should always be carried over into the English translation. One is mistaken if he thinks that the “feel” of the original can be retained through this method.⁴

¹Ibid., 45; NEB, 2nd ed., 45. In his translation of Luke 12:30, Dodd makes explicit what the NEB makes implicit. Concerning τούτων, the NEB translates “them,” assuming the ταῦτα γὰρ πάντα at the beginning of the verse. Dodd translates τούτων “all these things,” not assuming the opening words of the Greek. Ibid., 60; NEB, 2nd ed., 123.

²Dodd, “The Translation of the Bible: Some Questions of Principle,” 5.

³Ibid., 6–7.

⁴Ibid., 7.

2. Translate the Sentence in Light of the Whole Work

This principle is very important for the translator of the Fourth Gospel. When Dodd discusses John 8:28, he says:

The sentence in viii. 28 might mean, 'when you pay divine honours to the Son of Man, you will know who He is'. But I find it difficult to integrate this with the thought of this gospel as a whole. In no other place does it use ὑψοῦν in any such sense. Nor is Christ the object of the verb ὑψοῦν in that sense in any other passage of the New Testament.¹

In *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, he discusses the straight forward Greek of John 2:18, literally translated "what sign do you show for us that you do these things?" But in light of the use of σημεῖον by the author of the Fourth Gospel, and in light of the context in John chapter two, Dodd prefers a paraphrase: "In view of the drastic action you have taken, show us your credentials."²

3. Exaggerate the Sense of the Greek to Bring Out Its Emphasis³

Several examples of this principle can be listed. Dodd translates John 11:26, "he who believes in me, even if he dies, will come to life," emphasizing the ingressive sense of ζήσεται.⁴ He regards the ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ of John 4:23 as "a virtual hendiadys" and so translates "in spirit, that is, in reality."⁵ The force of the imperfect ἐξεπορεύοντο in Mark 11:19 is brought out in Dodd's translation "Jesus made a practice of going out of the city at night."⁶ And likewise the stress of the imperfect (*sic.*) participles μένων and ἀμαρτάνων in I John 3:6 must be brought out in translation: "he

¹Dodd, *InterpFG*, 376.

²Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 160; cf. idem, *About the Gospels*, 10, where Dodd translates Mark 1:15 πεπλήρωται ὁ καιρὸς, καὶ ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ "it is the climax of all time: God's kingdom is upon you."

³Dodd, *EpistsJohn*, 60; idem, "The Framework of the Gospel Narratives," *NTStudies*, 7.

⁴Dodd, *InterpFG*, 148.

⁵*Ibid.*, 256.

⁶Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 160.

who keeps on sinning has never seen Him and does not know Him; he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.”¹

4. Translate in Current Idioms

This principle is demonstrated in the following illustrations. Dodd translates τῆ μὲ τῶν σαββάτων πρωί in Mark 16:1 and John 20:1 “early on Sunday morning.”² The expression τινὲς τῶν σὺν ἡμῶν in Luke 24:22–24 is freely rendered “some of our associates.”³ Instead of “the seventh hour” for the translation of ὥραν ἑβδόμην in John 4:52, he prefers “at 1 p.m.”⁴ And in place of “by name” for the translation of κατ’ ὄνομα in John 10:3, he writes “individually, one by one.”⁵ Sometimes, however, it is almost impossible to translate into current idioms. This is true where there is no English idiom corresponding to the Greek idiom. In Luke 22:29 the author introduces the idea of covenant with the verb διατίθεμαι, but this is disguised in English translation because we have no verb to translate it. Thus Dodd translates “I devise upon you my covenant, as my father devised by covenant upon Me a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom.”⁶

5. Transliteration Is Not Translation

A translation is the attempt to express the meaning of the source language in terms of the receptor language. To transliterate difficult terms in the source language (such as λόγος) into the receptor fails because the meaning is still lacking.⁷

¹Dodd, *EpistsJohn*, 79.

²Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 140.

³Ibid., 141.

⁴Ibid., 190.

⁵Ibid., 384, n. 4.

⁶Dodd, “The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament,” 75, n. 1.

⁷Dodd, “New Testament Translation Problems II,” 101; cf. idem, *InterpFG*, 263–85.

6. Substitution of Words Is Not Translation

An example of this principle is found in Matt. 5:3. Dodd writes that the phrase οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι “looks deceptively simple. If translation is effected by the substitution of words, there is no difficulty: πτωχός = ‘poor’, πνεῦμα = ‘spirit’. Most translators have been content to leave it at that. But ‘poor in spirit’, as English, is hardly self-explanatory. The problem remains, what does πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι mean?”¹

7. Look at Words in Their Social Context

As an example, Dodd disapproves of the translation “slave” for δοῦλος in most cases. “When an English speaker uses the word,” writes Dodd, “he has behind him *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and Abraham Lincoln, and Wilberforce and the emancipation movement, and the century-long growth of a now almost universal reprobation of slavery as an institution. He may be thinking of none of these things, but they have imprinted an indelible colouring on the word he uses, ‘slave.’”² Where there is no reference to the legal status of slavery, he prefers the translation “servant.” But where the legal status is essential to the argument (such as in I Cor. 7:21-22), the translation “slave” should be used.

8. Pay Close Attention to Metaphorical Expressions

Metaphors can be dead or alive; for this reason, “it is necessary to enquire first whether the metaphor is still alive, for all languages are full of dead metaphors, and to attempt to revive in a different language a metaphor which in the original is already

¹Dodd, “New Testament Translation Problems: I,” 307. He says (p. 310), “The translators therefore decided to plunge boldly, and render, ‘How blest are those who know their need of God’. A free translation, certainly, but at any rate it gives a meaning, expressed in plain English, not to be misunderstood, and I believe that it brings out the central trait of the temper, disposition, attitude, of the πτωχός as here conceived.”

²Dodd, “Some Problems of New Testament Translation,” 268.

dead may produce a frigid and unnatural effect.¹ Thus the word ὑπωπιάζειν is used in I Cor. 9:27 and in Luke 18:5. Its meaning is to give a person a black eye, or to bruise. In the context of I Cor. 9 the metaphor is clearly alive since Paul speaks of boxing, but in Luke 18:5 the metaphor is dead. The complainant is not “bruising” the judge, says Dodd. He translates, “I will see her righted before *she wears me out* with her persistence.”²

9. Examine Words of Multiple Meanings

Often a single word (Greek or English) has several meanings. For example, a word may have two meanings which tend to run together. The term καταργεῖν means “to render idle, inoperative” and “not worked.” The “unworked” land is also “unworking,” “unproductive.” Likewise, the term πνεῦμα divides into three meanings: breath, wind, and spirit. Dodd comments, “It is pretty certain that the Greek who said πνεῦμα did not keep them as neatly separated as that; else John would not have been able to say, τὸ πνεῦμα ὅπου θέλει πνέει...οὕτως ἐστὶν πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος (3:8). We have no alternative but to render ‘wind’ in the first clause and ‘spirit’ in the second, but we have lost something in doing so.”³

In these two examples the multiple meanings arise out of a fairly logical development out of a single idea. With the term δόξα, we have an example of meanings which were originally separate but which tend to converge because the same word is used for both. In I Cor. 15:41, for instance, Paul speaks of the δόξα of the sun, moon, and stars with respect to their brightness or luminosity; but in 15:44 it is the antithesis of ἀτιμία—not brightness but glory in the normal sense. Paul was hardly conscious of

¹Ibid., 269.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., 271-2.

moving between each meaning, but that explains why he chose δόξα as the antithesis of ἀτιμία instead of the more obvious τιμή.¹

The case of multiple meanings is further complicated when a word group is affected by the Hebraic background of Jewish and early Christian religious language. Dodd has in mind the δίκαιος, δικαιοσύνη word group. With reference to the Greek understanding of the term, he agrees with Aristotle that δικαιοσύνη is the virtue of giving every man his due, or the whole of virtue so far as it is concerned with social relations.² English terms which correctly translate the Greek understanding are “just,” “virtuous,” and “good.” With reference to the Hebraic understanding, δικαιοσύνη translates דָּרָא, דְּרָאָה, and, according to Dodd, this has a wide range of meanings foreign to Greek. דָּרָא means “to be in the right,” and דְּרָאָה, דְּרָאָה denote status as well as action and character.³ How is the translator to render this Greek word group in English translation? Some may attempt a paraphrase of the term, but Dodd says that this attempt will run into problems in such a passage as Rom. 10:1–6, where the shades of meanings vary kaleidoscopically. He concludes:

Then how should δικαιοσύνη be rendered? In many places neither ‘acquit’ nor ‘vindicate’ will do.... ‘Put in the right’ is nearly literal, and might satisfy those who know the Greek, but to the general reader it would convey little meaning—or a wrong meaning. ‘Get right with God’ again is an unnatural expression, current only in certain special circles, and it is anyhow misleading, since it confuses justification with reconciliation. It seems impossible to find a satisfactory English word which would allow for the various *nuances* of Pauline thought and it seems necessary to accept ‘justify’, ‘justification’, as terms which do indeed belong to current English, but are here used in a sense which is not current, in fact as technical terms which must either explain themselves from the context to the attentive reader, or await the commentator.⁴

¹Ibid., 272.

²Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 42: “δικαιοσύνη is the standard Greek term for social righteousness or justice. Fundamentally it is acting in accordance with δίκη, that which is customary, sanctioned by social standards, or inherently right.”

³Dodd, “Some Problems of New Testament Translation,” 272–73.

⁴Ibid., 274. In idem, *The Bible and the Greeks* 57, he says, “The Pauline use of these terms must be understood in the light of Septuagintal usage and the underlying Hebrew. The apostle wrote Greek, and read the LXX, but he was also familiar with the Hebrew original. Thus while his language largely follows that of the LXX, the Greek

10. Translation and Interpretation Are Reciprocal Disciplines

Translation of the biblical documents commits the translator to decide upon the meaning to be expressed in the receptor language. To accomplish this feat, he must be an interpreter of that passage. Dodd writes that “while approaching exegesis from the exact study of words, we find ourselves fairly embarked upon the task of interpretation in the larger sense.”¹ And in his fine review of Brown's commentary on the Fourth Gospel, especially of Brown's translation of that Gospel, he writes that “the best commentary is a good translation.”² Recognizing that translators must make exegetical decisions, Omanson agrees fully with Dodd. Omanson writes:

Translators must be interpreters and should not abdicate that responsibility. The layperson does not have access to the vast resources of lexicons, grammars, commentaries, and numerous other tools of scholarly research. It is not presumptuous for the scholar to weigh the evidence where ambiguities or obscurities exist in meaning and then choose the one which seems more probable. But neither should the translator hide the fact from the reader that certainty of interpretation is not always possible. Translation and interpretation are inseparable tasks and readers are becoming more aware of this as they compare various translations in individual and group Bible studies.³

Nowhere in Dodd's writings is this principle more in evidence than in his translation of Matt. 12:28 = Luke 11:20, Mark 1:15, and Mark 9:1. In the context of the first passage he translates ἐφθασεν “the kingdom of God has come”; the second, ἤγγικεν “the kingdom of God has come”; and the third, ἐληλυθειαν “there are some of those who

words are for him always coloured by their Hebrew association.” We should note that some scholars have disputed Dodd's claim in *The Bible and the Greeks*, 56, that “in place of the comprehensive virtue of **יְהוָה צְדָקָה**, we have [in reference to God and men] justice on the one hand, mercy on the other.” See David Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings* SNTSMS-5, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 104–9, and J. A. Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul* SNTSMS-20, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 52–69.

¹Dodd, *Present Task*, 18; cf. idem, review of *TWNT* I–VII, 282–83, where Dodd warns of the “overuse” of the theological approach to lexicography.

²Dodd, “The Gospel According to John: A Review Article,” 18.

³Omanson, “Translations: Text and Interpretation,” 205–7; David Stacy, *Interpreting the Bible*, IRS (London: Sheldon Press, 1976), 5.

are standing here who will not taste death until they have seen that the Kingdom of God has come with power.”¹ Needless to say, Dodd's translation of these verses—and his investigation of the underlying Hebrew and Aramaic—set off a flurry of criticism.² The arguments pro and con for Dodd's case are well-known and have been carefully evaluated by R. F. Berkey in his 1958 doctoral dissertation “The Influence of C. H. Dodd's ‘Realized Eschatology’ on Later New Testament Scholarship.”³ The point is that in these translations Dodd is offering a commentary—his interpretation of his understanding of the kingdom of God in the teaching of Jesus. Whether one believes that Dodd is playing semantic games in his handling of the linguistic evidence is beside the point. At least he is consistent in his translation of these verses so that they are reflective of his total biblical theology, represented by realized eschatology.

Higher Criticism

Textual criticism and translation belong to the preparatory stage in Dodd's edifice of exegesis. They are the foundation upon which the structure is built. When the questions of the text have been given reasonable answers, and when an attempt to

¹Dodd, *Parables*, 44, 53; idem, “The This-Worldly Kingdom of God in Our Lord's Teaching,” *Theology* 14, no. 83 (1927): 259; idem, “Jesus as Teacher and Prophet,” *Mysterium Christi*, ed. George K. A. Bell and D. Adolf Deissmann, (London: Longmans, Green & Company, 1931), 66.

²See, e.g., J. Y. Campbell, “The Kingdom of God Has Come,” *ExpT* 48 (1936–1937): 91–94; J. M. Creed, “The Kingdom of God Has Come,” *ExpT* 48 (1936–1937): 184–85; C. T. Craig, “Realized Eschatology,” *JBL* 56 (1937): 17–24; K. W. Clark, “Realized Eschatology,” *JBL* 59 (1940): 367–383; Floyd V. Filson, “The Kingdom: Present and Future,” *JBR* 7 (1939): 59–63; W. R. Hutton, “The Kingdom of God Has Come,” *ExpT* 64 (1952–1953): 89–91.

³R. F. Berkey, “The Influence of C. H. Dodd's ‘Realized Eschatology’ on Later New Testament Scholarship,” unpublished PhD dissertation, The Hartford Seminary Foundation, 1958. Chapter three of the dissertation deals expressly with the linguistic arguments for realized eschatology. Berkey later published the results of his study in idem, “ΕΓΓΙΖΕΙΝ, ΦΘΑΝΕΙΝ, and Realized Eschatology,” *JBL* 82 (1963): 177–87.

make a good translation of the text has been done (provisional as it may well be), questions of higher criticism¹ must be addressed.²

These are legitimate questions, Dodd avers, for the following reasons. First, “the significance of ‘higher criticism’ is appreciated when detailed questions of date and authorship are seen as parts of an attempt to reconstruct the process of early Christian thought as a living thing.”³ Although the answers to these questions may not offer much help to the dogmatic theologian, they are very important for the biblical theologian in that the composition of the various New Testament books is an event in and of itself. Second, the individuality of the writers is significant. Dodd reviews his understanding of inspiration, that it is the authors of the books who were inspired, not the books themselves. In spite of the difficulties of his view, he has a good point. For example, he says that to recognize the idiosyncrasy of the mind of Paul is a great help in determining the authentic Pauline corpus. Such an enterprise cleared up many misconceptions in Pauline theology when scholars determined that Paul did not write Hebrews.⁴ Third, by accomplishing these first two points, higher criticism has opened the approach for a more truly Biblical theology. It shows how futile, in Dodd’s opinion, dogmatic theology is. Fourth, “the ‘higher criticism’ of the New Testament has a direct bearing upon the question of the credibility of its record of historical facts, especially in the Gospels.”⁵

In this outline of Dodd’s principles of higher criticism, we shall limit ourselves to his comments on the Synoptic Gospels. His principles of criticism regarding the

¹Dodd, *BibT*, 24, writes that “higher criticism’ discusses such questions as those of date, authorship, relation to other documents; it compares documents with one another, notes divergences or contradictions, and attempts to determine between them.”

²Dodd, *Present Task*, 7; idem, “The New Testament,” 227–28.

³Dodd, “The New Testament,” 228.

⁴Dodd, “The New Testament,” 228.

⁵*Ibid.*, 229; idem, *Present Task*, 7; idem, *History and the Gospel*, 78.

Pauline epistles are briefly analyzed in chapter two¹ and his use of higher criticism with regard to the Johannine literature is dealt with in the doctoral dissertation by Robert Dean Kysar.²

All three Synoptic Gospels are a part of a wider body of literature (Luke 1:1). These three were selected into the canon because they possessed greater authority than other writings about Jesus and because they conformed to the central and authoritative tradition. Moreover, they reproduced the general pattern of the narrative of the kerygma. They included the Passion story and placed the events which they narrate in an eschatological setting inseparable from the tradition. In keeping with Dodd's philosophy of the Bible, it is not surprising to find Dodd saying that these Gospels contain fact plus interpretation, and that the orientation of the kerygma toward these facts enabled them to preserve the facts. He accounts for the differences in character among the Gospels as due to different specializations of the tradition and—to some degree—the idiosyncrasies of the author.³

The tools of higher criticism which Dodd uses in his study of the Synoptic Gospels are source criticism and form criticism.⁴ We shall describe and analyze his contributions in these areas.

¹See above, pp. 120ff.

²Robert Dean Kysar, "A Comparison of the Exegetical Presuppositions and Methods of C. H. Dodd and Rudolf Bultmann in the Interpretation of the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel," PhD dissertation, Northwestern University, 1967. In addition, J. S. King has written on Dodd and the Fourth Gospel—see "There and Back Again," *EvQ* 55 (1983): 145–57, and idem, "C. H. Dodd and E. C. Hoskyns," *KThR* 7 (1984): 1–3, and D. A. Carson's debate with King concerning Dodd's treatment of the Johannine tradition in D. A. Carson, "Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel—After Dodd, What?" *Gospel Perspectives. Studies on History and Tradition of the Four Gospels*, vol. II, ed. R. T. France and David Wenham, (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981), 83–145; J. S. King, "Has D. A. Carson Been Fair to C. H. Dodd?" *JSNT* 17 (1983): 97–102; and Carson's response in "Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel: A Response to J. S. King," *JSNT* 23 (1985): 73–81.

³Dodd, "Historical Sources for a Life of Jesus."

⁴Dodd, *Present Task*, 10–11, 19–22; idem, "The New Testament, 229–30"; *History and the Gospel*, 78.

Source Criticism

In Dodd's hermeneutical scheme, it is important to determine which portions of the Gospels are the earliest. If these pieces of evidence can be extracted and catalogued, they would represent reliable and authentic information about the Founder of Christianity and what His followers thought about Him. Dodd accomplishes this by analyzing the different strands of tradition in the Synoptics: the triple tradition, the double tradition, and the single tradition.

Triple Tradition

The Gospel of Mark¹ represents the primary form of this tradition. The following reasons account for this thesis. If non-Markan matter is removed from Matthew and Luke,² what remains shows common language and order. Where Matthew and Luke differ in order against Mark they never agree.³ Matthew and Luke rarely agree verbally against Mark (often MSS have been assimilated; where they do thus differ, almost always the difference is caused by a smoothing or correcting of variations of Mark's language).⁴ In spite of variations, Mark and Luke do preserve

¹Dodd dates Mark at AD 64 (*About the Gospels*, 4); AD 65 ("The Study of the New Testament," 138; "The Jews and the Early Christian Church," 292); AD 60–70 ("Historical Sources for a Life of Jesus"; "A Story Retold," 32); AD 65–70 ("The New Testament," 229; *How to Read the Gospels*, 4); the late 60s ("The Gospels as History: A Reconsideration," 133). He believes that Mark originated from the West, possibly from Rome ("The English Bible: Are the Gospels Authentic?" 461) and possibly from an apostolic source ("The New Testament Witness to Jesus Christ," 17). He doubts the validity of the *Urmarcus* theory, especially as formulated by Guignebert (idem, review of *Jesus*, by C. Guignebert, 466; see further idem, "The Present Position of the Synoptic Problem," 207), but in his article "Eucharistic Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel," 531, Dodd speculates that Mark used one source in the account of the Five Thousand (personal tradition) and another in the account of the Four Thousand (ecclesiastical tradition).

²Dodd dates Matthew and Luke from AD 75–95; see idem, *About the Gospels*, 35; idem, *Founder*, 17.

³Ibid.; idem, *About the Gospels*, 24–25.

⁴See the discussion on assimilation above, p. 178.

vulgarisms out of harmony with their general correct style, usually from Mark. When the priority of Mark is accepted, it provides the simplest explanation of the details which emerge.¹

Double Tradition

In the double^{mark-Q} tradition there are three degrees of correspondence: verbal identity (close similarity);² less verbal identity (same meaning or implication);³ and

¹Ibid.; idem, "Synoptic Data for a Life of Jesus"; idem, "The New Testament Witness to Jesus Christ," II:17; idem, *The Bible and Its Background*, 68–69; idem, "Present Tendencies in the Criticism of the Gospels," 246; idem, "The English Bible: Are the Gospels Authentic?" 461; idem, "The Gospels as History: A Reconsideration," 133–34; idem, *History and the Gospel*, 84–86; idem, *How to Read the Gospels*, 5.

²Ibid. These passages, according to Dodd, are the following: the kingdom of God has come (Mark 1:15, Luke 10:9, Matt. 10:7); mustard-seed (Mark 4:30–32, Luke 13:18,19; Matt. 13:31,32); assault on the kingdom of evil (Mark 3:22–26, Luke 11:15–18, Matt. 12:24–29); Jesus the representative of God (Mark 9:37, Luke 9:48, Matt. 18:5); revelation [differences in Mark and Q explained by different translation of same original] (Mark 4:22, Luke 12:2, 8:17, Matt. 10:40); lamp (Mark 4:21, Luke 8:16, 11:33, Matt. 5:15); powers of faith (Mark 11:22–23, Luke 17:6, Matt. 17:20); controversy with Scribes and Pharisees: leaven (Mark 8:15 (?), Luke 12:1, Matt. 16:6); controversy with Scribes and Pharisees: pride (Mark 12:38–39, 9:35), Luke 11:43, 20:46, Matt. 23:6); ethical teaching: service (Mark 10:33–34, Luke 22:26, 9:48, Matt. 20:26–27, 23:11); ethical teaching: divorce (Mark 10:11–12 [cf. I Cor], Luke 16:18, Matt. 5:32); mission of disciples (Mark 6:10–11, Luke 10:5,7,10,11; 9:4–5, Matt. 10:11,13,14); warning and prophecies: bearing the cross (Mark 8:34, Luke 14:27, 9:23, Matt. 10:38, 16:24); warnings and prophecies: persecutions and divine assistance (Mark 13:11, Luke 12:11–12, Matt. 10:19–20); warnings and prophecies: watchfulness (Mark 13:34–35, Luke 12:37–38, Matt. 24:42, 25:13); warnings and prophecies: Lo here! there! (Mark 13:21, Luke 17:23, Matt. 24:26); sin against the Holy Spirit (Mark 3:28–30, Luke 12:10, Matt. 12:31–32); "with what measure..." (Mark 4:24, Luke 6:38, Matt. 7:2); "from him that taketh..." (Mark 4:25, Luke 19:26, Matt. 25:29, 13:12); salt (Mark 9:50, Luke 14:34, Luke 5:13); and millstone (Mark 9:42, Luke 17:1–2, Matt. 18:6–7).

³Ibid. These passages include the following: John the Baptist foretells the Messiah (Mark 1:8, Luke 3:17, Matt. 3:11); temptation (Mark 1:12–13, Luke 4:1–13, Matt. 4:1–11); Jesus as healer (Mark passim., Luke 7:1–10, 7:22, Matt. 8:5–13, 11:5); publicans and sinners (Mark 2:15–16, Luke 7:34, Matt. 11:19); kingdom of God sayings: ἐφ' ἑαυτῶν (Mark 1:15, Luke 10:9, 11:20, Matt. 12:28); kingdom of God sayings: power [in spirit] (Mark 10:15, Luke 6:20, 5:3); kingdom of God sayings: seed growing (Mark 4:26–29, Luke 13:20–21, Matt. 13:33); kingdom of God sayings: yet to come (Mark 9:1, Luke 11:2, Matt. 6:10); Son of Man: suffering (Mark 8:31, Luke 9:58, Matt. 8:20); Son of Man: glory (Mark 8:38, Luke 17:24, Matt. 24:27); Jesus the Son (Mark 13:32, Luke 10:22, Matt. 11:27); God as Father (Mark 1:25, 13:32, Luke 6:36, 11:2, Matt. 5:48, 6:9); childlikeness (Mark 10:15, Luke 10:21, Matt. 11:25); primacy of law of love (Mark 12:29–30, Luke 6:27, Matt. 5:44); power of prayer (Mark 11:24, 11:9–13, Matt. 7:7–11); forgiveness (Mark 11:25, Luke 11:4, Matt. 6:12); controversy with Scribes and Pharisees (Mark 2,3, Luke 11:14–43, Matt. 12:22–42, 2:23–25); blood of prophets (Mark 12:1–8, Luke 11:49–51, Matt. 23:34–36); rejection of Israel (Mark 4:10–12, 12:9, Luke

records of the same incident with only the barest minimum of verbal resemblance (e.g., the parables of the Feast and the Talents; the Nativity passages). The substantial agreements in the double Mark-Q tradition are brought into relief by the few divergences.¹ Dodd says that the range of verbal similarity is equivalent to the range of similarity of Matthew and Luke when following Mark, though they never attain verbal identity as in the triple tradition. The best hypothesis to account for this is the possible existence of a common source, called "Q."² Dodd believes that this source may have been a body of oral tradition or a collection of odd flyleaves.³ It may have even been a written source.⁴ If one removes the Marcan material and the M and L passages, the lines of this document become visible. In addition, doublets in Matthew and Luke are further evidence—one following Mark and the other Q. Dodd believes that Mark and this second source are independent parallel documents; it is not important to

13:34–35, Matt. 23:37–39); eschatological sayings (Mark 13, Luke 12:35–59, 17:22–37, Matt. 24).

¹Ibid. The divergences are: Pentecost and judgment (Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, Matt. 3:11); temptation (Mark 1:13, Luke = 40 days fast, then temptation); instructions to missionaries (Mark 6:8–9, Luke 9:3, Matt. 14:10 (*sic*) 10:14 (?); "blessed is he that cometh..." (Mark 12:11, Luke 13:35, Matt. 23:39; eschatological sayings substantially different: in Mark the coming follows on a long process of events ending in an astronomical catastrophe; in Q (Matt. 24:37–41, Luke 17:26–27, 34–35) the coming is quite sudden.

²Dodd, "The Close of the Galilean Ministry," 280. Dodd believes that Q can be dated about the same time as Mark or even earlier ("Synoptic Data for a Life of Jesus"; "The New Testament," 229); the 60s ("The Gospels as History: A Reconsideration," 133; *History and the Gospel*, 85); AD 69–70 (*The Bible and Its Background*, 73). He speculates that Q, like Mark, rests upon apostolic tradition and came from a different geographical area than Mark—possibly Caesarea ("New Testament Witness to Jesus Christ," 17. In his review of Scott's New Testament introduction, Dodd says that Q grew gradually, like a hymn-book, and that its nucleus was formed in the 50s ("The Study of the New Testament," 138).

