



Royce's Interpretation of Christianity

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ROYCE'S INTERPRETATION OF CHRISTIANITY.

STUDENTS of theology, whether historical theology or constructive, have reason to be grateful when a philosopher of the eminence of Professor Royce turns his attention to the Philosophy of Religion as his most vital field of enquiry, and to the history and significance of Christianity as the most essential problem in this field. Professor Royce himself interprets to us his title *The Problem of Christianity* when in his opening chapter on "The Problem and the Method" he declares (p. 10): "Whatever the truth of religion may be, the office, the task, the need of religion are the most important of the needs, the tasks, the offices of humanity." He describes himself on the succeeding page as "one to whom the philosophy of religion, if there is to be a philosophy of religion at all, must include in its task the office of a positive, and of a deeply sympathetic interpretation of the spirit of Christianity, and must be just to the fact that the Christian religion is, thus far at least, man's most impressive view of salvation, and his principal glimpse of the homeland of the spirit."

My friend and fellow-theologian Professor Brown has the responsibility, as I understand the matter, of determining with what success Professor Royce in his second volume, bearing the subtitle *The Real World and the Christian Ideas*, has fulfilled this task of assigning to Christianity its true place in the Philosophy of Religion. I for my part am to render as sincere a verdict as I can upon the preceding volume, which has as its subtitle *The Christian Doctrine of Life*. This volume in fact contains all that we have of that preliminary survey of the history and psychology of religion in its Christian form which must precede any competent interpretation and valuation of it.

Were I to commit the indiscretion of anticipating the verdict of Professor Brown, by giving full expression to my sympathy for the Roycean philosophy of Absolute Voluntarism, and especially for the doctrine of Loyalty as the foundation of Ethics and Religion, and were I thereafter to advance my criticism of

this exposition of the teaching of Jesus and of Paul as summarizing religious history and psychology respectively, I might place Professor Royce in the unfortunate predicament of that eminent artist-literateur who was understood to be a great artist among critics of literature, and a great literateur among critics of art. I shall not commit the indiscretion. Still I may premise that I began the reading of *The Problem of Christianity* with a deep conviction that the Philosophy of Loyalty, as it has come to be called, was both true and Christian in its most essential features, and that I concluded my reading of the present volumes not with admiration alone, but with a deep feeling of gratitude for the effort of a great constructive philosopher of our time to find his philosophy—not arbitrarily, not by doing violence to historic truth, but honestly and sincerely—in the teaching of Jesus and of Paul.

The late eminent colleague of Professor Royce, in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, has made perhaps the most distinctive American contribution to philosophy in the field of the psychology of religion, having especially in view Christianity and more especially still the psychology of Paul. Theologians surely have reason to be grateful to William James. Similarly the most eminent ecclesiastical historian of our times has sought to answer the question What is Christianity? by a survey of its history. Harnack will not be reckoned a convert to the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule* because he applies his knowledge of church history to New Testament problems, any more than James to the exponents of Paulinism because he applies his knowledge of psychology to the conversion of Paul. But both are most welcome in the field just because they bring to it the more or less specialized judgment of an expert in other fields. A Blass, a Ramsay, a Percy Gardner, a Reitzenstein, a Norden, a Cumont—New Testament philology and archaeology are not unconscious of their debt to such guests as these, and how many still greater names might be cited from the domain of philosophy, who have made Christian theology their temporary home!

Such guests have special aptitudes and special limitations. A biblical critic need not be in entire agreement with Harnack's

Beiträge nor even accept Harnack's idea of what constitutes the true essence of the religion in its historic development, to be appreciative of *Das Wesen des Christenthums*. For my own part I observe with satisfaction Professor Royce's emphatic dissent from Harnack, and his sympathy with Loisy, the exponent of French modernism, in the conviction that, "the Christian religion always has been and, historically speaking, must be, not simply a religion taught by any man to any company of disciples, but always also a religion whose sense has consisted, at least in part, in the interpretation which later generations gave to the mission and the nature of the founder."¹ One may anticipate more from the historical survey of a student of the philosophy of religion when his conception of the essence of Christianity is progressive and dynamic, than from the ecclesiastical historian when the point of view taken is merely static, like that of so-called 'nineteenth century liberalism.' The doctrine of the progressive Christian consciousness as the 'seat of authority in religion' was not an exclusive discovery of Newman, nor a monopoly of the Roman modernists. We who count ourselves modernists in a wholly suprasectarian sense may well be glad that a philosopher of the type of Professor Royce should look to 'the higher social religious experience of mankind' rather than to the experience of individual geniuses, no matter how eminent, as exhibiting 'the central idea' of religion. We should not, however