³Dodd, *About the Gospels*, 18.

⁴C. H. Dodd, "Teaching of Jesus According to Tradition Common to Matthew and Luke"; idem, "The Order of 'Q,'" AMs, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College, Oxford. Q may have been a translation of an Aramaic original—idem, "Teaching of Jesus According to Tradition Common to Matthew and Luke."

decide the scope of Q, but its early date is important.¹ A speculative conclusion at best, but it is always possible that M and L passages may have formed part of Q. This document consists predominantly of a record of the teaching of Jesus, whereas the Triple Tradition is mainly narrative. This arrangement represents kerygma and didache.² Furthermore, Dodd notes that Q contains no nature-miracles;³ reports one healing miracle, the healing of the Centurion's son;⁴ and portrays Jesus as commonly asking rhetorical questions.⁵

In an unpublished handwritten manuscript, Dodd provisionally reconstructed his version of Q.⁶ Comparing Matthew and Luke, he seeks to mark out the verbal resemblances and the relative order in which these resemblances occur. This procedure is in keeping with the comments he made in his 1925 article "The Present Position of the Synoptic Problem." He writes there that Harnack

taught us to lay aside speculation about what the second source *may* have contained, and confine ourselves to what it *must* have contained, viz., these passages in Matthew and Luke which from their close resemblance and their order in the Gospels can be shown to have existed in written form in Greek before either of those Gospels was written, irrespective of such similarities as can be better explained by modification of oral tradition or by an Aramaic line of transmission behind the Greek.... Only with this restriction can 'Q' become a subject of scientific investigation as distinct from irresponsible conjecture.⁷

Dodd notes that "there is good evidence for the conclusion that in Matthew 3–13 and Luke 3–11 we can recognize a common written source when the contents and order

¹Dodd, "Synoptic Data for a Life of Jesus"; idem, "The New Testament Witness to Jesus Christ," 16–17; idem, *The Bible and Its Background*, 69–70; "The Study of the New Testament," 138; idem, *Parables*, passim.

²Dodd, "Historical Sources for a Life of Jesus."

³Dodd, "Miracles in the Gospels," 507.

⁴Dodd, "Teaching of Jesus According to Tradition Common to Matthew and Luke."

⁵Ibid.

⁶Dodd, "The Order of 'Q'." This manuscript is very difficult to read and therefore there are many lacunae in our transcription of it.

⁷Dodd, "The Present Position of the Synoptic Problem," 209.

can in some considerable means be resolved.”¹ Hence, he believes that these portions of the Gospels contain the first seven chapters of Q:

Chapter I.	The Preparation for the Ministry Preaching of the Baptist Temptation of Jesus
Chapter II.	Fundamentals of the New Teaching Beatitudes ² Love for Enemies Brotherly Charity Necessity of Action
Chapter III.	The Faith of a Gentile
Chapter IV.	Jesus and the Baptist ³ The Baptist's Message Signs of the Kingdom Greatness of John Childish Treatment of John and Jesus ⁴
Chapter V.	Jesus and His Helpers Candidates for Discipleship Labourers for the Harvest Charge to Missionaries
Chapter VI.	Thoughts on Non-Success The Faithless Revelation to Babes Knowledge of the Son
Chapter VII.	How to Recognize the Kingdom Power and Work of Exorcism Danger of Relapse Sign of Jonah Jonah, Solomon, and “Something More”

¹Ibid.

²In his essay “The Beatitudes,” *MNTStudies*, 8–9, Dodd cautions the over-use of source criticism in the study of the beatitudes. Using form-criticism, he discerns that both accounts are distinct literary products, taking diverse forms in the course of the tradition. “Full justice,” Dodd writes (p. 8), “should be done to this fact before criticism attempts to trace the pre-canonical history of the Beatitudes, whether by way of literary dependence on sources or by way of development in oral tradition.”

³Dodd writes that Matthew and Luke have chapters four and five in reverse order. It is difficult to say which order is original, but, since chapter three deals with the faith of a Gentile, chapter four may with Luke deal with the non-faith of Israel, which is an element in the sayings about John the Baptist.

⁴Note Dodd's interpretation of this pericope in idem, *Parables*, 28–29, 114–115.

Jerusalem is Doomed
Invited Guests Have Failed and Others
Will Take Their Places

Chapter XI. Last Things

Lightning-Flash
Deluge
One Taken and the Other Left
Eagles and the Carcass

Single Tradition

Divergences from the overlap of Mark and Q may be accounted for not merely by editorial alteration but by preference for another source. This source may be as old as Mark or Q, but it is difficult to tell if these passages came from a primitive source, from the author, or are a later development. Dodd concludes that special sources are always of secondary importance.¹

From the above discussion it is evident that Dodd was well-versed in the Synoptic Problem, having sat under Sanday's seminar at Oxford. Moreover, his unpublished lectures give evidence that he was conversant with all scholars who had written on this subject, from B. H. Streeter and F. C. Burkitt in England, to J. Wellhausen and A. Harnack in Germany.

As we pointed out in chapter two, Dodd holds to the authority of Mark and Q as sources for a life of Jesus. The interesting thing to note is that he uses this principle of higher criticism as a hermeneutical knife to cut away the sayings of Jesus that relate to the future coming of the kingdom of God. For example, in *The Parables of the Kingdom*, Dodd omits discussion of passages such as Matt. 5:19–20; Matt. 6:10 = Luke 11:2; 7:21; 13:43,52; 16:28 = Luke 9:27; 18:4; 19:12; 20:20–23; 21:43; Mark 9:47; 10:23–24 = Matthew 19:23–24 = Luke 18:24–25; 11:10; 15:43 = Luke 23:50–52; Luke 9:1–2; 12:32–34; 14:15; 19:11; 21:29–33. And he treats as secondary passages such as Matt. 3:2;

¹Ibid.; idem, "The Tradition Behind the Gospels," "The remaining portions of the first and third Gospels represent other independent traditions the character of which remains undetermined." Cf. idem, *Parables*, 84–85, where Dodd discusses the L passage Luke 17:20–21.

13:36–43; 13:49–50; 18:23–335; 25:34; Luke 22:17–18; 22:28–30. This use of source criticism is consonant with his theory of realized eschatology and permits him to read the evidence to suit his theory. At this point he is clearly operating with a canon-in-the-canon methodology with respect to the teachings of Jesus. To be sure, scholars have made many attempts to “dispense with Q”;¹ and in the last thirty years scholars have revived the idea that Marcan priority is laid on a foundation of sand.² If any conclusive proof could be reached with respect to the priority of Mark and Q, then Dodd’s theory of realized eschatology—as formulated from the Synoptic Gospels—will sink through the sand.³

Form Criticism

When Dodd delivered his inaugural lecture at Cambridge University in 1936, a revolution had been taking place in New Testament studies, a revolution in which he had played—and would play—a big part.⁴ That revolution was the recognition that the

¹Austin Farrer, “On Dispensing with Q,” *Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R. H. Lightfoot*, ed. D. E. Nineham, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1955), 55–88. For an admirable survey of scholarly opinion on Q, see Howard Biggs, “The Q Debate since 1955,” *Themelios* 6 (1981): 18–28.

²See, e.g., the surveys by Owen E. Evans, “Synoptic Criticism since Streeter,” *ExpT* 72 (1961): 295–99; M.-E. Boismard, “The Two-Source Theory at an Impasse,” *NTS* 26 (1979–1980): 1–17; and Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction* 3rd rev. ed. (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity, 1970), 133–43. In 1950 Dodd writes that he is a little “old-fashioned” to believe that Q really did exist, in the face of recent criticism against Q—“Thirty Years of New Testament Studies,” 328; but three years earlier, he writes that “it would be very generally admitted that the earlier ‘Two-document Hypothesis’ oversimplified the Synoptic Problem, and that the assumption (in particular) of the unconditional priority of Mark in passages where the gospels run parallel requires much qualification,”—“The Fall of Jerusalem and the ‘Abomination of Desolation,’” *MNTStudies*, 70. Twenty years later, Dodd writes that perhaps scholars (including himself) have been too hasty to “dispense with Q,”—“T. W. Manson and His Ryland Lectures,” *ExpT* 83 (1961–1962): 303.

³See Michael Goulder, “A House Built on Sand,” *Alternative Approaches to New Testament Study*, ed. A. E. Harvey, (London: SPCK, 1985), 1–24.

⁴Interestingly enough, when Dodd started his Cambridge Seminar in 1936, he chose as the topic for study “The Tradition Behind the Gospels.” In a paper by the same title passed out to the members of the seminar, he stated his dissatisfaction with the scepticism of German form-critical presuppositions and methods, and he proposed that the seminar read through the Gospel of Mark section by section, comparing each

scholar could penetrate the nether land of oral tradition behind the writings of the Gospels through the use of form criticism.¹ By 1947 this revolution had advanced enough so that Dodd could write that

the method of *Formgeschichte* has led us to recognize that much of the material of the gospels was handed down orally (and perhaps even in writing) in the form of detached units of narrative and discourse. These units of tradition were built up by the evangelists (or their predecessors) into apparently continuous narratives and discourses, but the original discontinuity is often patent to careful observation. The separate units of tradition had a history of their own in the pre-canonical stage, and developed variations which may be reflected in the variations of the canonical record.²

And in a 1963 radio broadcast Dodd could report that “this oral tradition can now be traced not all that far removed from the events themselves” and that form criticism had provided a “good deal of success” in analyzing this oral tradition.³

section with parallels, and testing the theories of Dibelius and Bultmann to see if they held up under *British* scrutiny of the evidence. (In his “Paper on Presuppositions” Dodd comments that “in English law a man is innocent until proven guilty; whether this is so in German I cannot say.”) In 1937 the seminar covered Mark 1–8; in 1938, Mark 9–10; and 1939–1940, the Passion Narrative. Moreover, Dodd expressed his feeling that the treatment of form criticism by scholars in Great Britain had left much to be desired: “Speaking by and large,” he wrote, “I find that people either swallow Dibelius whole, or else wave the whole thing aside as irrelevant. My own view is that the *Formgeschichtler* have brought into play a method which has real importance, but that their actual theories are open to much more drastic criticism than they have received.” Dodd expressed the hope that the results of this seminar could be published in a book, such as *Cambridge Studies in the Gospel Tradition*. Such a book never came off, but much of the material in *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* first found expression during these years in Dodd’s seminar—cf. “The Passion Narrative: Provisional Report to Jan. 31, 1940,” TMs, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College, Oxford, with the arguments of *Historical Tradition*.

¹Dodd, “Present Tendencies in the Criticism of the Gospels,” 246–47; idem, “The Gospels as History: A Reconsideration,” 134–37; idem, “The New Testament,” 230; idem, “New Testament Scholarship,” 81; idem, *About the Gospels*, 13–15; idem, review of *Christianity According to St. John*, by W. F. Howard, 210; idem, “New Testament Criticism: A Fresh Approach,” 144; idem, *Christian Beginnings*, 14; idem, “The ‘Primitive Catechism’ and the Sayings of Jesus,” *MNTStudies*, 11; idem, “The Dialogue Form in the Gospels,” *MNTStudies*, 51; idem, *Historical Tradition*, 17–18, 21.

²Dodd, “The Fall of Jerusalem and the ‘Abomination of Desolation,’” *MNTStudies*, 70.

³Dodd, “Jesus: Good Man or God Incarnate?”

In a way C. H. Dodd was largely responsible for the introduction of form criticism to Great Britain. Not only did Dodd help his "lamented friend" Martin Dibelius settle on an appropriate title for the lectures Dibelius gave in England after the Four Years War (which was also the title of his book *Formgeschichte des Evangeliums*),¹ but he also was responsible for encouraging R. H. Lightfoot, perhaps the most famous British form critic, to visit Germany in 1931.² Moreover, Dodd made use of form-critical principles in constructing his edifice of exegesis.³ What are some of these principles? And how did Dodd use them?

Dodd observes that form criticism starts from the forms or patterns without immediate regard for content, meaning, or exact wording. For example, Mark 3:1-6, the healing of the man with the withered hand, contains a setting, action, and significant saying. Stories such as the Tribute Money and the Blessing of the Children contain similar form. These stories are examples of paradigms (Dibelius),

¹Dodd, "Thirty Years of New Testament Study," 325. Dodd credits Dibelius's book *From Tradition to Gospel*, trans. Bertram Lee Woolf, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, n.d.), with starting the movement of form criticism, see idem, "The Study of the New Testament," 139. It should be pointed out that Dodd was not very happy with the translation of *Formgeschichte* as "form criticism." Such translation was not too felicitous—*ibid.*; idem, *Present Task*, 19.

²Alan M. G. Stephenson, "The Synoptic Gospels. A Century of Historical Criticism," *The Roads Converge: A Contribution to the Question of Christian Reunion*, ed. P. Gardner-Smith, (London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1963), 27.

³Many scholars have noted Dodd's usage and have congratulated him. See A. J. B. Higgins, "Some Recent Trends in Biblical Scholarship," *CongQ* 27 (1949): 128-29; idem, review of *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, by C. H. Dodd, *SJT* 17 (1964): 359. Dodd's collection of essays entitled *More New Testament Studies* received praise from J. Massingberd Ford, review of *More New Testament Studies*, by C. H. Dodd *CBQ* 31 (1969): 433, for its constructive use of form criticism, and from B. R. Bate, review of *More New Testament Studies*, by C. H. Dodd, *CJT* 16 (1970): 266, who writes that "the older Dodd is in some respects more open-minded than the younger. The validity of that last statement is nicely documented in the evolution of Dodd's response to form criticism. What links these essays in this volume to each other more than anything else is the application of the methods of form criticism to unsolved problems in New Testament studies. They could only have been written by a committed believer in the value of the form critical approach to the Gospels."

apophthegms (Bultmann), and pronouncement stories (Taylor).¹ Mark 8:22–26 has an elaborate description of action: setting, action, and result. These stories, says Dodd, can be classified as tales or miracle-stories. In addition, there are also simple stories without action.² It is necessary to extract the “Sitz-im-Leben” of the passage, but sometimes pure form cannot determine the Sitz-im-Leben because the content must be taken into consideration.³

The Passion Narrative. The first part of the Gospels consists of separable units, each concerned with some particular theme. But in the second part there is a long continuous narrative, with the same general scheme in all four: (1) the Last Supper, with prediction of Judas and significant sayings about death, (2) prediction of Peter's denial, (3) retirement to a place on or near the Mount of Olives, betrayal, arrest ^{of Jesus} and flight of disciples, (4) examination before the High Priest, Peter's denial and mockery, (5) trial before Pilate, declaration of innocence, condemnation through the Jews, release of Barabbas, (6) crucifixion at Place of a Skull with two robbers, (7) burial, (8)

¹Dodd, “Historical Sources for a Life of Jesus”; in idem, “The Tradition Behind the Gospels: Summary to the End of 1937,” TMs, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College, Oxford, the members of Dodd's seminar conclude that “the classifications of narrative units in Bultmann and Dibelius seemed in various ways unsatisfactory, particularly because in both cases the terms used seemed to beg certain questions.” Dodd prefers Vincent Taylor's classifications to those of the Germans—see idem, “The Prophecy of Caiaphas: John xi. 47–53,” *MNTStudies*, 59.

²Dodd, “The Appearances of the Risen Christ: An Essay in Form-Criticism of the Gospels,” *MNTStudies*, 102–4, reduces the nomenclature of form-critical classification into two: concise narratives and circumstantial narratives. The concise type narratives include pronouncement stories, apophthegms, and stories of action cast in a similar mould. These narratives observe unities of time and space; take no account of development; and are drawn directly from the oral tradition of the corporate memory of the church. The circumstantial type narratives, on the other hand, are less formed; leave more room for the taste of the story teller; and are closer to the unformed body of reminiscences which floated around in early Christian circles.

³Dodd, “Historical Sources for a Life of Jesus”; cf. idem, “Behind a Johannine Dialogue,” *MNTStudies*, 41–57.

empty tomb, and (9) appearances to disciples (except Mark, but it is probably presupposed in 14:28.¹

Each evangelist gives something more. Luke's additions—22:14–18, 21–23, 24–30, 31–34, 35–38, 40–42 (44?), 54, 63–66; 23:1–25, 32, 35, 39–42, 48, 49—would form a passion narrative, with slight supplements, with a different point of view (pathos instead of tragedy). Dodd asks whether this means that Luke used another source. But Luke and John's testimonia are almost all different from Mark's.² This phenomenon means that the oral hypothesis must be taken into account and that literary dependence should not be assumed.³ A certain pattern and structure in the story must be recognized, for example, the sufferings and death of Jesus in the kerygma: προέγραφη ἔσταυρώμενος; καταγγέλλετε τὸν θάνατον τοῦ κυρίου. Dodd notes that in all its forms it is one into which elements of theological interpretation scarcely enter. There is no particular selection of prophecies. These passages, moreover, were not primarily Messianic or interpreted Messianically (except possibly Psalm 110). Therefore the story is not made up from prophecy, though perhaps it has been modified by it (e.g., the seamless robe, John 19:23–24), or interpreted (e.g., the Last Supper sayings, veil of the temple torn, and possibly Johannine discussion with Pilate). The Fourth Gospel lays emphasis on the political charge; Mark, on the other hand, lays it elsewhere, since it is the Gospel to the Roman Church.⁴

¹Ibid.; idem, *History and the Gospels*, 80–81; cf. idem, *Historical Tradition*, 29.

²Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 31–49.

³Dodd believes that the Passion Narrative was the first narrative to be written down, idem, *The Bible and Its Background*, 68; that it existed in tradition substantially complete before Mark wrote, idem, "The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ," 388; and that, through the results of source criticism and form criticism, "we seem led to the conclusion that there existed, at the pre-literary stage, three independent Passion narratives, closely similar in pattern, and rewording the same sequence of events, though with considerable variation in the detail of their contents," idem, "Results of New Testament Research," 184; see further idem, *Historical Tradition*, 21, 30.

⁴Dodd, "Historical Sources for a Life of Jesus."

Pre-Passion Narrative. These narratives consist of units of narrative and teaching. In this regard the evangelists are editors. Dodd classifies these units as follows:

- A. Words of Jesus
 - 1. Aphorism
 - 2. Longer utterances
 - a. Prose (e.g., woes, corban)
 - b. Verse (e.g., lilies, Matthew 11:28–30)
 - 3. Parables and similitudes

- B. Words of Jesus in a Dramatic Setting
 - 1. Dialogues (Mark 9:49f., 10:35–40; Matthew 8:18–22; Luke 12:13–14; Matthew 18:21–22).
 - 2. Dialogues with a narrative setting (Mark 2:19–20; Matthew 11:2–6; Mark 8:27–33, 12:13–17; John 3:31–34, 6:66–70, 12:20–24).
 - 3. Units in which the statement of Jesus is led up to by narrative (Mark 3:1–5, 2:18–22; Luke 7:36–50).

- C. Narrative
 - 1. Acts of Jesus—miracles, cleansing of Temple, Marcan triumphal entry.
 - 2. Stories about Jesus—baptism, Marcan temptation, transfiguration, passion narrative.

No hard and fast lines can be drawn and some units occur in different categories in different versions (e.g., triumphal entry; Beelzebul controversy [Q with setting, Mark purely narrative]); often the setting may not be part of the unit (e.g., Lost Sheep—setting in Luke, none in Matthew).

It is clear, Dodd believes, that the material had been crystallized into stereotyped forms in all sources in the oral stage before the written Gospels began. Therefore a considerable part must be allowed to oral tradition in the formation of the Gospels. This early formulation means that interest in the words and actions of Jesus was strong in the earliest church and that Mark was not the first sign of interest.¹

¹Ibid.; idem, "New Testament Scholarship," 81. Form criticism helps us get to the standpoint of the earliest Christians. "Looking with our eyes," writes Dodd, "we use the traditional forms or patterns each as a glass through which we view one particular aspect of the life and teaching of Jesus as it was understood and remembered by His followers."

The Sitz-im-Leben. Dodd notes that the material in C2 concerning the stories about Jesus is all associated with the kerygma: the Sitz-im-Leben is the preaching of the kingdom of God. Likewise, the material in C1 concerning the acts of Jesus and in A3 concerning parables and similitudes because the majority of the parables deal with the kingdom of God—the eschatological character of the kingdom of God. The material in B is primarily concerned with didache. Aphorisms Dodd believes may be the remains of a longer story.

Form criticism does not supply a criterion of historicity, but it is a useful tool by setting up contrasts between various elements in the record. The Sitz-im-Leben, the historical setting, might lead to the creation of stories to meet certain needs and interests of the situation. The evidence for this assertion is different attribution of sayings in the Gospels; in Revelation words are put into the mouth of Jesus and might be attributed to the Jesus of History; and Paul in I Corinthians 14 says “the things which I write to you are from the Lord.”

Dodd believes, however, that this assertion may not be entirely correct. He notes that it is impossible to report any incident objectively. For example, based on form alone, a comparison of the stories of the Gadarene Swine, the dumb man, and the blind man of Bethesda with the stories of the Paralytic and the man with the withered hand reveals a difference. In the first, there are traces of profane wonder-stories, a singular technique. The second show more, a word and it is done. There is a distinction between miracles wrought by the finger of God and current ways of exorcism.

A saying is a historical event, and the Sitz-im-Leben may be just what it purports to be. Dodd says that the transmission of a Rabbi's sayings of Jesus¹ betrays a Jewish-Palestinian environment and so are credible thus. But some, such as the Fourth Gospel and the apocryphal Gospels, show a Hellenistic environment.

¹Dodd does not define what he means by “a Rabbi's sayings of Jesus.”

Bultmann holds that "I"- words are based on Greek models. Dodd says that this type is more Semitic than Greek, and that the "I am" form is attested in the Old Testament and in Judaism.

Parables and poetical utterances have the closest Jewish-Palestinian environment. They are close to Rabbinic forms, but have an individual stamp. In several cases parables are provided with context and application and so the element of the setting is separable from the parable itself; the settings in life given and presupposed may often be distinguished, and the only one possible is that implied by the lifetime of Jesus. For example, in the Parable of the Pounds, Luke emphasizes the parousia aspect, but Jesus' probable meaning was the effect of His coming on the rulers of the Jews.¹

In the dialogues, the Sitz-im-Leben is most interesting. Sometimes sayings have different settings: a prophet in his own country in Mark and John, ox in pit in Mark and Luke. Bultmann suggests that ideal scenes were constructed in which the meaning of the sayings leaps to the eye. But in Rabbinic stories, retorts Dodd, they are not necessarily ideal scenes.² Moreover, Bultmann thinks that controversial dialogues were formed in controversy in the church (e.g., meat-controversy in Mark 7). Dodd responds that such a Sitz-im-Leben is only derived from the editorial comment in Mark 7:19. Furthermore, the disciples are criticized. He asks, does this mean that Jewish opponents of the church are criticizing them? But remarks about hand-washing are addressed in Luke to Jesus and in Mark to the disciples. It is only additional words of comment which create the later Sitz-im-Leben in the church.

¹See Dodd, *Parables*, 146–53.

²Dodd, "Historical Sources for a Life of Jesus"; idem, *Historical Tradition*, 240, "Some critics make great play with 'ideal scenes' supposed to have been created by the evangelist as a setting for traditional sayings. I do not believe there are many." Dodd's 1937 seminar scorned the assertion of ideal scenes—see "The Tradition Behind the Gospels: Summary to the End of 1937."

It is unlikely that any one particular class as such can be regarded as any more historically valuable than any other, with the possible exception of parables. In each group there is central and peripheral material, the central setting nearer the events, the peripheral setting more remote.

In *History and the Gospel* Dodd writes that the chief value of form criticism is that "it enables us to study our material in fresh groupings, which point to distinct strains of tradition, preserved from various motives, and in some measure through different channels, and to compare these strains of tradition, much as we compared Mark and 'Q', in search of convergences and cross-correspondences."¹ In this regard, Dodd proposes "a method of criticism which promises a fresh approach to the problem of historicity."² Taking units from different sources, he offers a comparison of them and concludes that "there are various channels of tradition all containing sayings or stories supplying the eschatological character of the ministry of Jesus. This is better than the eye-witness method of determining historicity. When we are in closest touch with the kerygma we are in closest touch with primitive tradition."³

Chronology. Form criticism insists on separate units connected editorially. K. L. Schmidt, in his famous—but unfortunately untranslated—*Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu*,⁴ sought to demonstrate that Mark was a *Sammler*, a collector of pericopae who strung them together with connecting links. This framework of links,

¹Dodd, *History and the Gospel*, 91. F. F. Bruce, *Tradition Old and New* (Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1970), 43–44, writes that this method of form criticism advocated by Dodd is another way in which the tool can be used without undue scepticism. Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 207–8, has the same opinion and says that Dodd's method serves as an interesting contrast to Bultmann's.

²Ibid., 103.

³Dodd, "Historical Sources for a Life of Jesus."

⁴K. L. Schmidt, *Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu* (Berlin: Trowitzsch & Sohn, 1919).

Schmidt argued, was the evangelist's creation and therefore unhistorical. He concluded that it was impossible to write a chronological account of the life of Jesus.¹

Following Schmidt, Dodd observes that in Mark there are many generalizing summaries, containing verbs in the continuous present or imperfect tenses:

1:14–15	Galilean ministry
1:21,22	Capernaum
1:39	Tour of Galilean synagogues
2:13	By the Sea
3:7b–9a	Concourse of people, retirement to hills, the Twelve
4:33,34	Parables
6:7, 12, 13	Mission of the Twelve
6:30	Return of the Twelve

Dodd argues that without 4:33–34 this makes a continuous, very summary account of the Galilean ministry as a whole.² It provides three stages: (1) synagogue-preaching in Galilee: only two examples given; (2) public teaching by the sea: a series of stories given; and (3) retirement: the Twelve are sent out, with the implication that this was the *practice* of Jesus.³ Other Marcan incidents do not fit in at any particular point. Mark probably fitted his pictures into an already existing outline framework, related to the briefer outline in Acts.

This outline, Dodd admits, is difficult to extend beyond 6:30. Possibly we could include 6:55–56 and 10:1. Instead there are fragments of an itinerary, ending with the Triumphal Entry. This outline, like that of Acts, would serve as a prologue to the Passion Narrative. Therefore, some order of events may be found. Mark 1:1–7:23 and 10:1f contain well-marked groupings of matter showing definite characteristics:

¹See Dodd's discussion of Schmidt in *idem*, "The Framework of the Gospel Narrative," *NTStudies*, 2–6.

²*Ibid.*; *idem*, "Historical Sources for a Life of Jesus."

³*Ibid.*; *idem*, "Order of the Main Sections of Mark," TMs, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College, Oxford; *idem*, "Characteristics of the Three Marcan Periods," TMs, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College, Oxford.

1. 1:1–7:23

Scene: Galilee
 Public proclamation of K/God
 Teaching, especially in parables
 Public ministry—synagogues
 Frequent healings, exorcisms
 Controversies with Scribes and
 Pharisees arising on
 particular occasions, not
 sought by Jesus
 Vast crowds, but attempts to
 escape (1:45, 6:31)

2. 10:1f

Scene: Judea
 Public teaching, but no example in
 earlier scene
 Hardly any parables
 Synagogue hostile
 One healing
 Controversies on questions of
 principle, sometimes sought
 by Jesus Himself (especially
 Temple-Cleansing)
 Large crowds, but no attempt to
 avoid publicity

Dodd notes that there is a marked change in the situation but asks if this arrangement is arbitrary. Apparently not. The changed situation is a development from the earlier one. This transition from Galilee to Jerusalem is preserved in the kerygma.

Between these two sections lies the confused section 7:24–9:.. It sometimes resembles the Galilean section. There is no miracle except the Syro-Phoenician, which could not be Galilean. Controversy is completely absent (allusion only in 9:14); public teaching is absent except in 8:34f., a possible editorial interpolation; and retirement is emphasized. There is an overlapping of the feeding miracles.

The framework summary in 3:14–15 connects retirement with the creation of an inner circle. This fits this travel-section, with its centre in Caesarea Philippi. With Caesarea Philippi goes the Transfiguration. The Syro-Phoenician healing is placed by internal evidence in Tyre-Sidon. The rest of the itinerary may simply be a linking of these two.

The transition between first and second, and second and third sections: overlapping, 6:34–44 Jesus intended to retire, cf. 8:1–8; 6:45,46 Jesus sent the disciples away, 47–53 Jesus joined them and sent them elsewhere, cf. 8:10; 7:1–23 Jesus assailed by Pharisees and 7:24 He left Galilee, cf. 8:11,13.

In addition, Dodd notes that some sayings in these sections recur in Luke in other connections. For example, Mark 3:22, 8:11 = Luke 11:15,16; Mark 3:24–27 = Luke

11:17–22; Mark 3:31–35 = Luke 11:27,28; Mark 8:12 = Luke 11:29; Mark 7:25 = Luke 11:37; and Mark 8:15 = Luke 12:1. This suggests reflections of a conflict with the authorities and His kinsfolk with the result that He turned to a spiritual family. The feeding of the multitude led up to it: it explains why Jesus must leave Galilee. Enthusiasm was high and at that point the Pharisees pressed their opposition. A difference was made by Caesarea Philippi and the Transfiguration. Jesus now enters public life as an avowed opponent of the religious regime, with a small band of followers. On the basis of this evidence, Dodd concludes that Mark in putting together his units has not entirely obscured the chronology.¹

From this description of C. H. Dodd's use of form criticism, it is evident that he used this tool conservatively in his search for the historical tradition behind the Gospels. Unlike his German colleagues and a few of his British colleagues, Dodd was convinced that the Gospels were reliable records of the Jesus traditions.² To be sure, he is aware that the Gospel records were written from the standpoint of post-Easter, but this observation does not mean that they are false.³ "To make that assumption," he writes, "is to entertain the prejudice that the Christian faith is not true."⁴

¹Ibid.; idem, "The Framework of the Gospel Narrative," *NTStudies*, 11, "Thus we need not be so scornful of the Marcan order as has recently become the fashion, though we shall not place in it the implicit confidence it once enjoyed. It is in large measure, as Professor Schmidt argues, the result of the Evangelist's own work, rather than directly traditional. But he did that work not arbitrarily or irresponsibly, but under such guidance as he could find in tradition. It is hazardous to argue from the precise sequence of the narrative in detail; yet there is good reason to believe that in broad lines the Marcan order does represent a genuine succession of events, with which movement and development can be traced." See also idem, *Historical Tradition*, 153, n. 1; 233, n. 2.

²Dodd, "Paper on Presuppositions"; idem, "The Founder of Christianity."

³C. H. Dodd, "Alan Richardson's *History, Sacred and Profane*," *ExpT* 75 (1963–1964), 206. In "The English Bible. III. Are the Gospels Authentic?" 462, Dodd writes, "The primitive tradition was not a record of bare facts, but of facts understood and valued in a certain way." Moreover, as an older man, Dodd realized that the time-span between the events of the Gospels and the writing of them—thirty-five years or so—was not, as he once thought, a major factor as to their reliability, idem, *About the Gospels*, 13–14.

⁴Dodd, "The Resurrection"; idem, "The Study of the New Testament," 139. See Dodd's comments in *Historical Tradition*, 14, 79–80, 216, on the assumption by form critics

Dodd has received the greatest criticism, perhaps, for his use of form criticism in establishing the reliability of the Marcan framework. Hugh Anderson faults Dodd's theory because it is based upon the reliability of the speeches in Acts. If the speeches are unauthentic, then the framework stands upon shaky support.¹ Moreover, Anderson, following James M. Robinson, criticises the framework theory because Mark does not follow the outline throughout the Gospel. Such evidence, he concludes, means only one thing: the outline never existed.²

In "The Order of Events in St. Mark's Gospel—An Examination of Dr. Dodd's Hypothesis," D. E. Nineham took Dodd's theory to task and criticised it from the text of the Gospel itself and from historical probabilities. In general he raises seven objections: the proposed framework is so brief that it would have afforded little help for the fitting in of the material; few units contained hints of time and place to allow them to be fitted into the proper time-frame; some groups of sayings may have been spoken by Jesus on a number of occasions and later collected into a topical group in Mark; the support of the speeches in Acts is unsubstantial; the church was not interested in the details of the ministry of Jesus and would have no need for such an outline; units may be placed in contexts where they do not belong because there was nowhere else to put them; and finally the lack of topical order may be due to a lack of understanding and would therefore be unreal.³

Dodd took up Nineham's criticism in *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* and responded that the outline is there in Mark and that it is unlikely that Mark had that the naming of persons and specification of numbers in the Fourth Gospel are *invariably* a sign of legendary development.

¹Hugh Anderson, *Jesus and Christian Origins*, 80–82.

²Hugh Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark*, 33; James M. Robinson, *A New Quest for the Historical Jesus*, 58.

³D. E. Nineham, "The Order of Events in St. Mark's Gospel—An Examination of Dr. Dodd's Hypothesis," *Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R. H. Lightfoot*, ed. D. E. Nineham, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1955), 223–41; *idem*, *Saint Mark*, PNTC (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1963, rep. ed., 1969), 28.

made it up; that the kerygmatic passages in Acts were reliable; and that “the process of development in gospel writing...tends, not to the elaboration of this outline material, but to its elimination in favour either of a more completely topical arrangement (as in Matthew) or of an obviously artificial scheme (in Luke, especially in the central portion), from which I should deduce that the nearer we are to primitive tradition, the more recognizable is the underlying outline.”¹

What is obvious from this debate between Nineham and Dodd is that the key issue centres around their presuppositions. Dodd believes that the Gospels are reliable documents and purport to paint a convincing portrait of the ministry of Jesus. Nineham, on the other hand, believes with Bultmann that the Gospels are primarily kerygmatic and betray little interest in the ministry of Jesus. That the early church had no interest in the Founder of Christianity is an incredible position to maintain and one wonders why Nineham must be so negative.² In this regard Dodd used form criticism as a useful tool in constructing his exegetical edifice.³

Exegesis and Interpretation

The final stage in Dodd's exegetical edifice is the task of exegesis and interpretation. He distinguishes between exegesis, which is the work of understanding the work of an author word by word, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, and interpretation, which is the attempt to make sense of the whole in a wider context.⁴ He

¹Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 233–34, n. 1.

²Not all scholars agree with Nineham; see, e.g., James H. Charlesworth, *Jesus within Judaism: New Light from Exciting Archaeological Discoveries* ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 13–14; Harry Sawyerr, “The Markan Framework,” *SJT* 14 (1961): 279–94; Thomas Aquinas Collins, review of *New Testament Studies*, by C. H. Dodd, *CBQ* 17 (1955): 107–8; F. F. Bruce, *Tradition Old and New*, 45, who argues that “the general framework of Mark's gospel suggests a sequence and development in the story of the ministry too spontaneous to be artificial and too logical to be accidental.”

³Cf. M. D. Hooker, “On Using the Wrong Tool,” *Theology* 75 (1972): 570–81.

⁴Dodd, “The New Testament,” 220.

realizes that both tasks are to a large degree interrelated, as is evident from our discussion of his translation principles.¹ The work of interpretation centers around the interpreter's knowledge of the background and environment of the Bible, and Dodd argues that such knowledge is a *sine qua non* if one is to offer a mature interpretation of a passage of Scripture. "The picture of Jesus derived from the criticism and analysis of the Gospel sources," he contends, "becomes the more credible and the more living when it is seen on the background of the historical conditions of the time."² And in *The Bible and Its Background*, he writes that like all literature the Bible had a history; consequently, it is imperative that something of its history and background be understood by the ^{layperson} as well as the scholar.³

The Semitic Background

The Study of Aramaic

The New Testament writings have a Semitic strain in them. The sayings of Jesus, of course, are able to be translated into Aramaic, and the interpreter who has a grasp of this language has a head-start in the task of interpreting the Gospels. In his 1925 article "The Present Position of the Synoptic Problem" Dodd prophesies that the next important line of Synoptic criticism after source and form criticism will be by way of the study of the Aramaic lying behind our Greek sources, and he commends Wellhausen, Allen, Torrey, and Burney for addressing the issue and setting the

¹See above, pp. 169–86.

²Dodd, "The New Testament Witness to Jesus Christ," 18; idem, *About the Gospels*, 5.

³Dodd, *The Bible and Its Background*, 17; cf. idem, *InterpFG*, 4, "In order to work towards a sound interpretation of the Fourth Gospel it is necessary to consider the work in its true context of thought, so far as that is possible for us at this date"; idem, *Romans*, 147, where Dodd writes at the conclusion to his discussion of Romans eight, "The difficulty that we find in following [the argument] is largely due to the extensive background in Paul's own mind, which we have to divine, often from mere hints. But we know that the background is there and that, even if sometimes the relation of ideas is obscure to us, it would become clear if we knew the background."

agenda for further study.¹ Eleven years later, in his work-sheet passed out to the members of his Cambridge Seminar, Dodd says that

on the Aramaic original we have Torrey's work, which has not, I think, received in this country the serious consideration to which it is entitled, partly because his theory of translation has been bound up with what seems to most of us a quite untenable solution of the Synoptic Problem. It would also be true to say that Burney's *Poetry of Our Lord* deserves more attention than it has received. Further materials are to be found in Wellhausen, in Schlatter, and in Allen's commentaries on Mt. and Mk.²

In his 1937 article "The Epistle of John and the Fourth Gospel" Dodd compares the idioms of the Fourth Gospel and the First Epistle to see how far they reflect Aramaisms, and he writes that it is difficult to reach the conclusion that the Greek of the Fourth Gospel has an Aramaic colouring and that the First Epistle lacks such colouring.³

The LXX

In addition to Aramaic idioms, the vocabulary of the New Testament reveals a Semitic influence in the specialized meanings which certain words have acquired through the influence of the Septuagint. This Greek version was made available to pagan readers and thus acquired a wide circulation and exerted a distinct influence in

¹Dodd, "The Present Position of the Synoptic Problem," 212; idem, "Present Tendencies in the Criticism of the Gospels," 249.

²Dodd, "The Tradition Behind the Gospels."

³Dodd, "The Epistle of John and the Fourth Gospel," 137. Dodd says on the next page that he believes the view of Burney and Torrey that the Fourth Gospel is a translation of an Aramaic original. The author of this Gospel, he says, had to be bilingual; cf. idem, *InterpFG*, 75, where Dodd says that this view is "improbable" and that the evidence for an underlying Semitic idiom in the Fourth Gospel is "irresistible." As is well known, Dodd rejects the view of Burney, followed by Jeremias, that the expression ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ represents an Aramaic original אלהא טליא, taken as the equivalent of II Isaiah's עֶבֶר יְהוָה; see idem, review of *TWNT*, 34 (1933): 284–85; idem, "The First Epistle and the Fourth Gospel," 146–47; idem, *InterpFG*, 230–38, 292–93. In Dodd's opinion, "Lamb of God" is a synonym for "Messiah" and is an apocalyptic term that signifies the divinely appointed leader of the people of God. Cf. Acts 8:32 and I Peter 1:19 where ἀμνός has one or other of the meanings that Dodd rejects for both occurrences in the first chapter of John. See further C. K. Barrett, "The Lamb of God," *NTS* 1 (1954–1955): 210–18; idem, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 176–77.

certain circles.¹ “Undesignedly, and merely through employing words which stood for Greek rather than Hebrew concepts, it brought Hebrew monotheism nearer to the half-philosophical, half-mystical ideas of religion which were becoming popular.”² A

classic example of this process is the way the LXX translators rendered the *title* Adonai / ^{given to Jehovah by the Greek} κύριος.³ Dodd explains:

the use of $\kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\omicron\varsigma$ as a divine title corresponds to a Semitic conception of the relation of the worshipper to the deity (cf. the Phœnician Adonis, a title of Tammuz). A somewhat similar use of κύριος grew up in the Greek East, which was not Greek in origin, but probably arose under Semitic or Egyptian influence. Thus the LXX translators found a translation ready to their hand, κύριος, meaning ‘sovereign Lord.... The complete disappearance of any personal name for God from the Greek Bible, and the substitution of the title κύριος, amounted in itself to a manifesto of monotheism.’⁴

“One of the most valuable books of reference for the student of the New Testament,” advises Dodd, “is a concordance to the Septuagint.”⁵ In addition, the Apocrypha should not be neglected because these writings contain valuable material on the intertestamental era and provide a useful introduction to many of the thought-forms of

¹Dodd, review of *The Oldest Version of the Bible*, by Henry G. Meecham, *CongQ* 11 (1933): 99–100, has some interesting things to say about the origin of the LXX in light of the Epistle of Aristeas. Dodd agrees with Meecham that Gaster's theory that the translation of the LXX Pentateuch was much earlier than 70 BC is incorrect, and that this translation was undertaken in Palestine. Although Meecham would like to retain some more facts of Aristeas's story, Dodd feels that much of Aristeas “is clearly legendary, and there are glaring blunders in matters of history and geography.” “The real value of this epistle is not in the story it tells,” writes Dodd, “but in its character as a document of Hellenistic Judaism.”

²Dodd, “The Jews and the Early Christian Church,” 278.

³*Ibid.*; idem, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 9–11.

⁴Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 10–11.

⁵Dodd, “The New Testament,” 233; idem, “The Study of the New Testament,” 141. In “Jew and Greek,” *The Bible Today* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1955), 116, Dodd writes that “the Septuagint is proof of the extent to which Jews abroad were making Greek the language of their religious life; and you cannot talk Greek... without in some measure thinking Greek.” In idem, “The Translation of the Bible: Some Questions of Principle,” 5, Dodd rejects Aquila's “painfully literal” Greek version of the OT as bordering fundamentalism.

the NT writers.¹ The LXX provided Dodd with the clues to solving to his satisfaction the riddle of Luke's Apocalypse.²

Old Testament History

The OT background is important for the task of interpretation, not only in matters of language, but also in matters of history. The events recorded in the Gospels took place on a stage prepared by the events recorded in the OT. The categories through which these events were interpreted were also supplied by the theology of the Old Testament and by the religious thought of Judaism. In addition, the questions asked by the OT are answered, in one degree or another, by the New Testament.³ In *The Authority of the Bible*, Dodd proposes five questions unanswered in the OT but solved in the NT. Judaism left open (1) the issue between nationalism and universalism in religion, or the question of the implications of monotheism;⁴ (2) the issue between righteousness and grace, or the question of the divine character;⁵ (3) the issue between divine justice and the human lot, or the problem of suffering;⁶ (4) the issue between

¹E.g., Dodd, *Romans*, xxxii; idem, "The Life and Thought of St. Paul," 369, n. 1, says that II Esdras is the best illustration of Paul's pre-Christian outlook; Dodd also states that the Wisdom of Solomon contributed to Paul's understanding of the faith, and in "Colossians," *ABC*, 1253, he comments that the Wisdom of Solomon was a relatively new book about Paul's time and that Paul eagerly read it as a young student.

²Dodd, "The Fall of Jerusalem and the 'Abomination of Desolation,'" *MNTStudies*, 72-79, following T. W. Manson, Vincent Taylor, and others. For a different opinion, see J. C. O'Neill, *The Theology of Acts in Its Historical Setting* (London: SPCK, 1961), 1-4.

³Dodd, *AuthB*, 207.

⁴This question, Dodd believes, is answered by the NT concept of the supra-national Church, emphasized especially in Luke, Galatians, Romans, and Ephesians; *ibid.*, 207-11.

⁵This question, Dodd believes, is answered by the NT concept of the love of God; *ibid.*, 213, "If therefore love is the key to the character and operation of God, then it is no paradox that the highest righteousness is displayed in a forgiving grace which anticipates even repentance, as also every other merit on the part of man, and makes possible for him all that is necessary for untroubled communion with a holy God."

⁶The answer to this question, Dodd believes, is found in the NT story of the Passion of Jesus; *ibid.*, 217. The Christian reply to this question "is not a theoretical vindication

this-worldliness and other-worldliness, or the question of immortality;¹ and (5) the issue between transcendence and immanence, or the problem of mediation.² Dodd's emphasis on the study of the OT is important for him because of his philosophy of history and of his belief in the corporate solidarity of the people of God throughout their history.³

Jewish Apocalyptic and Rabbinic Literature

Special attention must be given to the study of Jewish apocalyptic literature and to Rabbinical writings. Dodd observes that the opening up of the Rabbinic literature has corrected a one-sided conception of the Jewish background, a result of the first impact of the rediscovered apocalyptic literature.⁴ When Dodd was a student, the Rabbinic literature was a "sealed book."⁵ Now that Christian and Jewish scholars were working together, the prospects of using this literature in critical study were encouraging. The Rabbinic writings could be most useful once a chronological perspective is achieved.⁶ They are especially helpful in elucidating portions of the Fourth Gospel. To this end,

of the justice of God, but a challenge to accept as divine a certain attitude to life as a whole, in which suffering comes to be subordinate and instrumental to a positive purpose of good."

¹The answer to this question, Dodd believes, is found in the NT concept of everlasting life. Paul, the Synoptic Gospels, and the Fourth Gospel all emphasize this point; *ibid.*, 217–20.

²The answer to this question, Dodd believes, is found in the christology of Paul (e.g., the Spirit of God, identified with the Spirit of Jesus, takes the place of Torah) and in the Logos-doctrine of the author of the Fourth Gospel. In short, the question is answered by the Incarnation; *ibid.*, 220–23.

³Dodd, "The New Testament," 233; *idem*, "The Church in the New Testament," 12, "The history of the Old Testament is relevant to the present history of the church, and provides the key to it."

⁴*Ibid.*, 234; *idem*, "Present Tendencies in the Criticism of the Gospels," 249.

⁵Dodd, "New Testament Scholarship Today," 80

⁶C. H. Dodd, "Recent Developments in New Testament Studies: The Environment of Early Christianity," *The Listener* (19 July 1951): 104; *idem*, *InterpFG*, 75; *idem*, "The Jews and the Early Christian Church," 284.

Dodd commends the writings of Moore, Abrahams, and Strack and Billerbeck as reliable guides.¹

The Hellenistic Background

Hellenism in Palestine and in the Diaspora

For three centuries before Christ the Jews were influenced by the penetration of Greek culture. The restored Jewish community in Jerusalem was an interesting experiment in social, religious, and political polity. Under the watchful but tolerant eyes of the Persians, the people established themselves as God's people under the provisions of the Pentateuch. In addition, these writings, their ultimate authority, were being supplemented by a growing body of oral tradition given by the scribes, who aimed "to secure that the Jewish way of life, over the whole range of conduct, individual and social, should conform, so far as it might be, to the revealed will of God. It had its centre in the continual worship of the temple, to which a large staff of priest and ministers was assigned."² As a result of the importance attached to the written law of God, education advanced among all levels of the people. The joy and the discipline of living under this law penetrated into the fiber of the people and produced little by little a generally recognized type of character among those Jews who took their religion seriously.³

¹Dodd, *InterpFG*, 75. One of the early aims of Dodd's Cambridge seminar was to deal with Bultmann's contention that various types of Gospel material belong to definite forms of folk-tradition which can be paralleled from Hellenistic models on the one hand and from Rabbinic material on the other. Dodd proposed to examine these parallels closely; see idem, "The Tradition Behind the Gospels." One of the participants in Dodd's seminar a few years later was the eminent Semitist David Daube, who "often contributed brilliant notes or papers, delivered with verve and vigour." See C. F. D. Moule, "G. M. Styler and the Cambridge New Testament Seminar," *Suffering and Martyrdom in the New Testament*, eds. William Horbury and Brian McNeil, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), xviii; cf. Dillistone, *Dodd*, 150. Many of Daube's notes, with Dodd's responses on them, are in the collection of Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

²Dodd, "The Jews and the Early Christian Church," 276.

³*Ibid.*, 277.

Thus the Jews who lived in their homeland, so to speak, wore few badges identifying the influence of Greek upon their culture and religion.¹

In the meantime, a large Jewish population existed outside the borders of Palestine. Some stayed in the provinces of the Babylonian Empire, adopting many of the customs and religions; others had previously settled in Egypt, embracing Egyptian morality and practices. To be sure, most Jews throughout the Dispersion still looked to Jerusalem for their religious insight and inspiration.²

The Jewish Dispersion had a further expansion when Alexander the Great brought Judea and the whole Near and Middle East under his control in the fourth century before Christ. Used as colonists by their Hellenistic monarchs, the Jews became active in the commercial life of their new homes and learned to speak Greek. "The conquests of Alexander the Great...had resulted in establishing the Greek language as the common medium of intercourse and of education over the whole of the Near East. With the language, Greek thought and the Greek spirit quickly established an ascendancy."³ One important consequence of the Dispersion was the translation of the Septuagint, for in this document the Judaism of Palestine became naturalized into the Hellenism of the Diaspora. Philo of Alexandria applied the sophisticated system of allegorical exegesis, ^{to the LXX} which, when fused with Platonic ideas, guided many in

¹Dodd, "The New Testament," 234. Dodd comments that it is significant that we hear of "Hellenists" in the Church of Jerusalem in the earliest days. In "The History and Doctrine of the Apostolic Age," 393, he says that the term "Hellenist" may be used of anyone "whose language, outlook, or way of life was Greek, whether he was born a Greek or not." In the book of Acts, it probably means Christian Jews or proselytes "whose habitual use of the Greek language implied a certain detachment from the narrowly nationalist outlook and the severe legalism of the typical Palestinian Jew." Dodd has a similar definition of the term in "The World of the New Testament. III. The Early Spread of the Gospel," 76.

²Dodd, "The Jews and the Early Christian Church," 277.

³Dodd, "The New Testament," 234-35; idem, "The New Testament Witness to Jesus Christ," 11.

their understanding of the things of scripture.¹ These Jews conformed to the customs of Hellenism, so long as these customs did not interfere with their religion. The synagogue became a social and educational center, as well as a worship center. Thus whether by way of example or by propaganda, these Jewish colonies of the Diaspora drew many people called "proselytes" into the Jewish faith.²

As for the Jews in Palestine, Hellenistic influences seeped their way into their customs slowly but surely. The ruling classes, including the priesthood, gave their assent to the penetration of Hellenism, but the more rigid party, called the "Pious Ones," together with the common people, resisted this infiltration. Jerusalem cannot mix with Athens; a revolt was imminent. In 167 BC Antiochus Epiphanes, the reigning Greek king of Syria, intervened to put an end to the religious nonconformity of the Jews by ordering that the Jerusalem temple be dedicated to the worship of the Syrian deity. An image of the god was set up, and other rites were commenced in other Judean cities. Dodd writes that "it is a sign of the lengths to which foreign influences had prevailed that many citizens, and even priests, were found to accept the innovations without protest."³ But many disobeyed the king's orders, and persecution followed. Finally, under the leadership of Judas Maccabaeus, a portion of the population rebelled and victories were won. The temple was re-dedicated to the glory of God, and pagan practices were abolished. Some people, however, were not content with spiritual victory and aspired to political independence. Eventually, the Hasmonaean dynasty ruled over almost all of Palestine and recovered for Judaism those parts of the

¹Dodd, "From St. Paul to the Reign of Constantine," 434; idem, *InterpFG*, 54, "Philo appears in his works as a loyal Jew—at least in intention—for whom the Scriptures of the Old Testament had absolute authority. But he is so steeped in Gentile thought—mainly in the popular Platonic-Stoic philosophy which meets us in the *Hermetica*—that the Scriptures naturally interpret themselves to him in its terms"; see further idem, "From St. Paul to the Reign of Constantine," 444–45; idem, "The Jews and the Early Christian Church," 302.

²Dodd, "The Jews and the Early Christian Church", 278.

³Ibid., 280.

land inhabited by Gentiles. Internal strife picked up again, and civil war was imminent when the Roman armies entered Syria. Out of stupidity the rival Jewish princes appealed for the support of the Roman commander Pompey. Pompey annexed the country and brought profanation into the temple. "The Pharisees," writes Dodd, "had the mortification of seeing the foreigner they had invited not only entering Jerusalem as a conquered city, but even profaning by his presence the central sanctuary of the temple, to which the High Priest alone had right of access."¹ After a while, the Roman civil wars broke out, and Herod—a man for all seasons—ruled for thirty years, building up his kingdom in power and in wealth. At his death, however, his kingdom fell to pieces and was divided into sections for the members of his family, the tetrarchs, to rule.²

The Mystery Religions

Part of the Greek influence among the Greeks in the Dispersion, Dodd writes, had been moulded by contact with Oriental religions, resulting in the formation of various mystery religions. Although many of these religions reached the peak of their influence at a date later than the NT, Dodd argues that many of them "had already entered upon their Hellenistic development in the first century, and it is probable that their ideas and practices formed part of the background of some of the early converts."³ Dodd writes that the mystery religions had two major weaknesses. First, they played up to an excessive individualism which was a disease of the age. Second, they lent themselves to gross superstition, especially among the uneducated.⁴

¹Ibid., 282.

²Ibid., 282–83.

³Dodd, "The New Testament," 235.

⁴ C. H. Dodd, "The World of the New Testament: I. Religion and Philosophy in the Ancient World," *Religion in Education* 14 (1946): 13–17. Dodd adds a humorous comment that "the dear people were apt to be a bit cloudy." For further analysis of the weaknesses of the mystery religions, see F. V. Filson, *The New Testament Against Its*

At the lower end of the mystery religions, this mixture of Hellenism and Orientalism spread a cover of philosophical mysticism over popular cults. These cults appear to represent a sophistication of primitive rituals and vegetation or fertility cults, resembling those of Eleusis, of Cybele, and of Adonis.¹

At the higher end of these religions were Gnosticism² and the religion of the Hermetics;³ In the middle of these extremes were various grades. Common to all these religions was the quest for knowledge and that salvation is through knowledge.

“The craving for immortality, and the quest for supernatural knowledge as the way to

Environment: The Gospel of Christ the Risen Lord, SBT-3, (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1950), 87-97.

¹Dodd, “The New Testament,” 235.

²Dodd, “The First Epistle of John and the Fourth Gospel,” 148, defines Gnosticism as “a tendency in thought which can be traced within and outside Christianity, especially in Philo and the Hermetica, in Valentinus and other Christian heresies. It is generally recognized that both the Fourth Gospel and the First Epistle are in some ways akin to this tendency, while both of them seek to undermine an illegitimate application of Gnostic thought to Christianity.” Dodd gives a detailed description of the rise of Gnosticism in “From St. Paul to the Reign of Constantine,” 434-40. And in *InterpFG*, 103-114, he discusses three tenets of Gnosticism: dualism, mediation, and redemption. In the same book (p. 98), he lists three “certain facts” about Gnosticism. First, there is no known Gnostic document dated in the form that we have it before the period of the New Testament. Second, the typical Gnostic systems combine in their own ways ideas from Christianity with other ideas from other religious or philosophical systems. Third, these Gnostic systems differ widely in the way they introduce and combine these elements and therefore have to be considered separately. R. McL. Wilson, “Gnosis at Corinth,” *Paul and Paulinism. Essays in honour of C. K. Barrett*, eds. M. D. Hooker and S. G. Wilson, (London: SPCK, 1982), 102-103, states that Dodd’s first point remains true today despite the new discoveries at Nag Hammadi. Wilson also says that those who hold the narrow view of Gnosticism would even “admit the presence of trends and tendencies in a gnostic direction in the background of the New Testament” (p. 103). Dodd would agree; see Dodd, “Ephesians,” *ABC*, 1224, “Paul’s later thought changed in relation to Gnosticism, which in its main outlines in pre-Christian”; idem, “Colossians,” *ABC*, 1250; idem, “Present Tendencies in the Criticism of the Gospels,” 249-50; idem, “New Testament Scholarship,” 80; idem, “The Jews and the Early Christian Church,” 303. Dodd, “Wilfred Lawrence Knox,” 269, commends Knox for recognizing the Jewish influences upon Gnosticism.

³Dodd, “Present Tendencies in the Criticism of the Gospels,” 249-50; idem, *InterpFG*, 10-53; idem, *The Bible and the Greeks*, Part Two; idem, “Dialogue Form in the Gospels,” 61; idem, “Recent Developments in New Testament Studies: The Environment of Early Christianity,” 104, Dodd says that the Hermetics were his own special interest of study. See also idem, review of *Corpus Hermeticum*, eds. A. D. Nock and A. J. Festugière, 4 vols., and *The Mysteries of Hermes Trismegistus*, by G. van Moorsel, *JTS* n.s., 7 (1956): 299-308.

it, were, to judge by our available evidence, the most widely spread and deeply felt motives of the spiritual life of the Graeco-Roman world."¹

It was into this world, Dodd stipulates, that early Christian thought developed, not in a safe area protected from alien influences, but in natural and direct contact with wide-flowing currents of thought in the world at large.²

Dodd writes in his 1939 essay³ that the work which has been done on the Hellenistic background in the last fifty years is enormous. New documents have been discovered; the study of Egyptian and Iranian religions has contributed to our understanding of this knowledge; and specialists have been hard at work making sense out of what can become "a perfect fog."⁴ The result of all this activity is that

we have an immense mass of materials at hand; an unwieldy mass, it must be confessed, until the specialists do more that they have yet done to introduce order and discrimination into it. Our commentaries are enriched or burdened with abundant 'parallels' brought from all departments of Hellenistic religion. They are not always illuminating. Nevertheless, this material is of great value,
if it is properly used.

The student should have a clear conception of the real aim of this study of the Hellenistic world, so far as it bears upon the New Testament. It has often appeared as an attempt to 'explain' the thought of the New Testament by pointing out the ideas that Paul, or John, or another, drew *this* idea from the Mystery-religions, *that* from Platonism, the other from 'Gnosticism,' and so forth. The New Testament dissolves into a hotchpotch of unacknowledged borrowings. I do not say that this was the intention, but such is the impression produced.⁵

¹Dodd, "The New Testament," 236. See further R. McL. Wilson, "Pagan Religion at the Coming of Christianity," *PCB*, 712-18, for an admirable survey.

²Dodd, "Wilfred Lawrence Knox," 269.

³Dodd, "The New Testament," 237.

⁴Dodd, review of Hoskyns, 212.

⁵Dodd, "The New Testament," 237; see further Dodd's comments on "parallelomania" (to borrow an expression from Samuel Sandmel, "Parallelomania," *JBL* 81 (1962): 1-13), in idem, "Jesus as Teacher and Prophet," 63; idem, "The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ," 382; idem, *Present Task*, 14-15; idem, *ApostPD*, 179; idem, review of Hoskyns, 307; idem, "New Testament Scholarship Today," 80; and idem, "The Environment of Early Christianity," 103-104, where Dodd says that we need a "genuinely critical treatment of the Hellenistic texts themselves." Dodd attempted to do this with the *Corp. Herm.* in his book *The Bible and the Greeks*.

The Rewards for Studying the Hellenistic Background

The rewards for having studied the Hellenistic background of the New Testament are three-fold. First, it allows the interpreter to reconstruct the world of thought in which the NT writers and their readers lived in order to read the documents in the way that they were intended to be read. Second, this appreciation of the Hellenistic background allows the interpreter to recognize the unity and uniqueness of the New Testament. The husks which had been discarded in order to reach the essence of Christianity now are valuable in that they allow the reader of the NT to read the documents afresh. Then one is under no difficulty in recognizing what is distinctive and essential in Christianity. Third, it causes the interpreter to reflect anew upon the immediate context of all the New Testament writings—the life of the early church itself—and toward the central object of these writings—the Lord Jesus Christ.¹

*An Evaluation of Dodd's Views
on the Background of the New Testament*

In our evaluation of Dodd's views on the background of the New Testament, we shall focus our attention in two areas. First, Dodd is inconsistent in his use of this background material. Second, Dodd neglects to take into account positions differing from his, especially when they relate to the Jewish background of the Fourth Gospel.

Dodd's Inconsistent Use of Background Material

This inconsistency may be seen from a comparison of Dodd's reviews of the commentaries on the Fourth Gospel by Bernard (1929), Strachan (1940), Howard (1940), and Brown (1972).

Dodd criticizes Bernard for almost totally neglecting the Hellenistic background of the Fourth Gospel. The Mandæan and Hermetic literatures are passed over, as well as Christian, Jewish, and pagan syncretistic religious thought. Dodd writes that the readers of this Gospel "stood in the full stream of syncretistic thought,

¹Dodd, "The New Testament," 239.

and the resemblances, even if they be thought superficial, could not be missed by the contemporary reader."¹ Thus "the task of an interpreter of the Gospel is not achieved until he has defined in some way its relation to a widespread religious movement in which Jewish and pagan elements were already interfused, and which very quickly became aware of Christianity."²

In his review of Howard's commentary eleven years later, he reiterated the same criticisms. At this point in the investigations of Hellenism, Dodd observes that some scholars who had superficial knowledge of Hellenism had overemphasized the importance of the Hellenistic background with respect to the biblical documents, "but it remains true that converts from 'higher paganism' recognized that the Fourth Gospel spoke largely the language with which they were familiar."³

In his review of Strachan's commentary the same year, Dodd argues that the Fourth Gospel is the product of a complete fusion of Hebraic and Hellenistic thought. Since each sentence is likely to have more than one shade of meaning—whether approached from the Hebrew or Greek point of view—it has a "stereoscopic depth of meaning."⁴

Finally, thirty years later in his review of Brown's commentary, Dodd criticizes him for neglecting the Hellenistic background *and . . .* overemphasizing the Jewish background. He agrees that Brown demonstrated "the deep Biblical roots of Johannine thought." Dodd is also impressed with the way Brown marshalled parallels from the Wisdom literature in the OT. But this wisdom strain is the least distinctively Hebraic element in the OT, and Dodd shares Brown's contention

¹Dodd, review of Bernard, 371.

²Ibid.

³Dodd, review of Strachan and Howard, 207.

⁴Dodd, review of Strachan and Howard, 210. A "stereoscopic depth of meaning" is one of Dodd's favorite expressions; see *idem*, "Results of Recent New Testament Research," 184; *idem*, "Jew and Greek," 118.

that this strain was the most cosmopolitan or "ecumenical."¹ "The mainstream course of early Christian theology," Dodd writes, "was (for good or ill) strongly Hellenized, and the Fourth Gospel was its inspiration more than any other canonical writing."² At the conclusion of this review, Dodd uses an analogy that he used on several occasions to state his position, perhaps better worded in his essay "The Fourth Gospel and Christian Worship" in his discussion about the Logos:

This means that we are concerned with something more going far beyond a mere fusion of Hellenic and Hebraic ideas. Like Abt Vogler, who in his music made 'of three sounds not a fourth but a star,' John has made out of the two hemispheres of thought and experience, joined in a single term, a new category to comprehend a new and unique fact.³

King, in his perceptive analysis of Dodd's book reviews,⁴ has called into question Dodd's "perfect fusion" by asking whether Dodd could in fact do justice to the Hebraic element in this fusion. King's point is that all through Dodd's career he emphasized the Hellenistic background (albeit with brief forays into the Hebraic background, e.g., with *According to the Scriptures*). This emphasis came to expression in 1930 in Dodd's book *The Bible and Its Background*, in which he calls the Fourth Evangelist "the 'Master Propagator' of Christianity to the Greek world."⁵

King calls Dodd's reviews of Strachan's and Howard's commentaries to the witness stand to testify to this fact. Dodd notes that Strachan and Howard stressed the Jewish background. "There is a further point in which these two books taken together effectively illustrate the present tendency in Johannine studies. In contrast to the exclusive attention to the Hellenistic background which was common in the earlier

¹Dodd, review of Brown, 22.

²Ibid.

³Dodd, "The Fourth Gospel and Christian Worship," 12. This was the incarnation. Dodd emphasizes this fusion in idem, *AuthB*, 200–201; idem, "Hellenism and Christianity," 126; and in idem "Jew and Greek," 118,

⁴J. S. King, "There and Back Again," *EvQ* 55 (1983): 145–57.

⁵Dodd, *The Bible and Its Background*, 74.

years of this century, both Dr. Strachan and Dr. Howard emphasize the importance of the Jewish background."¹ King calls attention to the fact that Dodd notes that Howard does full justice to the Hellenistic background, but King writes that Howard's thought was actually moving in the opposite direction. In Howard's book *Christianity According to St. John*, King notes that Howard cites H. Pribnow's "Die Johanneische Anschauung vom 'Leben,'" written in 1934. Howard writes that Pribnow

points out that a whole group of terms are missing in the Johannine writings which are exceedingly common in the contemporary religious literature of the Hellenistic world, and which might seem to come inevitably into the vocabulary of a writer whose cardinal conception is 'Life.' The words are *ἀθανασία* and *ἀθάνατος*, *ἀφθαρία* and *ἀφάρτος*.

These words play their part in the Mystery cults, and in the kind of mysticism which is independent of ritual, as in the *Corpus Hermeticum* i. 18, 28; x. 4f.; xiii. 3 (Scott, i. pp. 124, 132, 188f., 240). References to Philo will be found in Leisegang's Index to Cohn and Wendland's edition of the Greek text. How far this language has penetrated the Judaism of the Diaspora can also be seen in the *Wisdom of Solomon* (ii. 23; iii. 1f.; iv. 1; vi. 19; viii. 13, 17; xv. 3) and in 4 Maccabees (xiv. 5f.; xvi. 13; xviii. 23).

Pribnow concludes that St. John has deliberately avoided using these terms because for his readers they would have conveyed a meaning which was out of harmony with his eschatology.²

King concludes that Dodd could not comment on this argument since it was so destructive for his own. Hence, Dodd was ignorant of a trend in Johannine studies—the emphasis of the Jewish background—while he was content to view the author of the Fourth Gospel as "the 'Master Propagator' of Christianity" to the world.³

The Universe of Discourse in the Fourth Gospel

In *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* Dodd analyzes this Gospel from three perspectives: the universe of discourse, the leading ideas, and the argument from structure. The first perspective, which is our concern in this section, is a survey of the

¹Dodd, review of Strachan and Howard, 209.

²W. F. Howard, *Christianity According to St. John*, ST-46 (London: Duckworth, 1943), 196.

³King, "There and Back Again," 156-57.

various background ideas and movements that may help to elucidate the Fourth Gospel. In order, they are the setting in early Christianity, the Hermetic literature, Hellenistic Judaism (Philo of Alexandria), Rabbinic Judaism, Gnosticism, and Mandaeism. It is instructive to note that Dodd begins his interpretation of the Fourth Gospel with these background studies, for such a study of necessity must precede the final interpretation.¹ In our evaluation of this section of Dodd's book we shall focus on his comments on the Hermetica.

Dodd spends twice as many pages in his discussion of the Hermetica as he does with any of the other literature. He does this because he is an authority on this literature, having submitted it to careful scrutiny in *The Bible and the Greeks* seventeen years before. He accepts the argument that these writings were produced in Egypt, mostly during the second and third centuries A.D., although he notes that a first century date is possible for one or two tractates.² The Hermetica are examples of the cross-fertilization of Greek and oriental thought characteristic of the Greek and Roman periods. They reveal a dominant Greek strain, and share a common outlook and religious spirit. Dodd says that most of these writings are later than the Fourth Gospel, though the first tractate may be placed not later than A.D. 125–130.³ "In particular," Dodd writes, "its essentials seem to be presupposed in Philo, for while the non-Hebraic strain in Philo's thought often recalls the *Hermetica* quite strikingly, I can find no grounds for concluding that they were directly influenced by Philo."⁴

¹Dodd, *InterpFG*, 3–4. It is instructive to note that Dodd discusses these background materials in a different order in his article "The Background of the Fourth Gospel," 329–343. In that essay the order is: primitive Christianity, Rabbinic Judaism, Greek philosophy and the higher paganism, Hellenistic Judaism, and Gnostics. This article was written in 1938 during the time when Dodd was investigating the kerygma and the testimonies.

²*Ibid.*, 11.

³*Ibid.*, 12, n. 2.

⁴*Ibid.*, 12–13.

Dodd finds certain basic themes in the *Corp. Herm.* which, he contends, run through the Fourth Gospel in one form or another. First, the only way of salvation for man is knowledge of God. "But always they make it clear that to 'know' God is a profound religious experience satisfying the ultimate needs of the soul."¹ Second, the Hermetics conceive of God as Light and Life.² Third, man knows God not immediately but through the mediation of the cosmos.³ Fourth, God is of the nature of νοῦς, mind or reason.⁴ Fifth, the secret of immortality is the knowledge that God is life and light and that we are His offspring.⁵ Sixth, rebirth is the liberation of the immanent Man by the mercy of God from the "torments" of the passions resident in the material body.⁶

Dodd concludes this section on the Hermetica with these words:

It seems clear that as a whole they represent a type of religious thought akin to one side of Johannine thought, without any substantial borrowing on the one part or the other. It is when we have done justice to this kinship that we are likely to recognize the full significance of those elements in Johannine thought which are in striking contrast to the *Hermetica*, and in which we must seek the distinctively Christian teaching of the Fourth Gospel.⁷

¹Ibid., 17. Rudolf Bultmann, "The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel," *HDB* 27 (1963): 14, criticizes Dodd for arguing that the origin for the Hermetic idea of the *com^munio* with God, as a mutual knowing of God and man, is the OT. He faults Dodd for overestimating the influence of the OT on the Hermetica and for citing OT passages which, in their context, do not substantiate Dodd's position. Likewise, William C. Grese, "The Hermetica and Recent Research," *Biblical Research* 28 (1983): 48-49, criticizes Dodd's argument in *The Bible and the Greeks* that *Poimandres* depends upon Genesis because the differences between the two accounts are too great and too many. He concludes that "Dodd's attempt to demonstrate a use of the Old Testament by the Hermetica was unsuccessful, but the close parallels to which he pointed raise intriguing questions."

²Ibid., 18.

³Ibid., 22.

⁴Ibid., 24.

⁵Ibid., 36.

⁶Ibid., 45.

⁷Ibid., 53.

In *The Bible and the Greeks*, Dodd argues that the parallels between the Poimandres and the NT are explainable as the result of minds working under the same general influence.¹ A few years before Dodd published this book, M. E. Lyman wrote an article arguing that the differences between the Hermetica and the Fourth Gospel were more significant than the similarities.² It is significant that Dodd never mentions Lyman's study. Moreover, Dodd's views on the Hermetica as presented in *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* were taken up in 1957 by G. D. Kilpatrick in "The Religious Background of the Fourth Gospel."³ Kilpatrick commends Dodd for drawing attention to the Hermetica, but he also criticizes Dodd, stating that it is surprising that in order to gain an understanding of the Fourth Gospel the reader is asked to turn to the literature of paganism rather than the Bible and first-century Judaism.⁴ Kilpatrick's solution to Dodd's heavy emphasis on the Hermetica is to examine terms used in the Hermetica which had already penetrated Hellenistic Judaism. He notes that such terms as ἀθανασία, γνώσις, δημιουργός, and μυστήριον are all missing from the Fourth Gospel.⁵ Next, he compares the vocabulary of the Fourth Gospel with that of the LXX and the Hermetica and notes that many significant terms that are common to the Fourth Gospel and the LXX are absent from the Hermetica.⁶ Kilpatrick concludes his study with the observation that "the language of the Gospel is the language of the Greek Bible just as the main element in the background of the Gospel is the Biblical revelation. Further, John represents a stage in the invasion of

¹Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 247.

²M. E. Lyman, "Hermetic Religion and the Religion of the Fourth Gospel," *JBL* 49 (1930): 265–76.

³G. D. Kilpatrick, "The Religious Background of the Fourth Gospel," *Studies in the Fourth Gospel*, ed. F. L. Cross, (London: Mowbrays, 1957), 36–44.

⁴*Ibid.*, 38.

⁵*Ibid.*, 39–40.

⁶*Ibid.*, 40–42.

Hellenistic paganism by Judaism and, later, by Christianity, and not an invasion of the Biblical religion by the pagan world.”¹ It is surprising, given Dodd's intimate acquaintance with the LXX, that he fails to admit this evidence. Like Lyman's study, Dodd neglects Kilpatrick's.

To conclude this evaluation of Dodd's use of the background in his theological edifice, it cannot be stressed too strongly that Dodd had the intellectual capability to master Hellenistic and Hebraic literature. He was well-qualified and well-trained to do so. However, it seems fair to conclude that Dodd was so fully entrenched in the Hellenistic background that he neglected the Hebraic. Nowhere is this observation so pertinent as in Dodd's comments on the Dead Sea Scrolls. In a BBC radio broadcast in 1951, Dodd reports on the discovery of the DSS. These documents have the possibility of being a “fresh source” from which important new information may be gleaned about the environment of early Christianity. He notes that many scholars believe that the DSS date not far from the time of the NT and that the sect in question (the Essenes) was more or less contemporary with the beginnings of Christianity, but he cautions that we must await complete publication of the documents and the critical study of them by experts.² In his essay “The Biblical Doctrine of the People of God” Dodd comments that the monastic community of Qumran was an example of an *ecclesiola in ecclesia* and that all attempts to affiliate the early Church to Qumran are idle. It is noteworthy that in this discussion of Qumran Dodd does not discuss the DSS.³ And in his magisterial *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, Dodd offers the following comments in a footnote:

Some recent writers have put forward the theory that our evangelist was under the influence of the Qumran sect. I must confess that I am unable to discern the close and striking affinity between the Fourth Gospel and the literature of Qumran which has been found by some of those whose acquaintance with that

¹Ibid., 43.

²Dodd, “The Environment of Early Christianity,” 104–105.

³Dodd, “The Biblical Doctrine of the People of God,” 34.

literature is more extensive and profound than my own. So far as my knowledge goes, I should endorse F. C. Grant's judgment (*The Gospels, their Origin and Growth*, 1959, p. 175–6), from which I quote two sentences: 'Included in the vast array of parallels found in Hellenistic religious literature, especially Greek, Egyptian, and near Eastern...the few which are found in the Dead Sea Scrolls are really minor and only "more of the same". They simply testify to the widespread religious syncretism which existed in that period and influenced the most diverse types of religious life and thought, even Jewish, even Essene—or "sectarian Judaism"—especially in their religious imagery.' In any case, I see no evidence that our evangelist could have learned at Qumran the kind of rabbinic thought with which he shows acquaintance. Nor indeed could he have improved in that circle his acquaintance with Hellenistic thought and literary method. The application of the term 'Hellenistic' to the Qumran literature appears to me unilluminating.¹

In spite of Dodd's strictures against the DSS, many scholars believe that the DSS serve as important background material for the study of the Fourth Gospel.² J. A. T. Robinson comments that one of the unhappier judgments of Dodd as an old man was that he underestimated the significance of the DSS. "What he missed," writes Robinson, "was that for the first time we had a body of thought which in fundamental, and not merely verbal, theological affinity, could represent a probable ground and not simply a possible environment for the distinctive categories of Johannine literature at an early date and on Palestinian soil. This is not to claim that there was any direct influence or connection.... But the relationship is very different from the many other possible (or near impossible) backgrounds which have been canvassed for John's thought."³ Burrows' observation on the DSS in 1955, that "what may be said without

¹Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 15, n. 3.

²R. E. Brown, "The Qumran Scrolls and the Johannine Gospel and Epistles," *The Scrolls and the New Testament*, ed. Krister Stendahl, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), 183–207; the collection of essays in *John and Qumran*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1972); and George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, WBC (Waco: Word Books, 1987), lxi–lxiii, lists several scholars who find the DSS useful for the study of the Fourth Gospel, but he cautions that how to evaluate them is variously estimated. His conclusion (p. xliii) is that "there is little doubt that associations between the thought of the Qumran community and that of the Evangelist must be taken into account in the explanation of the Gospel."

³Robinson, *The Priority of John*, 40–41; cf. T. E. Pollard, "The Fourth Gospel: Its Background and Early Interpretation," *AusBR* 7 (1959): 41. Pollard notes that in a 1947 article Dodd writes that the Fourth Gospel was the worst failure of nineteenth-century criticism and that the critical discussion ended in a "deadlock." Pollard writes that that deadlock continued up until the time Dodd wrote the article, but a few months after publication the DSS were discovered and this discovery "enabled scholars to make

exaggeration is that the Gospel and epistles of John and the Dead Sea Scrolls reflect the same general background of sectarian Judaism,"¹ should have been picked up by Dodd and incorporated into later reprint editions of *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* and in the first edition of *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*. But it wasn't. Bultmann's comment on Dodd's *magnum opus* is apropos: "it is very much to be regretted that the author ignores many more recent investigations, which, in my opinion, lead us beyond that understanding of the Johannine material for which Dodd's work is representative."²

Writing in a different context, but whose words correctly emphasize the point of this evaluation, Wilson comments that

in the Christian gospel there is something completely new, something which yet may be claimed as the fulfilment of the hopes and aspirations of the Old Testament. In the search for sources we need go no further than the Old Testament itself, as seen and interpreted in the light of the Person and work of Jesus. But the gospel is also universal in its range. It had to be translated into a form that would carry weight with the Gentile world; and the transformation effected by its presentation in Greek dress inevitably afforded links and associations with the hopes and aspirations of other nations, not least with those which sprang from the same original source in the Jewish faith. The works of Philo illustrate the background of ideas and the forms of thought that were current; they help us to understand the way in which the gospel was presented; they help to show the relevance of the gospel to the needs of men in that time. To

a break-through as far as some of the questions relating to the Johannine problem were concerned."

¹Millar Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Viking Press, 1955), 339. Burrows continues, "The scrolls thus show...and this has not always been recognized...that we do not have to look outside Palestinian Judaism for the soil in which Johannine theology grew." See also R. McL. Wilson's comments in "The Fourth Gospel and Hellenistic Thought," *NovT* 1 (1956): 225-27.

²Bultmann, "The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel," 10. Not only does Bultmann criticize Dodd for neglecting the DSS; he also faults him for excluding the use of the Odes of Solomon, to which Dodd refers only once. It is significant that in "Present Tendencies in the Criticism of the Gospels," 250, Dodd has a very favorable estimation of the Odes, "It now seems likely that in the Odes, Ignatius, and the Fourth Gospel we have three species of evidence for a type of Christian thought with its roots far back behind the date of the writings themselves." With Dodd's emphasis on the "Umwelt" of the Fourth Gospel, it seems he could have devoted more space to a discussion of the Odes. James H. Charlesworth, "Qumran, John and the Odes of Solomon," *John and Qumran*, 107-136, sees close affinities among Qumran, the Odes of Solomon, and the Fourth Gospel, particularly in their portrayal of "dualism." But cf. Barrett, *John*, 41, 65, 112-13, for a different opinion.

go further is to venture beyond the safe ground of certainty into the realms of pure conjecture.¹

¹R. McL. Wilson, "Philo and the Fourth Gospel," *ExpT* 65 (1953–1954): 49.

CHAPTER FIVE
THE EDIFICE OF EXEGESIS

Now that Dodd's understanding of history and the gospel have been examined, as well as his blueprint of exegesis, it remains for us to see how Dodd applied this understanding to his interpretation of the Bible, more specifically, to his interpretation of the thought of the Apostle Paul and to the theology of the Fourth Gospel.

The Theology of Paul

Paul, the pioneer theologian of the NT,¹ marks the beginning of theology proper. He distinguishes between the common foundation and the theological edifice built upon it² and sets out from the assumption of a New Order begun through the death and resurrection of Christ.³ His first postulate is that the early Christians stand at the moment when God acted creatively. In some sense Jesus regarded his coming as closing a chapter in the history of God's people (Luke 11:49–51 = Matt. 23:34–36; Mark

¹Dodd, *AuthB*, 206; idem, "Theology and Ethics of the New Testament"; idem, "Wilfred Lawrence Knox," 270.

²Dodd, *AccordSS*, 12, "In various parts of the New Testament, notably in the epistles of Paul, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Gospel and Epistles of John, we have a theological edifice constructed upon this plan [of the kerygma]"; idem, *History and the Gospel*, 50.

³Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 39; idem, *AuthB*, 202, "All the principle writers of the New Testament all hold the firm belief that they are living in a 'new age'"; cf. idem, *EpistsJohn*, 40. For the two ages see Gal. 1:4, I Cor 10:11; *καὶ νῦν κτίσις*, II Cor. 5:16.

13:1–2, 14:58) and beginning another (Matt. 13:16–17; 21:28–32).¹ This moment involves a crisis in the history of God's people. Israel has entered on the liberty of the glory of the sons of God (Rom. 8:21). God's purpose—implicit before—has become explicit.

According to Dodd, Paul places this crisis in the setting of a broad and elevated philosophy of history.² Paul learned from the OT that it was God's purpose to create man in His image. Man had the glory (εἰκών καὶ δόξα) of God (I Cor. 11:7, II Cor. 3:18) but empirically man does not possess the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). God's purpose, however, cannot be frustrated. History is the field in which the primary purpose is to be fulfilled. The process, in line with the tradition of Judaism, starts from the call of Abraham (Gal. 3:6) and is elevated in Romans 4. Thus the first beginnings of a people of God are found in an act of grace upon Abraham and an act of faith by Abraham.³ This act of grace entails complete abandonment of any self-confidence on the part of man to make way for the active causality of the divine will.⁴ But what was effected was not a full realization but a promise firmly established. The course of history was determined by this forward look. God has selected the people who are to be the bearers of the promise and ultimately of its fulfillment.

This selection is the beginning of a process. At each stage God is acting freely and yet a certain attitude on man's part is included. There comes into view ἡ κατ' ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις (Rom. 11:11).⁵ This ultimately results in the whole people of God

¹Dodd, Cambridge Lectures on the Church, 1946; cf. idem, *Founder*, 76–77.

²Dodd, "The Eschatological Element in the New Testament," 18; idem, *Romans*, 186; idem, "The Philosophy of the Bible"; idem, "The Kingdom of God and History," 29.

³Dodd, *Romans*, 68–70.

⁴The man in sin, e.g., is as helpless as a corpse, Rom. 4:17, cf. Eph. 2:1.

⁵Dodd, "The Kingdom of God and History," 29. In idem, *Meaning of Paul*, 37, n. 12, Dodd notes that "a transposition of the terms would give us 'purposive selection,' as distinct from merely 'natural selection'"; idem, "Natural Law in the New Testament," *NTStudies*, 131; idem, "The Life and Thought of St. Paul," 371.

being embodied in a single person. Paul selects for emphasis the attribute of obedience, which at that crisis was found only in Jesus, whose death was representative, and in whom at last the aboriginal purpose of creation is found (Col. 1:15, cf. II Cor. 4:4).¹ He was a victim of Israel, but He was the representative of the true Israel of God and in the same representative character He rose again (Rom. 6:3f, Col. 3:1).² Dodd writes that

the coming of Christ in fact marks a crisis in God's dealings with the human race, in that down to that time His purpose proceeded by successive stages of exclusion (Ishmael, Esau, the unrepentant Israel of prophetic times, and the Jews who rejected Christ), but since His resurrection it proceeds by way of inclusion, until in the end no member of the human race is left outside the scope of salvation.³

By this resurrection the "ancient wrong"⁴ was deprived of its power, and the Israel of God could enter into its inheritance of the people of God, the first-born among many brethren (Rom. 8:29), the Head of the body (Eph. 5:23), the chief corner-stone, and the foundation-stone. Thus the selective purpose, formerly working exclusively, now works inclusively. There is no longer any sense in the limitations under which Israel had lived before Christ. The Law is a παιδαγωγός. We are back in the sphere of promise, but the promise is fulfilled. This process must continue until all humanity is called into the Body of Christ. The present time is not a waiting for the Second Advent, but a positive process of building up the Body of Christ; the process will be completed by the Parousia: beyond lies the end (I Cor. 15:24, 25).⁵ The world contains supra- and sub-human creatures also, and it is God's purpose to sum up all creatures in Christ

¹Dodd, *AccordSS*, 125; idem, *Three Sermons*, 20–21; idem, "The Life and Thought of St. Paul," 373.

²Dodd, "Theology and Ethics of the New Testament."

³Dodd, "The Mind of Paul: II," *NTStudies*, 123.

⁴Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, chapter five, 54–65.

⁵Dodd. "The Thought of Paul," 325.

(Eph. 1:10). Therefore, the whole is ultimately destined to bear the glory of God (Rom. 8:21).¹

Anthropology

Paul, like other contemporary thinkers,² thought of the totality of existence as lying on two planes, e.g., τὰ ἐπουράνια καὶ τὰ ἐπίγεια; τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα καὶ βλεπόμενα; τὰ αἰώνια καὶ τὰ πρόσκαιρα (II Cor. 4:18-5:1, I Cor. 15:43f);³ this dualism, however, is not an *ultimate* dualism (cf. the Platonic κόσμος νοητός καὶ αἴσθητός). Though Paul talks of spirit, soul, and body, ψυχή καὶ σὰρξ belong to the lower sphere, the πνεῦμα to the higher (I Cor. 2-3, especially 3:1, 2:15).⁴ The temporal aspect of man, i.e., his bodily existence, is described by Paul as σὰρξ, material and subject to decay.⁵ The σὰρξ is not sinful, but morally negative and weak (Rom. 6:19, 8:3, passim) and specially exposed to the assaults of sin.⁶ Although the σὰρξ, in Dodd's

¹Dodd, "The Eschatological Element in the New Testament," 24, "The course of history is the working out of a corporate salvation for all mankind"; idem, *GospNT*, 89-90; idem, "The Ethics of the Pauline Epistles," 325-26; idem, "Ephesians," *ABC*, 1222; idem, *AuthB*, 208; idem, *Romans*, 157, 223; idem, "The Message of the Epistles: Ephesians," 61; idem, "The Mind of Paul: II," *NTStudies*, 123; idem, "Hellenism and Christianity," 121; idem, *BibT*, 71-72, 107, 110-21; idem, "Natural Law in the New Testament," *NTStudies*, 131, 138; idem, "The Biblical Basis for Christian Unity," 24; idem, "What is the Purpose of God?" 6; idem, "The Foundations of Christian Theology," 310; cf. idem, *Gospel and Law*, 36; idem, "The Relevance of the Bible," 161-62; idem, *ChristRN*, 6, 8, 10-26; idem, "The Ethics of the New Testament," 549; idem, "Man in God's Design According to the New Testament," 18-20; idem, *InterpFG*, 371-75, 423; idem, "The Life and Thought of St. Paul," 371, 374; idem, "The Biblical Doctrine of the People of God," 38; idem, "The Thought of Paul," 316, 325.

²George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), 457-58.

³C. H. Dodd, "The Meaning of the Resurrection to Paul," *Modern Churchman* 17 (1927): 582; idem, *Meaning of Paul*, 55; idem, "The Holy Spirit in the New Testament."

⁴Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

⁵Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 56; idem, *Romans*, 112, "[Σὰρξ] is the common stuff of human nature which we inherit."

⁶Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

opinion, is powerless in itself for moral ends,¹ it is temporarily animated by the ψυχή, “the principle of conscious life, including even intellectual processes.”²

Contemporary thinkers commonly placed the νοῦς, which they understood as “reason,”³ in the higher sphere, and Paul repeatedly uses this current term (Rom. 7:23–25, 12:2, I Cor. 14:14–19). In man as an individual ψυχή, σάρξ καὶ νοῦς are all included in σῶμα. But there is nothing in the concept σῶμα which constitutes materialism. It means “concrete personality”⁴ or the “organized individual self.”⁵

In addition to νοῦς, Paul uses the Hebraic πνεῦμα.⁶ The Hebrew קִיָּוָה has as its fundamental idea that of power, invasive energy, essentially divine and proceeding from the transcendent God.⁷ Throughout the Pauline epistles πνεῦμα is the energy of

¹Dodd, *Romans*, 112.

²Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 56.

³Dodd, *Romans*, 114.

⁴Dodd, “Theology and Ethics in the New Testament,”

⁵Dodd, *Romans*, 90. In “The Meaning of the Resurrection to Paul,” 583, Dodd writes with respect to the resurrection body of Christ, “One sees Paul working out a conception of ‘body’ in which that term stands for the concrete individual entity, which may exist without loss of continuity in many phases, using for its self-expression various kinds of ‘substance,’ much as our physical body continues self-identical throughout all change of its material particles.” See also idem, *Meaning of Paul*, 57–58; idem, *Romans*, 190.

⁶For the Hellenistic conception of πνεῦμα, see Dodd’s discussion in “The Holy Spirit in the New Testament,” and in *InterpFG*, 213, 215–22.

⁷Dodd, “The Holy Spirit in the New Testament.” Dodd says that in primitive parts of the OT, קִיָּוָה stands for Mana, e.g., Gideon, the prophets regarded as inspired with קִיָּוָה. No moral significance was attached to the term at first; bad as well as good קִיָּוָה was from Yahweh (I Sam. 16:14; 19:9). The emphasis was rather on power and on the supernatural (Isaiah 31:3). In the literary prophets, קִיָּוָה is still essential to prophecy. Now it is the power of moral discrimination (Hos. 9:7; Micah 3:8). Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Amos give no prominence to קִיָּוָה but use terms rather implying close personal relationship. This leads to an ethicising and personalising of קִיָּוָה (see idem, *AuthB*, 58–59). In the Pentateuch, Joseph’s קִיָּוָה is a permanent possession (Gen. 41:38). It is no longer abnormal. Ezekiel has the eschatological hope that all Israel will possess

God entering into this world and creatively producing life in man. Even in I Cor. 14:14, τὸ πνεῦμα μου is the result of the outpouring of the Spirit of God. Paul would not have spoken of the πνεῦμα of a non-Christian, except if possessed by an evil πνεῦμα. Νοῦς is natural, but becomes πνεῦμα when the Spirit of God invades it. Πνεῦμα is essentially ζωοποιουόν.¹ Dodd comments that Paul thinks that in the Christian

the inner man is definitely described as 'spirit' (*pneuma* as distinct from *psyché*). Like 'flesh,' spirit is a *continuum*; it is the form of being of God Himself and of the risen and glorified Christ, but it is also the form of being of the believer's own 'inner man.' Not that 'spirit' is to be considered as if it were, like 'flesh,' mere substance. It is essentially power, energy, and as such is 'life-giving' ('quickenings'). 'Spirit' is therefore not properly a term of individual psychology. Every man, so far as he has attained to truly mature life, partakes of flesh and of spirit.²

Doctrine of Sin

This whole scheme has been upset by sin. When Paul uses ἁμαρτία, he does not mean a wrongful act knowingly and responsibly committed (this is παράβασις καὶ παράπτωμα); these are included, but ἁμαρτία is more fundamental.³ The word in Hebrew, חטא, has for its fundamental meaning "to miss the mark";⁴ therefore, any behavior, way of life, or condition which misses the true end of human existence is ἁμαρτία; and the true end is δόξα θεοῦ, the glory and image of God (Col. 3:10). Sin is an objective condition in which man lacks the glory of God (Rom. 3:23), whether a man is conscious of it or not (Rom. 5:13f).⁵ Unconscious sin does not entail guilt, but does

חטא, which has ethical significance as well as older ecstatic aspect (Ez. 36). In II Isaiah, חטא rests on Messiah; for further discussion see idem, *InterpFG*, 214–15.

¹Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

²Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 56.

³Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

⁴Ibid.; idem, *Meaning of Paul*, 60. In idem, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 76–77, Dodd notes that the Hebrew has three specific aspects of sin: חטא, עוול, and עוון, represented respectively by "lawlessness," "injustice," and "godlessness."

⁵Ibid.; idem, "The Ethics of the Pauline Epistles," 295, Dodd says that for Paul sin "is a condition of mankind—a condition social and racial in scope—in which man 'falls

involve men in the consequences. To taint the conscience with sin is to taint one's relationship with Christ¹ and to set a barrier between himself and God.² The important thing is the actual objective condition.

This use passes into a quasi-personification of sin (Rom. 5:14 ἐβασίλευσεν).

"Sin," writes Dodd,

is a mysterious power, not native to man or to the material world, but intruding into human nature on its lower side. Paul speaks of it in personal terms: it lives, reigns, holds us in slavery; it is condemned and overcome. Whether he was consciously personifying an abstraction, or whether Sin was for him really a personal power, like the Devil of popular mythology, is not clear. At all events it is not an inherent taint in matter, but rather one of the 'spiritual forces of wickedness.'³

The primary seat of ἀμαρτία in man is not the σάρξ because the σάρξ is morally negative and weak. It is not the σάρξ as such which constitutes the enmity of God which is sin, but the φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός (Rom. 8:7); τὸ θέλημα τῆς σαρκός καὶ τῶν διανοιῶν (Eph. 2:3); and ὁ νοῦς τῆς σαρκός (Col. 2:18). Even the νοῦς itself becomes involved in this misdirection (ἄδόκιμος νοῦς Rom. 1:28). The entire σῶμα becomes a σῶμα ἀμαρτίας (Rom. 6:6)—it has become the organ of a fundamentally misdirected human life. The νοῦς is not divine, nor will Paul have anything to do with the view that sins done in the flesh cannot affect the spirit (see I Cor. 6:13f). The whole σῶμα is involved, and the whole is either misdirected or rightly directed. This condition of ἀμαρτία is empirically universal. It does not belong to the choices of individuals but is the

short of the glory of God"; cf. idem, *Romans*, 51; and see further idem, *EpistsJohn*, 22; idem, "The Kingdom of God and History," 16–17; and idem, *Three Sermons*, 24.

¹C. H. Dodd, "Conscience' in the New Testament," *Mansfield College Magazine*, no. 66 (1916): 154; idem, *Three Sermons*, 22; cf. idem, "The Ethics of the New Testament," 543.

²Dodd, "Constructive Theology. X. Revelation," 447; cf. Dodd, *EpistsJohn*, 24–25.

³Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 58.

corporate possession of man (see Rom. 1–3). The *σάρξ* has become a condition in which all partake.¹ Dodd puts the matter in personal terms when he writes that

there was something wrong with our corporate life as a whole; and therefore something wrong with you and me. It is quite impossible for us to have grown up in this environment without being part and parcel of the wrong, whether we knew it or not. We got our ideas twisted, our desires and ambitions misdirected, our values confused, just because we lived as members of this order of life.... And in turn *our* false ideas, *our* wrong desires and ambitions, and *our* confusion of values contributed to the general wrongness. I don't mean to suggest that if only you and I and the other man had been a bit more honest and a bit more kind, the war need never have happened. I do mean that the war and all that goes with it is a symptom of a deep-seated disease of our society, and that you and I have been in our measure infected cases, victims and carriers of infection. It cannot have been otherwise. It took a war to convince us how closely we are all bound together, for good or ill. But we always were so bound together both in good and ill. And therefore we are responsible.²

Moreover,

There is something wrong with mankind. There is a racial, a corporate, a social wrongness of which we are 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 a corporate wrongness in which we are involved by being men in the world.... The preoccupation with that wrongness as the primary interest of the religious life is certainly morbid; but no matter how freely and fully we recognize the wonderful potentialities of that human nature which we share, it remains true that there is a flaw somewhere, which defiles treatment.³

And, furthermore,

it is enough for [Paul] and for us to recognize that the wrongdoing of an individual is not an isolated phenomenon, but part of a corporate, racial wrongness which infects human society as we know it, and affects the individual through heredity and environment.⁴

¹Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament"; idem, "The Holy Spirit in the New Testament."

²Dodd, "The Gospel Preached by the Apostles," 55–56; idem, *The Coming of Christ*, 36; idem, "Letters of a First-Century Traveller," 15, "The idea that we are one body, and what hurts me hurts you hurts me, cuts at the root of all things that cause divisions among us. (And what about nations? If we really believed that we are members of one another—that what hurts Germany, or France, or Italy, or England, hurts us all—Europe would look very different)."

³Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 60–61; idem, "The Life and Thought of St. Paul," 371; idem, *Benefits of His Passion*, 30, "Sin is not simply doing wrong things. It is not merely that misdirection of our life.... It is a defilement and corruption of our nature."

⁴Dodd, *Romans*, 80.

Origin of Sin

How did the universal, objective condition of sin come about? First of all, says Dodd, Adam transgressed, and by virtue of that transgression, all men have the condition of sin. This idea is reflected in II Esdras, a writing with which Paul was familiar.¹ This idea, however, was not the universal view. Baruch takes a different view. He mentions the fall of Adam in chapter 57, but in 54:15f he says that each person has been the Adam of his own soul. Thus the Fall is allegorized in Baruch and in Philo as the story of the Fall of each man's soul. Dodd believes there is a hint of this thought in Romans 7,² but in Romans 5 Paul comes down on the other side of the whole.³

To understand Paul's thought, Dodd contends that we must give full weight to his concept of the solidarity of man.⁴ This solidarity is considered, on the one hand, as "forensic." "Mankind is regarded as a real corporation which acts and suffers in the person of its representative."⁵ Although the solidarity of man is a re-discovered concept in modern times,⁶ its main ideas are ancient. "The moral unit was the community (clan, tribe, or city), rather than the individual. If Achan broke *taboo*

¹See, e.g., II Esdras 3:21; 4:30; 7:48. Dodd thinks II Esdras is the best illustration of Paul's pre-Christian outlook—see "The Life and Thought of St. Paul," 369, n. 1.

²Dodd, *Romans*, 111, "It describes the condition of impotence resulting from unsuccessful moral struggle, but with a side-glance at the story of the Fall of Man in Genesis, where transgression dooms man to death."

³Ibid., 79–80. Dodd writes (p. 80), "If we take the words [in Rom. 5:12] as expressing primarily a theory as to the way in which, as a matter of historical fact, man began to be sinful, it is doubtful whether it is consistent with the account of the origin of sin in the pagan world which he has given in i.18–32. He is not really concerned about origins, but about the facts as they are: 'in Adam' humanity is corporately sinful." In *History and the Gospel*, 169, Dodd understands the Fall as symbol and not to be taken as "a literal, historical statement that there was a moment when man first began to set himself against the will of God."

⁴Ibid.; idem, *Meaning of Paul*, 95; idem, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

⁵Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 95.

⁶Ibid., 61.

(Josh. vii) his whole clan fell under the curse. Thus the whole of humanity could be thought of as the tribe of Adam, and Adam's sin was the sin of the race."¹

Secondly, man, by turning away from God to idols and spirits, puts himself under these powers.² In Wisdom we have the idea set forth that the origin of sin is idolatry (14:12f, cf. Rom. 1:18f). It is not certain that Paul knew Wisdom, but he agreed with it. The result is that man is enslaved to the Spirits, the Heavenly Bodies (Gal. 4:3,9). Romans 8:38,39 shows that Paul conceives of these powers as potentially hostile to salvation. By idolatry man put himself under slavery to these powers and to sin.³

Law

Paul is not primarily interested in how sin has come about, but in the actual fact that it has happened.

Upon this condition supervenes νόμος, the meanings of which have been the subject of controversies for centuries.⁴ In LXX it is used to translate Hebrew תּוֹרָה, meaning primarily "instruction," but as a religious term it means the instruction of God, and hence it comes to mean "laws." In Greek thought it means system or principle. Dodd writes,

תּוֹרָה in its widest sense means divine teaching or revelation; νόμος in its widest sense means a principle of life or action. When divine teaching is of the nature of commandments regulating conduct and when the principle of life is conceived as dictated by a legislative authority, then νόμος and תּוֹרָה have approximately identical meanings.⁵

¹Dodd, *Romans*, 79. Likewise, Dodd says in *Meaning of Paul*, 95, "If a Macdonald of Glencoe delays to take the oath of allegiance, his whole clan must be massacred."

²*Ibid.*, 112–14.

³Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament"; *idem*, *Meaning of Paul*, 36, n. 8; *idem*, *Romans*, 146; *idem*, "The Message of the Epistles: Ephesians," 61, n. 1; *idem*, *ChristRN*, 22

⁴C. H. Dodd, "Ἐννομος Χριστοῦ," *MNTStudies*, 136–37.

⁵Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 40; cf. *idem*, *The Bible and Its Background*, 22.

Paul uses it in all these senses. His characteristic use is the meaning "law," and he thinks first of the Mosaic Law (Rom. 5:13). For Paul, as a Jew and as a Christian, the Mosaic law was "absolute law."¹ The sin of man did not become conscious transgression until Moses. But this is schematic rather than historic because the principle of Law was present from the first. In fact the divine legislation stands known by all men (Rom. 2:12-15). Paul, therefore, brings out a real distinction between sin and guilt.² "Paul sees that it is a great advance to have discovered sin in one's own heart as guilt. Only the man who is conscious of his guilt can be saved from the sin of which he is guilty. Only as the individual acknowledges such guilt can the racial wrongness be successfully attacked."³

The Law is wholly spiritual, just, and good, and Paul accepts it as such. Paul states in Romans 2:15 that the law is recognized by conscience. Conscience to the Stoics was a judicial faculty, not a legislative one. Paul takes this over fully, and does not add the legislative sense. The conscience only judges us as we do or do not obey the Law of God (I Cor. 4:4, "For I know nothing against myself.")

The conscience of man, it appears, is a kind of palimpsest—like one of those ancient parchments which many of our libraries possess, from which the original script had been erased long ago, in order that the expensive material might be used by another writer. It is often possible by careful scrutiny to decipher here and there a word of the underlying script. So we may think of the Law of God as having been 'written on the heart' of man by the mere fact of his creation: Paul says as much in Romans ii. 14–15. But by reason of the perversity of the human will, the depravity of human society, and all that is comprehended in the ideas of the fall of man and original sin, the writing is hard to decipher. Where however something of it may be dimly read, it can be recognized as a first draft of that revelation of the will of God which is given to us clear and fresh in Christ.⁴

¹Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 68; idem, *Romans*, 36.

²Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

³Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 82.

⁴ Dodd, *The Gospel and the Law of Christ*, 21.

So it is through the Law that consciousness of sin comes (Rom. 3:20, 7:13).¹

Consequences of Sin

Ὀργή (Rom. 2:8)

One of the consequences of sin in Paul's thought, according to Dodd, is ὀργή.² This wrath is not identified with the last judgment; it is the sentence, not the judgment, the inevitable result of a life of sin. Since human history is a moral order, it is impossible to do wrong and not suffer the consequences.³ In fact, the wrath of sin means that man is left to his own evil propensities.⁴ He is left, in Dodd's words, "to stew in his own juice."⁵ It is an example of "retributive justice."⁶

A major argument for Dodd's interpretation of Paul's idea of wrath is that he notes that God is never made the subject of wrath.

It has been supposed that Paul thought of God as a vengeful despot, angry with men whom nevertheless He had Himself created with the liability to err, even if He did not create them to be damned for His greater glory. That is a mere caricature of Paul's view. There are, indeed, many indications in his use of language that 'the Wrath of God' is not being thought of as a passion of anger in the mind of God. It is not without significance that there are no more than three or possibly passages where the expression 'The Wrath of God' (or 'His Wrath') appears at all, while the phrase 'The Wrath' is constantly used in a curiously

¹Dodd, "Conscience' in the New Testament," 153–54; idem, *Romans*, 35–37; idem, "Natural Law in the New Testament," *NTStudies*, 140; idem, "The Meaning of the Epistle to the Romans. III. Moral Responsibility," *Religion in Education* 16 (1949): 41–43; idem, "The Ethics of the New Testament," 543; cf. idem, *Three Sermons*, 22 and idem, *EpistsJohn*, 24–25.

²(Ἡ) ὀργή; (τοῦ) θεοῦ = Rom. 1:18; Col. 3:6; Eph. 5:6; ἡ ὀργή = Rom. 3:5, 5:9, 11:22 (possibly with αὐτοῦ), 12:19, 13:5; I Thess. 1:10, 2:16; ὀργή = Rom. 2:5, 8, 4:15, 11:22 (σκεύη ὀργῆς); Eph. 2:3; I Thess. 5:9. See *Meaning of Paul*, 63, n. 13.

³Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 62; in idem, "Τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἀμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν," TMs, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford, Dodd writes that "wrath follows upon a sinful situation, and involves all who are implicated in it."

⁴*Ibid.*, 109.

⁵*Ibid.*, 63; idem, "The Meaning of the Epistle to the Romans. II. What Is Wrong with the World," *Religion in Education* 16 (1948): 6–7, Dodd says that God made the universe like that.

⁶Dodd, *AuthB*, 100–101.

impersonal way. Paul carefully avoids ever making God the subject of the verb 'to be angry.' Once he speaks of God as 'applying the Wrath'—a strange way of saying that God made His anger felt, if anger was thought of as a passion in the divine mind. It suggests rather a process directed or controlled by a person.¹

In I Thess. 2:16 ὀργή is a petrification in regard to the things of God, as in Rom. 11:8,25; 1:18f., 26,28. This culminates in a reprobate mind, in which the reason is corrupted to approve the things done. This is the same as blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, calling good evil and evil good. In Rom. 9:22 the vessels of wrath are such people. So human life is heading for destruction.² Sin inevitably brings ὀργή, moral degradation. This leads to the idea of death being the consequence of sin.

θάνατος (II Esdras 3:7, Rom. 5:12–14)

The reason why death has such a close connection with sin is that the Hebrews had an idea that death is separation from God—one goes into the darkness of Sheol.³ Even the doctrine of resurrection did not do away with that. So this idea is taken over by Paul. Sin is the sting of death (I Cor. 15:26), and death follows sin, independent of individual guilt (Eph. 2:1).⁴

But this does not mean a doctrine of total depravity in the sense of no goodness at all. Dodd does not believe that Paul was espousing "a rigid theory of the total depravity of human nature"⁵ because he holds the view that "human nature is fundamentally good, and evil only an abnormality."⁶ There is a possibility of relative goodness

¹Ibid., 63; idem, review of *TWNT*, ed, Gerhard Kittel, Lieferung V. *JTS* n.s., 5 (1954): 248; see Dodd's lengthy discussion in *Romans*, 20–29, 54–55; idem, "Ephesians," *ABC*, 1229; idem, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 82–95; idem, "The Epistle of John and the Fourth Gospel," *BJRL* 21 (1937): 145, n. 1; idem, "History and Doctrine of the Apostolic Age," 407; idem, *Epistles John*, 25–26, 112; idem, "The Life and Teaching of St. Paul," 373; idem, "The Teaching of Paul," 315–16.

²Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

³Dodd, "The Meaning of the Resurrection to Paul," 582.

⁴Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

⁵Dodd, *Romans*, 19.

⁶Dodd, "The Ethics of the Pauline Epistles," 319.

attained by individuals. The $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ is not absolutely in dominance over the intellect. But sin is definitely guilty on all, on the people as a whole. So the real unit of Paul's theology is the people of God.¹

Salvation

The world into which Christianity came was painfully aware of the need for salvation, and many preachers and philosophers from other faiths were ubiquitous in the Roman Empire, offering their wares and their promises of salvation.² In ethical religion the object of cure is the mystery of righteousness. This principle is illustrated in Isaiah 6. The greater the concept of righteousness in the OT, the greater the idea of the transcendence of God.³ The answer is given in II Isaiah and in Ezekiel. After the sins of Israel have been purified, God will intervene again as He did in bringing them from Egypt. Ezekiel, in the passage about the Dry Bones, shows that at the word of God the Israel dead in trespasses and sins will be revived. "The restoration of Israel, in fact, will have the character of a resurrection from the dead. The implication is that no human situation is too desperate to be retrieved by the grace of God, who works in history in His own incalculable ways and at His own time."⁴ This action also takes place in Jeremiah 31—the passage about the new heart—and is a quality of the age to come.⁵ As we have seen, Paul took over from the Primitive Church the idea that the last time has come. So the clue to his theology is fulfilled eschatology.⁶

¹Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

²Dodd, *GospNT*, 3.

³Dodd, *AuthB*, 176–80, 220–23.

⁴Dodd, *BibT*, 48; idem, *AccordSS*, 85–86, 103.

⁵*Ibid.*, 45–46, 76.

⁶Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament"; see above, pp. 120–125.

The vocabulary Paul uses to describe this salvation are σώζειν, δικαιοῦν καὶ δικαίωσις, ἁγιασμός, καταλλαγή, and ἀπολύτρωσις. From the way Paul brings these terms together we cannot construct an order of processes; they describe different aspects of the same process.¹

καταλλαγή

The word καταλλαγή is translated “reconciliation,” and is found in II Cor. 5:19; Col. 1:21; Rom. 5:10,11; 11:15. In Rom. 5:11, however, the AV translates it “atonement.” But the meaning, in Dodd’s opinion, is identical because in the OT “atonement” is used to translate the Hebrew “expiatory sacrifices.”² It is from these words that the Christian theological color has come.

The idea behind καταλλαγή is restoring peaceful, friendly relations between oneself, other people, and with God.³ “The problem of reality,” as Dodd puts it, “is at bottom a problem of personal relations.”⁴ The consequences of one’s sin bring disharmony within the soul. The conscience, stained with the guilt that hinders communion with God,⁵ longs to be cleansed and to enjoy the benefits of a undivided personality (Acts 23:1, 24:16; I Tim. 3:9; Heb. 13:18).⁶ The “irrelevant distinctions of class, race, and nationality”⁷ and “the intricate play of affections and feelings”⁸ set

¹Ibid.

²Dodd, *GospNT*, 87.

³Ibid., 1–2; idem, *AuthB*, 293–94.

⁴Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 33; idem, “Christianity and the World’s Challenge,” 12.

⁵Dodd, *Romans*, 53.

⁶Dodd, “Conscience’ in the New Testament,” 152; idem, “The Meaning of the Epistle to the Romans. III. Moral Responsibility,” 42; in idem, *Meaning of Paul*, 72, Dodd says that “this divided state of the personality is a state of miserable impotence, in which the freedom of the will is a miserable illusion.”

⁷Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 140.

⁸Dodd, *GospNT*, 81.

people in hostility with one another; therefore, all divisions among people, and all the sharp distinctions among the material things of life,¹ are the result of sin,² and this sin hampers all attempts of reconciliation among men. This sin, moreover, alienates humankind from God, Who is "the true end of our being."³ Dodd is quick to point out in several of his writings that man's reconciliation with God comes from the divine, not the human, side. God does not need to be reconciled to man; man needs to be reconciled to God. "God is the Reconciler, and we are the reconciled."⁴

The whole activity of God in the work of reconciliation is one of bringing peace and order. As a result we have peace with God (Rom. 5:1).⁵ Paul experienced this peace because his guilt was removed.⁶ This peace with God also means peace among men. When the vertical relationship between man and God has been made at peace, the way is made possible for the horizontal relationship of man and humanity to be made at peace, and without compromise. "Paul," says Dodd, "saw men divided into camps (Gal. 5:15). Behind that internecine strife he saw the hostility of men to God their common Father. Get rid of the enmity toward God, and the divisions of men may

¹C. H. Dodd, "Communism in the New Testament," *Interpreter* 18 (1921): 61.

²Dodd, "Realities," 125.

³Dodd, "The Teaching of Paul," 316.

⁴Dodd, *GospNT*, 87; idem, "Colossians," *ABC*, 1255; idem, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament," *ChristRN*, 10; idem, "The Thought of Paul," 316; see Rom. 8:7 and Col. 1:21.

⁵*Ibid.*; in idem, *Romans*, 72–73, Dodd comments on Rom. 5:2 that "this standing, or status, which is the effect of justification, is one of 'peace with God,' in place of the state of hostility between Him and us in which our sin had placed us."

⁶Dodd, "History and Doctrine of the Apostolic Age," 406; cf. idem, *EpistsJohn*, 24–25.

be overcome.”¹ In turn, all the spiritual forces in the universe will be reconciled to God, since it is His purpose “to sum up”² all things in Christ (Eph. 1:10).

The logical consequence of this reconciliation is the ultimate inclusion of everyone in the family of God.³ Dodd makes this universalism especially clear in his essay “The Biblical Doctrine of the People of God”:

It is possible to fix the center about which the new People of God is constituted, but not to draw its circumference. No attempt to define the limits of the Church, either exclusively or comprehensively, proves workable—as we have so often discovered in our discussions about reunion—and in fact no such definition can hold good which stops short of the totality of the human race.⁴

¹Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 55; idem, “The Message of the Epistles: Ephesians,” 61–62; idem, *Romans*, 73.

²This is Dodd’s translation of ἀνακεφαλαιόομαι. In “Ephesians,” *ABC*, 1226, he justifies his translation: “*To sum up* means, in logic, to bring a multiplicity of concepts under one inclusive idea (Rom. 13:9); in mathematics, to express in one quantity the value of many separate quantities. A cognate word is used of a corporation so completely organized that a single individual can fully represent the whole body and all its members.” This word is also found in Rom. 13:9. It is translated in the Ephesians passage “gather together” (AV); “unite” (RSV); “bring into unity” (NEB); “summing up” (NASB); and “be brought into a unity” (REB). In the OT it is found only in Theod. and the Quinta to Ps. 71:20. See further *LSJ*, s.v., “ἀνακεφαλαιόω”, which points out that in classical Greek, the word means primarily the summing up of an argument; *TDNT*, s.v., “ἀνακεφαλαιόομαι”; *BGD*, s.v., “ἀνακεφαλαιόω”; and *NIDNTT*, s.v., “Head.” In “The Mind of Paul: II,” 125, Dodd paraphrases the term in this quotation: “The ultimate unity of all things in God is secured not by the mere suppression or destruction of hostile elements, human, sub-human, or super-human, but by bringing them all into harmony with the will of God as expressed in Christ.”

³Dodd, *GospNT*, 89–90; idem, *Meaning of Paul*, 158–59; idem, *AuthB*, 207–11; idem, “The Ethics of the Pauline Epistles,” 326; idem, *Romans*, 223; idem, “Ephesians,” *ABC*, 1222, 1226; idem, “The Message of the Epistles: Ephesians,” 61; idem, “Theology and Ethics in the New Testament”; “Hellenism and Christianity,” 121; idem, “The Kingdom of God and History,” 29–30; idem, *How To Read the Gospels*, 16; idem, *BibT*, 65; idem, “The Relevance of the Bible,” 161–62; idem, *ChristRN*, 15; idem, “Man in God’s Design According to the New Testament,” 18–20; cf. idem, *InterpFG*, 375, 423; idem, “The Mind of Paul: II,” *NTStudies*, 120–26; idem, “Natural Law in the New Testament,” *NTStudies*, 131, 138; idem, “The Communion of Saints,” *NTStudies*, 153–55; idem, “The Biblical Basis for Christian Unity,” 24; idem, “What Is the Purpose of God?” 6; idem, “Jew and Greek,” 371; idem, “The Biblical Doctrine of the People of God,” 38.

⁴Dodd, “The Biblical Doctrine of the People of God,” 31.

Dodd believes that Paul's universalism was decided for him at his conversion and that it also underwent change and development.¹ Early on Paul had no doubt that the church was a supra-national society. In his early epistles he regards the church as an exclusive society over against the rest of humankind, which, according to II Thess. 1:6–10, must be destroyed at the second coming of Christ. In his later epistles, however, he has moved to a truly universal appreciation of the church, which includes all mankind and forms the centre of a reconciled universe (Rom. 9:32, 8:18–23; Col. 1:20; Eph. 1:10, 3:6–10).² Dodd finds special significance the fact that the Greek words for “reconciliation” are not found in any epistle earlier than II Corinthians (except in 8:11, when *καταλλάσσω* is used of a marital reconciliation) and that they occur in important passages in II Corinthians 1–11, Romans, Colossians, and Ephesians.³ The reconciliation of Jew and Greek into the ‘new humanity’ of the Body of Christ is, in Dodd's interpretation of Paul, a sacrament and symbol of the ultimate unity of all things.⁴ Thus

the Church, God's chosen people out of mankind, appears as the ἀπαρχὴ of a race which as a whole is under a universal Covenant with God, and is destined to be ‘summed up in Christ’. The historical beginnings of the Church in the past are known; its specific modes of action in the present are clearly defined—the preaching of the Gospel and the communion of the Holy Spirit—and these are the basis of its *koinonia*. But the frontiers of the *koinonia* cannot be traced short of the boundaries of the human race. The Church is the trustee, under the Covenant of Sinai and of the Cross, of the benefits of that Covenant on behalf of all mankind.⁵

¹Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 49.

²Dodd, *AuthB*, 208; in idem, “The Mind of Paul: II,” 123, Dodd writes, “The coming of Christ in fact marks a crisis in God's dealings with the human race, in that down to that time His purpose proceeded by successive stages of exclusion (Ishmael, Esau, the unrepentant Israel of prophetic times, and the Jews who rejected Christ), but since His resurrection it proceeds by way of inclusion, until in the end no member of the human race is left outside the scope of salvation”; idem, “What Is the Purpose of God?” 4. See above, pp. 122–25.

³Dodd, “The Mind of Paul: II,” *NTStudies*, 125, n. 1.

⁴Dodd, “Ephesians,” *ABC*, 1226; idem, *ChristRN*, 6, 8, 20; idem, “Jew and Greek,” 120.

⁵Dodd, “The Relevance of the Bible,” 161–62.

δικαιοῦν

This word should mean, thinks Dodd, “to make just”; but there is no such expression in ordinary Greek. “It always starts from the Hebrew קָדַשׁ , as the causal of קָדַשׁ in the sense of ‘to be in the right.’”¹ It means, first of all, “to set right what is wrong”; secondly, with personal object, “to treat justly, to give the guilty his deserts, or reward”; and thirdly, with impersonal object, “to deem or pronounce right.”²

Dodd says that in the NT δικαιοῦν is never found in the sense “to pronounce righteous.”³ In the LXX it is found in that sense, δικαιοῦν being used as a synonym of δικαίος , ἀποφάνειν , and κρίνειν . Several times it is used with the meaning “to justify the unrighteous” (Ex. 23:7 of an unjust judge; cf. exact use in Romans 4:5, $\text{δικαιοῦν τὸν ἄσεβη}$). So we may assume that Paul uses it according to LXX usage. He is using a paradox here, to show that God does not act on the eye for an eye basis (II Cor. 5:19).⁴

But Paul probably has in mind a wider usage of the basic Hebrew word. It means both “righteous” and “in the right.” So the noun comes to mean “an act of vindication.” This becomes particularly important in II Isaiah. Israel has lost its standing with God, but God, by an act of grace, has put Israel in the right (Isaiah 51:6). Paul has this Hebraic background in mind.⁵

In Romans 1:17 Paul means that God's act of vindication has been revealed, or better, *is* being revealed. Dodd paraphrases the verse, “God is now seen to be

¹Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 46–53; idem, “Some Problems of New Testament Translation,” 273.

²Dodd, “Theology and Ethics in the New Testament.”

³Dodd, *Romans*, 51; in idem, “Theology and Ethics in the New Testament,” Dodd says that Romans 5:19, $\text{δικαίον καθιστάναι}$, means to make righteous: δικαιοῦν never means this.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.; idem, *Romans*, 51–52; idem, “The Life and Thought of St. Paul,” 372–73.

vindicating the right, redressing wrong, and delivering man from evil.”¹ So God's work is a delivery of man from all damnation. It brings out the whole idea of God's free grace. He does not impute the guilt to man but delivers *man from it*.² God, Who has acted in Christ, acquits man because He Himself is righteous, not because man is righteous.³ He acquits man because He is a God of love.

Since the nature of God Himself is love, in giving us love He imparts to us something of His own nature, or, in Pauline language, His Spirit. Thus love is (here, as in I Cor. xii. 31–xiii. 1) the primary ‘spiritual gift.’ It is at this point that the originally legal and forensic concept of justification decisively enters the sphere of moral experience. That which justifies is the love of God for the undeserving..., and in justifying us that love becomes the moral principle by which we live.⁴

Therefore, it is from this justified state that a right character will grow.⁵

ἀπολύτρωσις

Another concept or metaphor of salvation is ἀπολύτρωσις, “redemption.”⁶ It comes to mean the same as ἀπελευθέρωσις, the emancipation (of a slave or prisoner of war).⁷ In the OT it is specially used of Hebrew slaves from Egypt (Ex. 6:6, Deut. 7:8: so also Jeremiah, Psalms, etc.) and is also used in II Isaiah of the second emancipation from Babylon, where God's people were not slaves (Isaiah 44:23).⁸

This OT concept is Paul's meaning—the process by which the people of God are freed from slavery and able to live to God (Eph. 1:14; Col. 1:14; cf. ἐξαγοράζειν, Gal.

¹Dodd, *Romans*, 13.

²Ibid., 53.

³Ibid., 59.

⁴Ibid., 74; idem, “The Thought of Paul,” 315.

⁵Dodd, “Theology and Ethics in the New Testament.”

⁶Ibid.

⁷Dodd, “Colossians,” *ABC*, 1253; in “The Thought of Paul,” 315, Dodd notes that the NEB translates ἀπολύτρωσις as ‘liberation’. The REB does the same.

⁸Dodd, “Theology and Ethics in the New Testament.”

4:5; for the events of Exodus, cf. I Cor. 10). Usually the ἀπολύτρωσις is already attained, but Paul teaches in Romans 8:23 that Christians are awaiting both υἰοθεσία καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις. Moreover, redemption is closely tied to justification. "The justified man is like a slave freed from his master's power; or like a widow whom her husband's death has emancipated from the absolute dominion (*potestas*) into which the Law gave the married woman; or like the heir who on attaining his majority bids farewell to guardians and trustees, and becomes master in his own house."¹

The object of redemption is primarily the people of God: the individual in intrinsically redeemed, yet he must work out his ἀπολύτρωσις day by day.²

ἀγιασμός

This entire process of salvation may also be regarded as ἀγιασμός. There is no basis in Paul for a distinction of sanctification from justification; both are both past and future (I Cor. 6:11, I Thess. 4:3). "The distinction which theology has made between justification as the momentary act of deliverance and sanctification as the process of attaining perfection is not to be found in Paul. For him they are only different aspects of the same act."³

πίστις

Faith is the condition in which salvation is obtained. We are not saved πίστει, by faith, but by His grace διὰ πίστεως (Rom. 3, Eph. 2:8). Faith is the condition on which the act of God becomes obtainable for us; it is "an act of sheer trust in God the All-sufficient,"⁴ and reflects an "attitude of pure receptivity in which the soul appropriates what God has done."⁵

¹Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 116. Ἀπολύτρωσις is associated with δικαίωσις in Rom. 3:24; I Cor. 1:30; cf. Eph. 1:7, 14; Col. 1:14.

²Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

³Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 117-18.

⁴Dodd, *Romans*, 56.

The meaning of πίστις is not complex but simple, although Paul's use of the word can be complex. It is set against works and against every form of self-originating activity in man.¹ It is best illustrated by Rom. 4:16–22. Abraham looked upon himself as dead and gave the glory to God and not to himself. It is in a sense a moment of passivity and negativity which gives full scope to the positive activity which proceeds from God. Such faith is itself the gift of God (II Cor. 5:18 πάντ' ἐξ αὐτοῦ).²

The object of faith is strictly πρὸς θεὸν εἰς Χριστόν. But the most usual phrase is πίστις Χριστοῦ, probably a genitive of definition: "Christ-faith." Ultimately the object of faith is God.³ Salvation is the work of God which becomes effective for man on the basis of faith.

χάρις

God's side of salvation is ἀγάπη or χάρις. His love, "the centre of all Christian theology,"⁴ is exhibited over against human lack of merit; it has χάρις as its character. Derivatively, χάρις may be used of the effect of God's love in man, though the proper term for this is χάρισμα (II Cor. 8:1–9).⁵ χάρις is exhibited in the sending of Christ (Gal. 4:4, Rom. 8:3). All that Christ suffers and does in life and death is an exhibition of the divine activity by which man is redeemed.⁶ Obedience (ὑπακοή) is the

⁵Ibid.; idem, "The Meaning of the Epistle to the Romans. I. The Question at Issue," *Religion in Education* 15 (1948): 78.

¹Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 107.

²Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament." This is essentially the meaning as πίστις in the Synoptics, e.g., the epileptic in Mark 9.

³Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 107, n. 3, says that "πίστις ἐν Χριστῷ is rather faith towards God as conditioned by communion with Christ, Col. i.4, Eph. i.15."

⁴Dodd, *The Bible and Its Background*, 86.

⁵Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

⁶Dodd, *The Gospel and the Law of Christ*, 16.

one word which describes Jesus' life, set over against the παρακοή of Adam.¹ In each case they are corporate representations of humanity in the person of its representative. Christ redressed the original wrong by complete and unreserved obedience to the will of God, especially in His death (Phil. 2:8), and thus His ὑπακοή is exhibited. Christ was so completely obedient that there was nothing in his life and death by which the mature character and efficacy of the divine grace does not become manifest.

The Death of Christ

Whatever is said of the efficacy of the cross is always said by virtue of His representative character, and always in the light of His resurrection.

In Relation to the Powers

In Philippians 2 Paul states that Jesus took on Himself μορφή δούλου. The dominion exercised by the powers is to death. Christ, by entering into the domain of the powers, fell under the dominion of death. The powers put Him to death not knowing who He was (I Cor. 2:8). But death for Him was not exclusion from the divine presence but the preliminary to exaltation to the right hand of God. In this respect He was the representative of humanity and in Him humanity passed out of the domain of the powers into the sphere of life (Col. 2:15).² Furthermore, "there is evidence in the epistles that Paul expected the spiritual powers now hostile to God and to man's salvation ultimately to be reconciled to Him through Christ."³

¹Dodd, "Christianity and the World's Challenges," 12; idem, *Three Sermons*, 20–21; idem, *AccordSS*, 125.

²Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

³Dodd, *Romans*, 184–85. Dodd has in mind Gal. 4:8–10; Col. 1:16–20; and Eph. 1:10. See also idem, *Meaning of Paul*, 36, n. 8; idem, "Ephesians," *ABC*, 1226; "Colossians," *ABC*, 1255; and "The Message of the Epistles: Ephesians," 61, n.1.

In Relation to Sin

Similarly Christ, by coming in the flesh, passed into the dominion of Sin. Sin puts in a claim to the σάρξ, which is its slave; but God passed a condemnation (Rom. 8:3): ἐν Χριστῷ man got a verdict against Sin. Christ fell under the ὀργή (II Cor. 5:21), but by the resurrection Christ changed the character of death: He died *to sin* once for all (Rom. 6:10). "By taking 'flesh,' Christ occupied the post of danger, for Sin was lord of the flesh, and claimed Him as its slave. That He successfully resisted that claim is the gift He gave to all men who are partakers with Him of our common nature."¹ Thus humanity corporately in Him dies from sin, and the σῶμα ἁμαρτίας (Rom. 6:7) is dissolved in order that a new σῶμα may take its place.²

In Relation to Law

In Galatians 3:13 Paul introduces the idea of the curse.³ Dodd notes that the old idea of the independence of a curse was probably in the back of Paul's mind. Orestes in the Greek legend exhausted the curse of the House of Atreus in his own person and reconciled the Furies who pursued the family. "To the thought of the ancient world the

¹Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 96.

²Dodd, *Romans*, 89–92; idem, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

³In "The Historical Problem of the Death of Jesus," *MNTStudies*, 84–87, Dodd discusses this verse in detail. The expression ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς ὁ κρεμάμενος ἐπὶ ξύλου is the LXX translation of Deut. 21:23 קָלָהּ תִּהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר לֹא הִיאָהֵם לְלֹאֵי which is the conclusion of the Deuteronomic law about the gibbeting of the bodies of the criminals. In *Bab. Sanh.* 43, the writer states that "Jesus was hanged on the Eve of Passover. The herald went before him for forty days, saying: 'He is going forth to be stoned because he practiced sorcery and enticed and led astray Israel. Let everyone knowing anything in his defence come and plead for him.' But nothing was found in his defence, so he was hanged on the Eve of Passover." Dodd then notes that the verbs in this tractate translated "enticed" and "led astray" are two used in Deuteronomy 13:1–11, a passage warning those who do such things to Israel will be stoned to death. The tractate does not state that Jesus was stoned, but that He was *condemned* to stoning and was hanged. Dodd concludes: "The inference I should wish to draw is that the manner in which Jesus was put to death was accepted as the equivalent of the stoning and gibbeting which was the penalty prescribed in the Torah for the crime of 'enticing' and 'leading astray', and that the responsibility for it was attributed, both by Christians and in the Jewish tradition represented by *Bab. Sanh.*, to the Jewish authorities" (p. 87). See further idem, "Jesus as Teacher and Prophet," 55; idem, "Miracles in the Gospels," 507; idem, *Historical Tradition*, 95, 116–17, 132; idem, *Founder*, 11.

curse was a real force launched upon the world and destined ultimately to work itself out."¹ So Christ has exhausted in his own person the curse which the law inflicted on human nature, and the Law, having accomplished its work, comes to an end: *Χριστὸς τέλος νόμου* (Rom. 10:4).²

Jesus entered into a sinful situation: the intriguing hierarchy of the priest, the perverted piety of the Pharisees, the injustice of the Romans, the violence of the Zealots, the instability of the disciples—all a heritage of long courses of sinful action. When confronted by Jesus, the sin inherent in the situation came to a climax and led to a disaster, and the disaster fell upon Him.³ All the forces of evil descended upon Christ; yet God took that which was most evil—the death of His only Son—and transformed it into a supreme occasion for a new creation.⁴ Yet in His own inner being He was untouched by the situation. From His side His death was the supreme expression of his obedience, the liberation from His limitations, and a triumph completed by the resurrection.⁵

The value of all this for us is dependent on our incorporation in Christ; it is as man's representative that Christ won the victory over the situation.

In Relation to Sanctification

In old religion the way of breaking down the unholiness of man was by sacrifice. The victim represents the people, but by the act of consecration the victim is also in solidarity with the deity. By the solidarity the people are removed from

¹Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 101.

²Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

³Ibid.; cf. idem, *Epists John*, 27.

⁴Dodd, "The Gospel of the Glory of God," 334; idem, "Christianity and the World's Challenge," 10–12; idem, "The Resurrection"; idem, "Everyman's Book. 20. Conclusion."

⁵Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 96; idem, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament"; idem, *Three Sermons*, 20–21.

unholiness to holiness. The agent is the sprinkling of the blood—the life-principle. The essential thing is the release of the blood—the life—dedicated to God and imparted to the worshippers.¹

Paul uses a ritual metaphor in Romans 8:3, *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*. The blood of Christ removes sin. In Romans 3:25 the word ἸΛΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ is used. It means an instrument of *λάσκεσθαι*, which means to placate an angry person, especially a deity; and to expiate a sin, remove taint of unholiness. In LXX *λάσκεσθαι καὶ ἐξιλάσκεσθαι* are used about 110 times, twice in the sense of placating an angry man; three times of propitiating God (Zech. 7:2, 8:22 of pagans propitiating the God of Israel, and Mal. 1:9 used in scornful irony). There is no other case of God being the object; the normal object is the sin of man, the altar, or the temple. Its characteristic meaning is to perform an act by which a taint is removed, i.e., to expiate. But sometimes God Himself is the subject of the word, and it not infrequently translates a word meaning “to forgive.” The idea is that only by divine forgiveness can the taint be removed.²

So Paul's use means to remove the taint of sin, and not to propitiate God. In Romans 3:25 it is God who provides the *ἱλαστήριον*: we may conclude that Paul uses a means by which sin is forgiven and man is made fit for communion with a holy God. Once again it is an act of God.

So that which in the forensic sphere is justification, in the religious sphere is sanctification. “The distinction which theology has made between justification as the momentary act of deliverance and sanctification as the process of attaining perfection is not to be found in Paul. For him they are only different aspects of the same act.”³

¹Dodd, “Theology and Ethics in the New Testament.”

²See Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, chp. 5, 76–95, for his etymological study of the term, and see further idem, *Meaning of Paul*, 99–100; idem, review of *TWNT*, ed, Gerhard Kittel, Lieferung V. *JTS* n.s., 5 (1954): 248; idem, *Romans*, 20–29, 54–55; idem, “Ephesians,” *ABC*, 1229; idem, “The Epistle of John and the Fourth Gospel,” *BJRL* 21 (1937): 145, n. 1; idem, “History and Doctrine of the Apostolic Age,” 407; idem, *EpistsJohn*, 25–26, 112; idem, “The Life and Teaching of St. Paul,” 373; idem, “The Teaching of Paul,” 315–16. See above, pp. 185, 192, n. 1.

³Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 117–18.

Reconciliation

Reconciliation must always take the form of obedience. There can be no compromise between God and man. Christ's death is the supreme act of obedience and therefore a reconciliation, as Christ is representative (Col. 1:21, II Cor. 5:14). In Romans 5:10 the *καινή κτίσις* starts with emergence from death and is consummated by the resurrection-life.¹

Incorporation in Christ

The death of Christ is an objective act of God, complete in the resurrection. Not that He personally needed to be redeemed, justified, and reconciled, but the humanity which He represented did need it. So far the individual to be saved is to enter into that Body of Christ which is the act of the saving act of power. As Christians are united with Him, Christ possesses a body on earth, continuous with the old Israel, by death and resurrection.²

It is in the light of this that the phrase *ἐν Χριστῷ* must be understood. In his Cambridge lectures on the church, Dodd says that Deissmann proved that *ἐν* can only be used in a local sense. Deissmann also said that it must be understood as *ἐν πνεύματι*, a sort of atmosphere, which can be reversed. This implies a kind of mystical relationship in which we are immersed in Christ. But this leads to emphasis on depersonalizing and purely individual character foreign to Paul's thought. Schweitzer in *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* points out correctly that Paul uses *ἐν τῷ σώματι* of members of the body (e.g., I Cor. 12:18): so *ἐν τῷ σώματι Χριστοῦ* becomes naturally *ἐν Χριστῷ* because Christ is the body. We are members of the Body and therefore in Christ.³

¹Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament." See also Col. 3:1–4 and Eph. 1:18f.

²Dodd, "Ephesians," *ABC*, 1228, 1233.

³Dodd, *Cambridge Lectures on the Church*, 1946; idem, "The Thought of Paul," 318–19. In idem, *Meaning of Paul*, 129–30, Dodd says, "Where we find those words ['in Christ'],

The Spirit and the Church

The outstanding characteristic of the church is that it possesses the Spirit of God or Christ.¹ This is part of the κηρύγμα of the primitive church. Miraculous phenomena are taken as convincing signs of the presence of the Spirit. Of the reality of these we have first-hand evidence (Rom. 15:19, I Thess. 1:5, I Cor. 12-14). I Corinthians 12-14 is a criticism of primitive values. At the bottom of the list comes speaking with tongues, which was valued perhaps most highly. Next come miraculous healings, etc. Near the top of the list come prophecy, knowledge, and wisdom, and the pinnacle of the whole is ἀγάπη. This transforms the whole conception of these miracles. Paul applies two tests: their rational and ethical content (he exalts prophecy against speaking with tongues); and edification (the upbuilding of the Body of Christ).² Speaking with tongues has no constructive value for the community. Ἀγάπη is the very principle by which the life of the church as a community is built up.³

It is the love of God which is the focus and origin of the whole act of God. "Love is the key to the character and operation of God."⁴ The highest gift of the Spirit is the

'in Christ Jesus'] used we are being reminded of the intimate union with Christ which makes the Christian life an eternal life lived in the midst of time. The deeper shade of meaning would often be conveyed to our minds if we translated the phrase 'in communion with Christ'."

¹Ibid.; idem, "The Holy Spirit in the New Testament."

²Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 140-41.

³Ibid.; idem, *ApostPD*, 135-40.

⁴Dodd, *AuthB*, 213; see further, idem, *The Bible and Its Background*, 86; idem, *Romans*, 196-99; idem, "The Communion of the Saints," *NTStudies*, 154; idem, "Things Most Certainly Believed: God in Christ," 117; idem, "Hellenism and Christianity," 129-30; idem, *EpistsJohn*, xlv-xlvii, 108-10; idem, *The Gospel and the Law of Christ*, 7, 11-12; idem, *Gospel and Law*, 3, 42-45; idem, *InterpFG*, 327-30, 422-23; idem, *Three Sermons*, 24-25, 33; idem, *Founder*, 64-67; idem, "Everyman's Book. 20. Conclusion"; idem, "Religion in Its Contemporary Context. The Marks of Meaning and Purpose in Society. The Kingdom of God."

very principle which lies at the root of man's salvation. When Paul speaks of the Holy Spirit, he means (Rom. 5:5) the presence of the love of Christ or of God in the church.¹

The Spirit is that which Christ possesses and which Christ gives. It is constitutive of His Sonship, and it is His Spirit which builds up His Body. The Spirit enters into the individual through Baptism (I Cor. 12:13). We become members through the Spirit's indwelling. To be in the Spirit is to be in Christ and the indwelling of Christ is by the Spirit (Rom. 8:9-11). ὁ κύριος τὸ πνεῦμα ἐστὶ (II Cor. 3:17) is not a metaphysical identity but an identity of operation. What Christ does the Spirit does. The work of the Spirit is the mould in which Christ works in and for His body.²

For there in the body the Spirit (νοῦς Χριστοῦ) affects a transformation of the human νοῦς (Eph. 4:23, Rom. 12:2). In humanity νοῦς represents the higher element, a continuum in which individuals partake. But by reason of sin the νοῦς may become ἄδοκιμος. So within the redeemed humanity πνεῦμα is the continuum in which individuals partake. As they partake of it the νοῦς is then transformed into the πνεῦμα of Christ. It is a κοινωνία of the church. It is also a κοινωνία of Christ, a partaking of Christ.³

The Spirit thus manifested in the individual Christian becomes the organ of religious experience. By it we have knowledge of God. The Spirit is the self-consciousness of God, and this Spirit of God is granted to us that we may know that which God grants to us. Again it is by the Spirit (Rom. 8:15, Gal. 4:5,6) that we know we are sons of God (in Gal. 4:5,6 ὅτι is declarative: the Spirit is the witness to our divine sonship as experienced). Again it is the Spirit that is the real subject of prayer (Rom. 8:26f.). The Christian's prayer to God is an utterance of the Spirit within him.⁴

¹Dodd, *Cambridge Lectures on the Church*, 1946.

²Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 126-30; idem, *Cambridge Lectures on the Church*, 1946 (especially lecture seven); idem, "The Holy Spirit in the New Testament."

³Ibid., 139-40; idem, "Communism in the New Testament," 61; cf. idem, *Epistles John*, 6.

⁴Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament"; idem, *Romans*, 135-36.

Finally the Spirit is creative of the ethical life in man. The effect of God's objective act is to place us in a sphere of life in which the fruit of the Spirit grows. Paul always develops his ethical teaching in the framework of the terms "in Christ," "the Body of Christ," "the Spirit," *ἀγάπη*, e.g., Rom. 12:4, Eph. 4:25, 6:1, Col. 3:18, Phil. 2:1.¹

The work of salvation is objectively complete, but it becomes an experimental appropriation through the Spirit. The status of righteousness, freedom (II Cor. 3:18), holiness, becomes actual righteousness, freedom, holiness. For Paul the Christian life in the Spirit is essentially an ecclesiastical life: *ἐν πνεύματι = ἐν Χριστῷ* in the Body of Christ, the church. In this connection the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper take on special significance.²

Paul's Christology

Dodd notes that Paul's Christology is a highly speculative structure of thought and makes use of a difficult philosophical vocabulary. It is interesting that Dodd spends very little time discussing this subject in his writings.³

The Heavenly Man or Second Adam

The use of *ἄνθρωπος* is at bottom equivalent to the use of "Son of Man" in the Synoptics. Paul takes over the christological conception. This links it with a widespread religious idea of the time, that there was a kind of heavenly counterpart and archtype of humanity as its ideal side, i.e., the human *νοῦς*. The term lent itself to a conception like Paul's in which Christ embodies in Himself the whole of humanity as it is in God's purpose. He is the image of the glory of God, and the new humanity has the image and glory of God. So in I Corinthians 15:45 there is a comparison between

¹Ibid.; idem, *Meaning of Paul*, 132–37.

²Dodd, *Meaning of Paul*, 142–43; idem, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament"; idem, *Cambridge Lectures on the Church*, 1946.

³Ibid., 84. This chapter on Christology is the shortest one in *The Meaning of Paul for Today* except for the introductory first chapter.

Adam and Christ. Adam was simply a creature of earth. There is a movement from the earthly to the spiritual. In Romans 5 there is a comparison between Adam's disobedience and the obedience of Christ. This heavenly ἄνθρωπος was thought of as being the image and offspring of God. So Paul; in Him we have real humanity which is at the same time divine. The appearance of Christ on earth is the appearance of this divine humanity on earth: it realizes itself by death to the world and resurrection through which God purposed to create a people for Himself.¹

Son of God

As in the Synoptics, Paul thinks of Christ as embodying in Himself the new Israel, and as such He is Son of God. But it is an ontological significance. Cf. Philo, who compares the Heavenly Man with Adam, the πλάσμα of God, but the One Heavenly Man is γέννημα θεοῦ. The Heavenly Man is also aboriginally Son of God. Romans 1:4 might suggest that He became Son of God after the Resurrection; but ἐν δυνάμει is to be emphasized, and perhaps this represents a common confession of faith rather than Paul's own way of formulating the matter. Elsewhere he implies an eternal or pre-existing sonship (Rom. 8:3, Gal. 4:4). In Romans 1:3 sonship is constituted by the πνεῦμα. For believers the Spirit is the spirit of υιοθεσίας; but it is also the Spirit of Christ and it becomes the Spirit of adoption for us by virtue of κοινωνία (I Cor. 1:9, Rom. 8:29). Those who become sons of God do so through their relation with Him who is Son of God.²

Lord

This term was probably also taken over from the primitive church. The evidence for this is that Paul cites an Aramaic formula—Maranatha—which shows that it was in the liturgy of the current Aramaic church. The fundamental

¹Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament"; idem, *Meaning of Paul*, 84–85; idem, "History and Doctrine of the Apostolic Age," 408.

²Ibid.; idem, *Meaning of Paul*, 85; idem, "History and Doctrine of the Apostolic Age," 409.

testimonium is Psalm 110:1, which was taken by the church to designate Christ as Lord, as being raised to the right hand of God and His enemies being subject to Him. So Paul represents the status of the crucified and risen Christ (Phil. 2:9-11, Rom. 14:9, 10:9), the status as the head of the body of redeemed humanity.

It is widely held that κύριος is derived from Hellenistic sources. It is certainly found in uses analogous to Paul, for example, κύριος ἰσως. Paul is aware of this; there are in the world many θεοὶ and many κύριοι, but for us only one (I Cor. 8:5). He speaks of the table of demons in parallel and comparison to the table of the Lord. But the origin of this pagan use is *not* Greek: the absolute use of κύριος as a divine title was repudiated by the Greeks. Dodd contends that the idea of God as the Lord of His worshippers is Semitic.

Paul quite freely and without misgiving applies passages in the OT speaking of God as κύριος to Christ because those saving acts performed by Christ are in fact the acts of God. There is a coeval relation of God with His worshippers. In this sense Paul's use of κύριος meets the pagan use rather than being from it.¹

The Wisdom of God

This phrase is used almost incidentally and is not developed. But it came to play a large and important part in Paul's thought. "This 'Wisdom-Christology' made it possible for Paul to give a more adequate account of what was meant by calling Christ the Son of God."² It all starts from the description of Wisdom in Proverbs 8:22f, an eternal divine principle, possessed by God from the beginning and the agent of God in Creation. Ecclesiasticus and Wisdom both have this idea of an immanent, creative, divine principle worked out in more detail. The more the transcendence of God was emphasized, the more important became this immanent idea. (Genesis 1:1 "in the beginning" could be translated "by the first principle," i.e., wisdom; cf. Greek ἐν

¹Ibid.; idem, "History and Doctrine of the Apostolic Age," 409-10.

²Dodd, "History and Doctrine of the Apostolic Age," 409.

ἀρχῆ). See Colossians 1:15f: εἰκὼν, πρωτότοκος, ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα, πρὸ πάντων, κεφαλὴ, ἀρχή, ἐν πᾶσιν πρωτεύων. With the exception of πλήρωμα, all the terms can be traced to the Wisdom Christology and most of them to various interpretations of Genesis 1:1. Πλήρωμα means properly the totality, explained later in Colossians as πλήρωμα θεότητος.¹ Paul is probably transferring the gnostic idea to mean all the attributes of God. There is no Jewish antecedent for applying this conception to the Torah. Paul has transferred to Christ the attributes of the Torah because Christ is τὸ τέλος τοῦ νόμου. Νόμος is replaced by ὁ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος. Paul's conception of Christ's relation to humanity assigns to Him a position of absolute supremacy. In this is included his dominion over powers and principalities. (This is necessary, Dodd argues, if man's salvation is to be assured through His work). So the question must be considered in relation to creation at large. These cosmic functions inevitably fall within the conception of Christ's Saviourhood. So we go back to the initial purpose: God willed to create man in his image: Christ is the image and the image is somehow related to the creation as a whole. This could best be expressed in terms of wisdom-theology.²

The Theology of the Fourth Gospel

John represents the κήρυγμα as a recital of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus as the climax of history. He presupposes the church, in fellowship as the Body of Christ under the leadership of the twelve disciples; the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper;³ and the kerygma in which the primitive church proclaimed its faith to the non-Christian world. Since the Fourth Gospel is based on the kerygma, it has a literary form, like the synoptics, of a gospel, a εὐαγγέλιον. The main topics in the

¹Dodd, "Colossians," *ABC*, .

²Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

³Cf. Dodd, "Eucharistic Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel," 530–31.

gospel of Mark and in the primitive forms of the kerygma in Acts recur in the same order in the Fourth Gospel.¹

The Eschatology of the Fourth Gospel

Dodd believes that John 1:1–14 is synonymous with Paul's philosophy of history in Romans.² The λόγος is the word of the Lord in OT. Jesus came to God's own people just as the prophets did; and here, as well, Israel is apostate. Those who received Him became sons of God. The Word now became flesh, representing the tabernacling of God with His people. The facts represent the inauguration of a new age in which the word of God which came to Israel through the prophets now dwells among them permanently and the glory of the Lord is revealed. "The Prologue thus represents a thoroughgoing reinterpretation of the idea which...is expressed in terms of the 'realized eschatology' of the primitive Church."³ But John carries to its logical conclusion the realized eschatology. The relations of the world and God had become final. History itself is turned into a manifestation of the glory of God: "the hour cometh and now is." In the Fourth Gospel, therefore, there is no future second coming of Christ recognized.⁴ Jesus' words in John 13-17 involve a reinterpretation by the author of the Fourth Gospel of popular Christian eschatology in that His coming again means His return in His resurrection in the glory of, and by the gift of, the Spirit.⁵ History still moves on and there will be a last day; but the last day no longer has the same eschatological

¹Dodd, *InterpFG*, 6; idem, *ApostPD*, 164–75; idem, "The Central Theme of St. Mark's Gospel. The Passion Narrative (3) The Cross and Resurrection"; cf. *How to Read the Gospels*, 29. These topics are the preaching of John the Baptist, the inauguration of Jesus as Messiah, His ministry in Galilee, His journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, His sufferings, death and resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Spirit.

²Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

³Dodd, *InterpFG*, 296.

⁴Dodd, "The Kingdom of God and History," 32.

⁵Dodd, *InterpFG*, 296.

significance as in the Synoptists. But “the hour cometh and now is, when the dead shall hear....” The real entry into eternal life, Dodd argues, has taken place in the Lazarus-story. The last day simply “tidies things up.”¹ Thus the Fourth Gospel has most radically transformed the eschatology inherited from Judaism.²

Eschatological values are concentrated in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. The Jewish conception of two ages is largely replaced in the Fourth Gospel by the conception of two orders of being after the manner of Plato—the order of πνεῦμα and the order of σάρξ, or the ἀλήθεια and their copies.³ To be sure, ζωὴ αἰώνιος in the Fourth Gospel reflects the Jewish doctrine of the two ages (4:14, 36; 6:27; 12:25).⁴ But in the author's reinterpretation of the eschatology, he uses Platonic categories. There is a clear-cut division in this reinterpretation, but not an ultimate dualism since everything came into existence through the Word of God. Dodd explains that when the present enjoyment of eternal life is so conceived,

the epithet αἰώνιος acquires a fresh shade of meaning. The believer possesses ζωὴ αἰώνιος here and now (iii. 36, v. 24, vi. 47, vi. 54). Inevitably the emphasis now falls on the qualitative rather than the quantitative aspect. As we have seen, Jewish usage has the expression עולם יי, signifying ‘everlasting’ life, as contrasted with temporary life; and the expression יי העולם הבא, which implies a qualitative difference from the life of the age; but when the life of the Age to Come, with its specific quality, is transplanted into the field of present experience (which is never the case in Rabbinic Judaism), the the chief thing about it is its difference in quality from merely physical life. Its everlastingness is a function of its divine quality. We may then recall that Plato fixed the meaning of αἰώνιος as signifying ‘eternal’, in the strict sense of timelessness. This quality belongs to the divine or heavenly παράδειγμα, of which the visible universe is a copy.⁵

¹Dodd, “Theology and Ethics in the New Testament.”

²Dodd, “The First Epistle and the Fourth Gospel,” 142; idem, “History and Doctrine of the Apostolic Age,” 411.

³Dodd, “Theology and Ethics in the New Testament”; idem, “History and Doctrine of the Apostolic Age,” 412.

⁴Dodd, *InterpFG*, 146; cf. John 5:28–29.

⁵Dodd, *InterpFG*, 149.

Knowledge of God in the Fourth Gospel

Dodd says that we live in an order of darkness and death contrasted with one of light and life.¹ God is thought of in the religious thought of the period as τὸ ὄν and transcendent. The question asked by the religions of the first century is, How can man rise into the realm of light? The answer given by most religions is by knowledge of God. The Fourth Gospel replies to the question in John 17:3, "eternal life is to know thee." Another maxim of the time was ὅμοιος ὁμοίῳ νοεῖται—cf. John's "born again." Jewish thought said that at the end man would be transfigured. Παλιγγενεσία is found in Matthew in this sense. This παλιγγενεσία is already given in Christ's work on earth, and the possibility of rebirth is already hidden in the Gospel facts.

How was rebirth to be attained? According to the mystery-cults, it was through ritual initiations, often with ecstatic experiences. There was an attempt to explain Christianity likewise in some of the Gnostic cults.

To understand what John means by γνῶσις we have to bring in the Hebraic ideas. Knowledge in Hebrew is primarily *experience* of the object, not self-contemplation. So knowledge of God involves a reciprocal relation with God. Man must recognize God in His acts for mankind and His demands upon mankind. The primary object of God's knowledge in the Fourth Gospel is Christ—never conceived in terms of contemplation. Knowledge of God He communicates to man. Man is thus the direct object of God's concern and responds to God's concern in obedience and love. In this, Christ is the mediator. He takes the place of the various intermediary beings in Gnosticism. The terms applied to Christ are largely terms applied to such intermediaries in contemporary thought.²

¹Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

²Ibid.

The Christology of the Fourth Gospel

Messiah

Dodd translates John 20:31, the expressed purpose of the Fourth Gospel, as “this has been written that you may hold the faith that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that, holding this faith, you may possess life by His name.”¹ In this translation Dodd prefers the inceptive aorist πιστεύσητε to the continuous present πιστεύητε, since he believes that the Fourth Gospel was written to a non-Christian public “in the varied and cosmopolitan society of a great Hellenistic city such as Ephesus,” although the continuous present would not rule out such a readership.² Because the author intended that the response of these readers to his book should be to acknowledge Jesus as messiah and Son of God, we should expect that he should expound on this theme throughout his work. Indeed, that is the case. Dodd is quick to point out that in the listing of the titles of Jesus in the first chapter of the Fourth Gospel, “it is as though the evangelist had intended to emphasize the fact that his own distinctive teaching rested directly on the messianic beliefs of the primitive Church, and with this aim had begun his work by calling the roll of the traditional messianic titles of the Lord. For in primitive Christian usage they are all messianic, though for the most part they cannot be shown to have been current in this sense in pre-Christian Judaism.”³

The author of the Fourth Gospel, Dodd contends, develops the title “Messiah” in several ways. First, the author shows some acquaintance with Jewish messianic ideas. He is aware that this title is a royal title. He avoids the Lucan phrase χριστὸς βασιλεύς, but he retains the expression “King of Israel” with Matthew and Mark. Unlike Matthew and Mark, who use “King of Israel” in passages referring to the mockery of Jesus, the author of the Fourth Gospel uses it of the crowd at the Triumphal

¹Dodd, *InterpFG*, 9; idem, “Theology and Ethics in the New Testament”; cf. idem, “The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ,” 382.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., 228.

Entry and of Nathanael when he confesses Christ. Moreover, this evangelist represents Pilate using the similar title "King of the Jews" in his question to Jesus, implying a political connotation. Dodd concludes that the title "king" as Messiah with reference to Jesus "is to be understood only in the sense of authority in the spiritual sphere, the authority which belongs to one who knows and communicates absolute truth."¹ Consequently, this understanding of Messiah in Christian usage must be peeled of a large part of its connotation in Jewish usage, and a major task of the author is to refute certain of these Jewish ideas: the Messiah's ancestry (John 7:40–44), his performance of many signs (John 7:31), his place of origin (John 7:25–29), and his "abiding forever" (John 12:34).² Second, the evangelist portrays the Messiah as one whose kingship is "the sovereignty of the Truth which He reveals and embodies. In virtue of this He demands obedience from men."³ Third, as we have stated in chapter four, the author uses the title "Lamb of God" as a synonym for "Messiah."⁴ And last, in line with the apostolic kerygma, as God's Messiah, Jesus inaugurates the new order of the Spirit.⁵

Son of Man

Dodd notes that the title "Son of Man" in the Fourth Gospel is given a content largely derived from the idea of the Heavenly Man, coming down from heaven equipped with knowledge which no one in the sphere of *σάρξ* can know, and drawing *men* up to God with Him.⁶ Son of Man also has OT overtones, where τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου

¹Ibid., 88–89.

²Ibid., 87–93.

³Ibid., 229.

⁴Ibid., 292–93. See above, p. 226, n. 3.

⁵Ibid., 293.

⁶Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the New Testament."

frequently translates the Hebrew בְּרֵאשִׁית , in the sense of "human being," e.g., Psalm 8:5, and once the Aramaic בְּרֵאשִׁית in Daniel 7:13.¹ But Dodd's primary emphasis is on the Hellenistic conception of the Heavenly Man who is the archetype of the true relation of men to God. The Johannine Son of Man is

represented symbolically by light, bread, the vine; in relation to the empirical light, bread and vine He is ἀληθινός, the ultimate reality lying behind phenomenal existences, or that which ultimately they mean. The φῶς ἀληθινόν, for example, is what Philo calls ἀρχέτυπον φῶτος, the real or archetypal Man, or the Platonic Idea of Man.²

The Johannine Son of Man is in such ultimate union with God that it can be postulated that he dwells in God. Moreover, he is the inclusive representative of ideal or redeemed humanity. Dodd picks up on an old theme when he says that the Johannine Son of Man, as representative of this humanity, takes within himself the "solidarity of believers with Christ." This aspect of solidarity has precedent in the Christian tradition, in the Synoptics and in Paul.³ Unlike the Hellenistic Man, who acts as a person but is really no more than the personification of mythical abstractions, the Johannine Son of Man is "a real person, that is, of a concrete, historical individual of the human race, 'Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph (i. 45).'"⁴

Son of God

Son of God is almost a generic term for an intermediary, δεύτερος θεός, a reproduction of the Being of God on a lower plane from which it is possible to reach the truth about God. Philo freely adopts this conception: you cannot see God, but you can see

¹Dodd, *InterpFG*, 241. Dodd notes that both verses are cited in the NT as testimonies to Christ. See above, pp. 150, 154–55.

²Ibid., 244; idem, "Hellenism and Christianity," 128.

³Ibid., 244–45; Dodd says (p. 247) that "in His death the Son of Man draws all men into union with Himself, and so affirms His character as inclusive representative of the redeemed race."

⁴Ibid., 248–49.

His Logos, His πρωτόγονος υἱός.¹ Yet it is also clear that there is a difference in the way the Son of God reflects the Father: it is a personal relation, which is not predicated of an intermediary in non-Christian literature of the time. This Johannine idea of the Son of God was moulded upon the prophetic model. Strong emphasis is laid upon the dependence of the Son upon the Father.² Dodd points out that the author of the Fourth Gospel, in passages such as John 5:39–47; 6:60–61, 66; 9:39–41; 11:45–53; and 12:31,

is concerned all through to exhibit the work of the Son as having the two inseparable aspects of ζωοποίησις and κρίσις, and to represent these as the distinctively divine activities; for to give life is the work of the Creator, and to judge is the work of the Ruler of the universe. To be Son of God is to exercise these functions in continuous and absolute dependence on the Father. It is thus the nature of the work which He accomplishes which finally distinguishes the Son from the prophet.³

It is thus similar to the Synoptics' Son of God theology (Matt. 11:27).⁴

Logos

Dodd raises the question, Did this term color the thought of Christian theology?⁵ It was not widely current except in Philo because the happy ambiguity of the term served Philo—it could mean both “thought” and “utterance.” Therefore Philo can speak of the Logos as the immanent rational principle and can bring it into touch with passages in OT speaking of “the word of the Lord.”⁶ He has attempted to make a harmonious unified whole out of elements of Jewish and Hellenistic thought.⁷ The world is κόσμος

¹Dodd, “Theology and Ethics in the New Testament.”

²Dodd, *InterpFG*, 255. Such dependence “is of the essence of sonship.”

³*Ibid.*, 257.

⁴Dodd, “Theology and Ethics in the New Testament”; cf. *idem*, *InterpFG*, 253.

⁵*Ibid.*; cf. *idem*, “The Jews and the Early Christian Church,” 302–303; *idem*, “Jew and Greek,” 118

⁶*Ibid.*; *idem*, “The Background of the Fourth Gospel,” 340–41; *idem*, “A Story Retold,” 35; *idem*, “The Prologue to the Fourth Gospel and Christian Worship,” 9–11.

⁷Dodd, “Hellenism and Christianity,” 126

νόητος and at the same time the utterance of God. But the personification is a mere personification. It is nothing more or less than the κόσμος νόητος itself and by this κόσμος νόητος you can attain to knowledge of God.¹ The Prologue would fit both conceptions. A Stoic would recognize the immanent rational principle, and a projection of the transcendent world of ideas (Plato). But the focus of the doctrine on the Incarnate Logos differentiates it from all other conceptions. What we know of the Logos is not from the κόσμος νόητος but from the incarnate Logos—the focal point at which the ways of the eternal light meet. The same applies to the Son of Man and Son of God. John speaks of a historical individual.

Dodd lists four ways in which the author of the Fourth Gospel uses λόγος. First, he uses the plural λόγοι as synonymous with ῥήματα and is used by Jesus and others in the plain sense of “words” spoken. Second, it sometimes denotes a “proverbial saying,” a “statement,” or a “discourse.” Third, it stands for Christ's message. Fourth, it is used to stand for God's revelation to men in Scripture and in Jesus Christ.²

If the knowledge of God is to be attained by man, it must be through the historic life and work of Christ. So every act is significant: it is the σημεῖον of the nature of God the ultimate reality. Thus the author of the Fourth Gospel “writes in terms of a world in which phenomena—things and events—are a living and moving image of the eternal, and not a veil of illusion to hide it, a world in which the Word is made flesh.”³ In this light, the Prologue is a skeleton outline of the evangelist's *Weltanschauung* and of the

¹Dodd, “Theology and Ethics in the New Testament”; idem, “From St. Paul to the Reign of Constantine,” 446–47.

²Dodd, *InterpFG*, 265–66; idem, “The Gospel Preached by the Apostles,” 49; Dodd writes in “The Centre of Christian Experience,” 85–86, that John 1:1–14 is a “classical interpretation of how God speaks to man”; idem, *About the Gospels*, 41–42.

³*Ibid.*, 143; idem, “Present Tendencies in the Criticism of the Gospels,” 250, “The Evangelist holds the Platonic view of the phenomenal world as a copy of the eternal world of real existence. Jesus' whole life is a manifestation in space and time of the Logos, the eternal constitutive Meaning of things”; idem, *The Bible and Its Background*, 74; idem, “The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament,” 73.

symbolism that he utilizes as reflecting this same fundamental *Weltanschauung*.¹ This understanding does not make the λόγος unhistorical because σάρξ ἐγένετο, which emphatically and uncompromisingly calls attention to the earthly and concrete actuality of Jesus. Therefore knowledge of God comes simply from getting into contact with the historical reality, the σάρξ, of Jesus Christ.² As Dodd says in a BBC radio broadcast, "The mystery of the Word made flesh is not to be sought on the summit of some Everest of metaphysical speculation or historical reconstruction. It awaits us in the worshipping fellowship of the universal Church."³

¹Ibid., 285.

²Dodd, "Theology and Ethics in the Fourth Gospel"; idem, "The Prologue to the Fourth Gospel and Christian Worship," 14, 18.

³Dodd, *Three Sermons*, 17.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this thesis was to examine the structure of C. H. Dodd's biblical theology by looking at his edifice of exegesis. A secondary purpose was to investigate the unpublished writings of Dodd, which have never been taken into consideration by any other writer critiquing Dodd's life and work.

Summary

Chapter one was a study of Dodd's background. The climate of Dodd's early years, his classical training in Greek and Latin, his conversation with German theology—especially the theologies of Harnack, Weiss, and Schweitzer, and his commitment to Congregationalism were all areas which dealt with his background. Primary sources were used in this investigation. Dodd's biblical theology was influenced by all four areas. Throughout his professional career, Dodd emphasized the aspect of tradition and of corporate worship instilled in him from early childhood. His classical education provided him with the necessary tools needed for biblical research and acquainted him with the philosophy of Plato (as well as other philosophers). This classical training also instilled in Dodd the discipline of searching for truth and the desire for academic excellence. Dodd made the transition from the study of classical Greek to the study of koine Greek with ease, and he used his knowledge of koine Greek to explain some of the mistranslations of the Greek NT by scholars who had been initially trained in classical Greek. It is the opinion of this writer that Dodd made one

of his greatest contributions in the area of biblical translation. As demonstrated in chapter four, he was a master at translating the Bible, and for all the criticism of his theories of the kerygma, of realized eschatology, and of the background of the NT, no one can fault him on his principles of translation. One wishes that Dodd had made a complete translation of the NT in addition to his work on the New English Bible. Dodd's summer in Berlin acquainted him with the best in German scholarship at the time. His attendance at lectures, his personal contacts with professors, and his grasp of the German language made him more proficient as a biblical theologian. In particular, his knowledge of the writings of Harnack, Weiss, and Schweitzer helped him focus on particular areas of biblical research where he would make his most distinctive contributions. Finally, Dodd's commitment to Congregationalism was probed. True to his heritage, he attended Mansfield College, Oxford, for his ministerial training, and he became well-versed in the affirmations of Congregationalism. It was concluded that many principles of Congregationalism found their way into the development of Dodd's biblical theology and that Dodd was faithful to these affirmations throughout his life. Dodd's view of the church was particularly affected by his Congregational mentality.

Chapter two examined Dodd's views on biblical authority. Thus this chapter is theological in nature. The first section researched Dodd's views from a chronological perspective. His understanding of biblical authority as professor at Mansfield College, Oxford, at the University of Manchester, at Cambridge University, and as professor emeritus during his retirement was documented and analyzed. Dodd modified his understanding of biblical authority over the course of time. From the moderately liberal positions in *The Authority of the Bible* written at Oxford, he moved toward a more satisfactory view of the authority of the Bible. That is to say, in his earlier days Dodd emphasized the response to the biblical revelation as opposed to the revelation to which we respond, and from his Cambridge days he emphasized the biblical revelation over against the response to the biblical revelation. He wisely shed

the category of religious genius as a principle of biblical inspiration and correctly utilized the principle of salvation-history, providing him with a more biblically based understanding of the Bible.

The second section catalogued the qualifications for a biblical interpreter. It presented Dodd's justification for using the critical method by proving that this method was used by scholars and laypeople in every period of church history.

The third section evaluated Dodd's views on biblical authority. The important point was made that Dodd was trying to affirm the authority of the Bible. He used the critical method in his defense of biblical authority to gain a proper perspective of the biblical narrative. Since, in his opinion, this perspective is acquired when the books of the Bible are put in their correct historical sequence, Dodd goes into great detail in his critical method to produce this sequence. Dodd holds the views of OT critical scholarship in the JEDP theory, in the division of the book of Isaiah into three parts, and in the late dating of the Psalms and of Daniel. If this historical sequence of the OT writings is justifiable, Dodd says this understanding would explain some of the ethical difficulties of the OT, e.g., I Samuel 15, portions of the Pentateuch, and the imprecatory Psalms. Dodd also holds to the general conclusions of the Synoptic problem, and he uses the results of source criticism in an attempt to ascertain the earliest and therefore most reliable traditions in the Gospels. Evangelical scholars have criticized certain secular presuppositions of the critical method and have reasoned that the method would be a useful one if these presuppositions were eliminated. Dodd's critical method was tested for the evidence of five of these presuppositions and revealed negative results. His presuppositions were that his critical method reflected the philosophical presuppositions in the Scriptures; that the Bible, as an historical book, could be studied by using the refinements of the critical method; and that the Bible, as a theological book, could be studied by affirming the presupposition that God has acted in Jesus Christ and has made Himself known within Holy Scripture. This approach, Dodd reasons, bears more fruitful results than a prior dogmatic belief in biblical inerrancy. Finally,

a case study was made of Dodd's particular contribution to biblical studies—the Pauline chronology. In a fascinating essay “The Mind of Paul: Change and Development” he outlines his position that Paul changed his eschatological outlook around the time of the writing of II Corinthians. He accounts for this change in Paul by the application of the principles of realized eschatology. The early Paul was a fanatic apocalypticist; the more mature Paul, as seen in his later epistles, severed himself from his apocalyptic moorings and developed a more sound theology, especially in his emphasis on universalism.

Chapter three investigated the philosophy of the Bible, as understood by Dodd. Hence, this chapter is philosophical in nature. Dodd conceives of this philosophy in terms of the history of the Bible. History, as he defines it, is occurrence plus meaning, and criticism of Dodd's position as understood by Rudolf Bultmann and T. A. Roberts was examined and found unfair. Arising from this philosophy of the Bible is Dodd's concept of the kerygma. A survey of Dodd's listings of the kerygma was made, and criticism was offered. A primary criticism was that Dodd attempted to prove too much with this theory. In addition to the kerygma, an investigation into Dodd's understanding of the testimonies of the OT in the NT was attempted, and criticism of his position by Wilcox and Sundberg was examined. Dodd's views on the kerygma, the testimonies, realized eschatology, and his understanding of the sacrament of the Eucharist all revolve around his understanding of the biblical philosophy of history.

An examination of Dodd's critical method was dealt with in chapter four. Dodd was not a great textual critic, but the evidence shows that he was aware of textual problems and that he knew how to deal with them. As stated earlier, he was a master at biblical translation. The principles of biblical translation listed in chapter four are worthy of memorization. With respect to source criticism, Dodd used this tool primarily to defend his theory of realized eschatology. With respect to form criticism, he correctly used this tool to search for the historical tradition in the Gospels. As such he stood within the conservative tradition of British NT scholarship, and his criticism

of the skepticism of much German form criticism is worthy of note. Finally, this chapter investigated Dodd's views on the background and environment of the NT. He recognizes the importance of studying the Semitic elements in the NT. The studies of aramaisms, the LXX, OT history, Jewish apocalyptic literature, and Rabbinic literature all play a part in NT interpretation. The importance of studying the Hellenistic elements in the NT was seen by Dodd. In several of his writings Dodd examines the history and development of Hellenism and its impact upon the Jews in the Dispersion and upon the mystery religions. Finally, Dodd's views on the background and environment of the Bible were evaluated in two areas. First, it was noted that Dodd was inconsistent in his use of background material. An examination of Dodd's reviews of the Johannine commentaries by Bernard, Howard, Strachan, and Brown revealed that Dodd wavered in his emphasis on the Hebraic element and the Hellenistic element in the Fourth Gospel. Dodd was ignorant of a growing trend in Johannine studies to emphasize the Hebraic background of the Fourth Gospel, while he was content to view the author as "the 'Master Propagator' of Christianity" to the world. Second, it was shown that Dodd spent a tremendous amount of energy delving into the "universe of discourse" in the Fourth Gospel. Dodd's contributions in the area of the Hermetic literature were analyzed. Although there are similarities in language and style between this literature and the Fourth Gospel, Dodd neglected to mention some of the differences noted by Lyman and by Kilpatrick. This neglect was symptomatic of a tendency in Dodd's critical method to disregard the Hebraic elements in the Fourth Gospel. This observation was confirmed by the fact that Dodd paid little attention to the discovery of the DSS and saw little importance for these scrolls in the study of the Fourth Gospel and for the NT at large.

Chapter five described Dodd's biblical theology from a Pauline and Johannine perspective. No attempt was made to deal critically with each point of Dodd's biblical theology, but it remains for us to offer some comments relative to the relationship of that chapter with Dodd's critical method.

Conclusions

If one word could adequately describe the biblical theology of C. H. Dodd, this writer thinks that it would be "reconciliation." One is impressed by the number of times the word appears in Dodd's writings. But the word is more than a statistic of Dodd's vocabulary; it is the *leitmotif* of his critical method and his biblical theology.

This thesis can be demonstrated in two ways. From the perspective of Dodd as an individual, it is evident that Dodd was profoundly affected by his personal psychological crisis during his early years at Mansfield College. Amos Wilder, in a personal interview, reflected upon how strongly Dodd's personal problems touched everyone at Mansfield. It was during that time that Dodd came in contact with the theories of the New Psychology movement through his friend Selbie and through books by J. A. Hadfield and W. Fearon Halliday.¹ As demonstrated in chapter five, Dodd views the Pauline anthropology in light of personality conflicts. The problem with ourselves, with others, and with God is one of personal relations. The purpose of the cross was to effect a reconciliation among all three parties.² Thus to be a Christian, in Dodd's experience, is to have the personality, divided without Christ, totally reorganized around a new center in Christ.³ Dodd believes that the moral universe is a

¹Dillistone, *Dodd*, 79–80, writes that Dodd experienced deep emotional scars after his engagement with Lesley Griffiths was called off. "This experience left a deep scar and some months later he was seeking the help of Dr. J. A. Hadfield, one of the earliest practitioners in England of the new methods of psycho-analysis. Over a period of more than four years he paid periodic visits to Dr. Hadfield and, although the nature of his treatment is not known, it is abundantly clear that at this stage of his life he became aware of the profound importance of its interpretation of the place of religion in human life but also of the possibilities which it offered for resolving in a positive way his own emotional problems. He never attempted to become an expert in the study of psychological theories but he gained sufficient knowledge of the new insights which psychological investigations had made available to use them effectively in his interpretation of the writings of the New Testament, in his grappling with the question of authority and later on in his consideration of the constraints which were hindering the cause of reunion amongst the churches."

²Dodd, *AuthB*, 293–94.

³Dodd, "The Ethics of the New Testament," 552.

unity,¹ and since sin has divided elements within the universe, a total and complete reconciliation is needed. This reconciliation reaches its ultimate fulfillment in Dodd's biblical theology in his interpretation of Ephesians 1:10.²

Not only is this reconciliation reflective of his biblical theology; it is also reflective of his critical method. While Dodd does not resort to harmonizations to clarify problem passages within the Scriptures, he clearly wants to reconcile these passages in the light of the coming of Christ. This understanding fits in with his view of the progressive revelation within the Bible. In addition, Dodd acknowledges the unity of the NT in his biblical theology. It seems that his program of the kerygma is one of reconciling the great diversity within the NT under the control of the kerygma.

From Dodd's theological perspective, reconciliation is the conclusion to his emphasis on the fact that the kingdom of God has come. Dodd makes this point clear in his essay "The Theology of Christian Pacifism."

First of all, he notes that the aim of the kingdom of God "transcends all the divisions of blood, language, nationality, class and the like by which men are separated from one another. It contemplates mankind as a body (of which the Church is called to be a pattern), in which if one member suffers all suffer with it; a body which grows by the mutual service of every part, until, in fullness of time, all things are 'summed up', or brought into unity, in Christ (I Cor. xii, 12-27; Eph. i, 10, ii, 19-22)."³ Dodd's understanding of the solidarity of humanity is evident within this quotation.

Second, the method to attain this reconciliation is not by coercion, which would

¹Dodd, *Romans*, 19.

²See above, p. 263.

³Dodd, "The Theology of Christian Pacifism," 10-11. See further idem, *Meaning of Paul*, 140. In *Parables*, 35, n.1, Dodd writes, "Whatever social implications may be given to the teaching of Jesus, the essentially religious idea of God reigning in the lives of men and in human society lies at the bottom of it all." And in *Founder*, 76-77, he says, "With the coming of the Kingdom of God a new era in relations between God and man had set in. Morality might now draw from fresh springs."

violate man's freedom, but by reconciliation. "The unity of mankind under the Kingdom of God is effected by the formation of new interests, motives and 'sentiments', which are common to all men, in place of those which set them against one another."¹ These new sentiments are given freely by God; they do not originate from man. "Our hope for the future," Dodd writes, "depends on God's ability to call into being, in the men and women in our generation—in us—something that has not been there before, for the furtherance of His purpose in the world."²

Third, this unity of humanity takes place through the working of divine *agape*, which Dodd understands as "grace towards the undeserving"³ and as that "redemptive goodness of God towards the undeserving."⁴ Dodd defines this divine *agape* as "the distinctive activity of the Divine Nature."⁵ Even the coming of the Kingdom of God is an act of the love of God.⁶

Fourth, this love is directed towards men as individuals, giving them value because the individual then rises to full personality.⁷ "God sets a high value on the individual, which does not depend on their worthiness or merit."⁸

¹Ibid., 11; cf. idem, *Gospel and Law*, 74.

²Dodd, "The Gospel Preached by the Apostles," 66.

³Dodd, "The Theology of Christian Pacifism," 11; idem, *Romans*, 74.

⁴Dodd, *Romans*, 197. In *GospNT*, 86, Dodd expounds on this theme, "The goodness of God is a creative goodness, aiming only at the perfection of the life He gave to men. When that life is impaired by sin, He draws near, not to redress an abstract legal balance by making the punishment fit the crime, but to give more life and so overcome evil with good."

⁵Dodd, "The Ethics of the Pauline Epistles," 310.

⁶Dodd, *EpistsJohn*, 108.

⁷Dodd, "The Theology of Christian Pacifism," 11.

⁸C. H. Dodd, "RELIGION IN ITS CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT. The Marks and Meaning of Society: The Kingdom of God, 12 March 1968," TMs, BBC Radio Broadcast Transcript, Dodd Papers, Mansfield College Library, Oxford.

Fifth, the death of Christ exhibits the divine charity by going to all lengths in suffering the effects of human sinfulness, even to death. Looking at the death of Christ from the point of view of the moral order, "it is an example of the corporate impact of the principle of retribution."¹ By His example on the cross, Jesus acted in such a way as to mirror perfectly the attitude to men which He attributed to the Father in heaven.²

Sixth, Dodd says that all the above is adequately expressed by saying that we are all children of the Father in heaven and brothers one of another under the Kingdom of God.³ Therefore, in this human family under the kingdom of God all relations among members should be determined by pure love.⁴ Since the members of this family are to copy the love of God towards us in Christ Jesus,⁵ the idea that one should hate an enemy breaks down. In "The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ" Dodd explains

The one universal ethical principle is that which is revealed in God's free grace to undeserving men in offering them the blessings of His kingdom. The unqualified benevolence and beneficence of the heavenly Father towards all His creatures is to be imitated by His sons. They will always be beforehand with loving actions towards a 'neighbor,' that is to say, to any one in a position to need such beneficence, whether he be a brother, a stranger, or even an enemy. They will not be concerned to judge his conduct, knowing that they themselves deserve the judgement of God, but that His mercy saves them from it. Still less will they wish to requite wrong with wrong, since to forgive and to be forgiven by God are two sides of the same experience. Since God their Father attaches a mysterious and immeasurable value to each individual creature of His (even to a sparrow, much more to a man), His sons will similarly regard 'every one'; and Jesus emphasized this by saying that to receive a child was to receive Him, and in receiving Him to receive God (Mark 9:37).⁶

¹Dodd, "The Theology of Christian Pacifism," 12.

²Dodd, *EpistsJohn*, 27.

³Dodd, "The Theology of Christian Pacifism," 15.

⁴Dodd, "The Communion of Saints," *NTStudies*, 155.

⁵Dodd, *The Gospel and the Law of Christ*, 11–12; idem, *Gospel and Law*, 42; idem, "The Thought of Paul," 322–23; idem, *Founder*, 63–66.

⁶Dodd, "The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ," 379–80; idem, "Natural Law in the New Testament," *NTStudies*, 136; idem, *The Gospel and the Law of Christ*, 20; idem, "The Jews and the Beginnings of the Christian Church," 294.

In *The Founder of Christianity* Dodd devotes several pages to show that Jesus redefined the concept of “neighbor” to include anyone who was in need. He notes that Jesus may have been speaking of teachings such as the precept in the *Manual of Discipline*, found in the DSS, to “love all the children of light...and to hate all the children of darkness, each according to the measure of his guilt,” when He redefined love. Jesus substituted “Love your enemies” for “Love your neighbor.”¹ Therefore, Dodd says that the real meaning of life lies in the love of God and that it becomes real to us when we cease to assert ourselves and try to live in loyalty to God and charity to our neighbors.²

The conclusion Dodd reaches, on the basis of the above discussion, is that war is wrong. There is a painful tension among those who desire to live under the principles of the kingdom of God. It is in experiencing this tension that we become “fellow-workers with God,” because the impact of the kingdom of God upon the world takes place through our transforming the whole order of human life. Dodd writes,

we therefore judge deliberately that, while we may hope to Christianize industry, commerce, government, the criminal system, and other activities of the social order, by taking part in them, in spite of their un-Christian elements, we cannot Christianise war by taking part in it. For this judgment we must take personal responsibility; by it the reasoned justification of our action stands or falls. Our judgment may be mistaken, our action wrong: we are fallen and fallible creatures. God alone knows. At best we may say with Paul, ‘I have nothing on my conscience, but I am not thereby justified. My judge is the Lord’ (I Cor. iv, 4). First and last we rest under His judgment and His forgiveness. We live in faith that the Almighty, who over-rules all things, makes use of the imperfect actions of those who accept His kingdom ‘as a little child’ to make an end of this evil, when He will and as He will.³

Consequently, one of the primary social manifestations of this love of God shed to all mankind is peace. Accordingly, Dodd says that the Christian must always strive for peace with his pagan neighbors, and if problems and collisions occur, then the provocation must not come from the Christian side. Not only should one refrain from

¹Dodd, *Founder*, 65–67.

²Dodd, “Everyman’s Book. 20. Conclusion.”

³Dodd, “The Theology of Christian Pacifism,” 15.

shocking one's neighbors who are not in the faith; one should also seek to do them good.¹ When the neighbor in turn happens to be an enemy, Dodd says emphatically that there are to be "no reprisals."² To the objection that if injuries are overlooked, the moral order will suffer, Dodd replies that "the moral order will look after itself, without the crude attempt of the individual to uphold it by 'getting even with' people who have done him wrong."³ Dodd argues that evil can never be overcome by evil, but only by a greater good. Thus in its wider application, where the divine love is shown,

there evil will be met with an unwearying beneficence which, in the end, will wear out the evil. That such will be the ultimate result is an optimistic belief which goes with the faith...that the mercy of God will finally include all men; and it can be effectively held, probably, only if human nature be believed to be fundamentally good, and evil an abnormality. This Paul held, in spite of 'original sin.' The injunction, 'Do not let evil get the better of you; get the better of evil by doing good,' is an admirable summary of the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount about what is called 'non-resistance,' and it expresses the most creative element in Christian ethics.⁴

In summary, Dodd's pacifism and universalism derive much of their justification in his biblical theology from his particular understanding of the wrath of God as a principle of retribution. Many pacifists quote Dodd in their rationalization of pacifism.⁵ In response to Dodd, scholars have shown that his philological study of the

¹Dodd, *Romans*, 199–200; idem, review of *TWNT*, *JTS* 39 (1938): 30, Dodd says that εἰρήνη has a social-ethical conception, as well as an eschatological conception.

²*Ibid.*, 200; cf. C. H. Dodd, *The Leader* (London: Independent Press, 1922), 17, where he translates the words of Jesus at His arrest, "Put up your swords,' he cried. 'No resistance!'"

³Dodd, *Romans*, 200.

⁴*Ibid.*, 201.

⁵See, e.g. G. H. C. Macgregor, *New Testament Basis of Pacifism* (London: James Clarke and Co. Ltd., 1936), chapter five, "The Wrath of God," 68–88, who refers several times to the relevant pages of Dodd's *Romans* commentary on the wrath of God. A. T. Hanson, *The Wrath of the Lamb* (London: SPCK, 1957), 85, likewise quotes Dodd approvingly. In his discussion of Rom. 1:18, Hanson says, "Throughout this exposition of the operation of the wrath we find Paul using language which suggests that he viewed the wrath essentially, not as something directly inflicted by God, but as something which men bring on themselves."

λασθήριον word group to refute the idea of propitiation has not been totally convincing.¹ To his argument that wrath is never used with God as the subject, O'Brian has shown that "the wrath' (ἡ ὀργή) and 'wrath' without the article (ὀργή) decisively point to God's holy anger (just as εὐδοκία, 'good pleasure,' and θέλημα, 'will,' can be used without qualification of the good pleasure or will of God).² To his argument that the wrath of God is an impersonal principle of retribution, O'Neill correctly responds that

there is little reason to suppose that the Bible regards God's wrath as some impersonal mechanism within the universe, to be distinguished from his personal mercy.... In this context [Rom. 1:18] the phrase refers to God's condemnation of men's ungodliness and unrighteousness in unrighteously holding down the truth, and the words probably refer to God's specific condemnation on the day of judgment, rather than to his disapproval of such behaviour at present.³

And to his argument that it is wrong and even un-Christian to attribute to God the irrational passion of anger, O'Neill again responds that

even the highest human ideals of personality require an honest recognition of evil and wickedness for what it is. If men are commanded not to judge others, that is because of their own limitations and sins. If God, who knows the secrets of men's hearts, were not to judge men justly, he would be denying the special status he gave to men, and treating them not as responsible creatures but as an irresponsible part of creation. The teaching of Jesus, to which Dodd appeals, certainly speaks of God's limitless forgiveness and his fatherly kindness to the unthankful and evil, but it also speaks of an end to this age, an end to the possibilities for repentance, and of an essential condition, that men should repent and ask for forgiveness.

The Bible everywhere assumes that God will judge men for what they have done in this life, and that God's punishment will fall on the unjust.⁴

¹See the bibliography listed above, p. 192, n. 1.

²Peter T. O'Brian, *Colossians, Philemon*, WBC-44 (Waco: Word Books, 1982), 185.

³J. C. O'Neill, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, PNTC (London: Penguin Books, 1975), 43. Likewise, James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, WBC-38A (Waco: Word Books, 1988), 55, correctly argues that in Paul's view "wrath" is something God *does*.

⁴*Ibid.* John Ziesler, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, JPTNTC (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1989), 75, criticizes Dodd for allowing "too little weight to the connection, both in Jewish tradition and in Paul, between the wrath and the Day of Judgment. It was at the End that *orge*/wrath was to be revealed, especially against those who oppressed God's people..., and Paul too saw the End as the Day of Wrath. As God is indubitably the Judge, it is unlikely that Paul saw the wrath, even in its present operation as in [Rom. 1:18], entirely in impersonal terms."

O'Neill's last point is well-taken as a criticism of Dodd's universalism. Dodd is certainly correct in emphasizing the message of the Bible that "God is love," but he goes too far when he writes that "God is love' implies *all* His activity is loving activity."¹ The Bible speaks of present *and* future judgment. Oepke comments with penetrating insight that

Paul sometimes emphasises so strongly the comprehensive saving work of the second Adam as to give rise to the appearance of a final restoration of all [Rom. 5:18, 11:32; I Cor. 15:22; Eph. 1:10; Col. 1:20]. Yet in truth the reference is only to a final hope, or perhaps only to a final tendency of the divine work of salvation. It is Paul who also emphasises most strongly the election of grace (Rom. 8:29; 9:11, 17; Eph. 1:4 etc.). He knows that judgment will have a twofold outcome (Rom. 2:7ff.; II Cor. 5:10), and expects the actualisation of the $\delta \theta \epsilon \delta \varsigma \pi \acute{\alpha} \nu \tau \alpha \acute{\epsilon} \nu \nu \acute{\alpha} \sigma \omega \nu$ by the overthrow of all opposition (I Cor. 15:25ff.). Thus there remains a strong tension throughout the NT, and, even if there is an underlying universalism, for reasons of admonition the main emphasis falls on the fact that few will be saved (Matt. 22:14; 7:13f.; Luke 13:23ff.; I Cor. 9:24ff.).²

In conclusion, Strecker writes that because many of Dodd's works have not been translated into German, "um so dringlicher ist, das Werk und die darin ausgesprochene theologische Position Dodds für die Gegenwart in Erinnerung zu rufen. Kein Zweifel, daß von hier aus neue Impulse für das Verstehen des Neuen Testaments ausgehen können."³ Strecker summarizes Dodd's thought in five theses. First, Dodd stresses that an important task of NT interpretation is an analysis of its language. Second, Dodd uses the historical-critical method not only analytically, but synthetically. Third, Dodd gives the evidence of the NT writers priority for interpretation. The basis for this interpretation is the NT canon, "deren theologische Konzeptionen nicht zuletzt durch Kontextexegese zu erheben sind."⁴ Strecker feels that Dodd's commentaries have made an important contribution to this task. Fourth, Dodd demonstrates that important contributions can be made to the understanding of the NT

¹Dodd, *EpistsJohn*, 110.

²*TDNT*, 1:392, s.v., "ἀποκατάστασις," by A. Oepke.

³Strecker, "Charles Harold Dodd: Person und Werk," 56.

⁴*Ibid.*, 57.

by research into the historical-religious environment. And finally, Dodd's exposition of the NT is centered on a modern interpretation. "Unter Beachtung des historischen, situationsbedingten Charakters der Texte bringt sie das Verbindliche der neutestamentlichen Botschaft zur Sprache, indem sie die im Urkerygma angelegte, in verschiedenen Glaubensweisen sich brechende, auf das Christusgeschehen sich zentrierende Einheit des Neuen Testaments artikuliert."¹

At the beginning of this thesis, a paragraph from Dodd's inaugural lecture at Cambridge University was quoted. In that quotation, Dodd doubts that a final interpretation of the NT, final even for our age, is possible. Today's exclamation points may become tomorrow's question marks. But he also says that it is toward that end that our task as NT interpreters lies.² This thesis has demonstrated how one man interpreted the NT. Some of his interpretations may be applauded; some may be corrected; and others may be rejected. But one thing is certain: C. H. Dodd stands as a worthy model of a "sober and imaginative" biblical scholar. Although his name will forever be connected with realized eschatology,³ his work will continue to provide fresh impulses for future generations of biblical scholars—scholars who, like C. H. Dodd himself, long to be ideal interpreters of the New Testament.

¹Ibid.

²See above, p. 1.

³Strecker, "Dodd, Charles Harold," *TRÆ* 9:17, "Daß Dodd keine „Schule“ gründete, entspricht der individualistischen britischen wissenschaftlichen Tradition, die sein Werk profiliert verkörpert: im kritisch geläuterten Beharren auf der Überlieferung und im schöpferischen Ergreifen von neuen Ansätzen, wie dies der mit seinem Namen untrennbar verbundene Begriff „realized eschatology“ beispielhaft zum Ausdruck bringt."

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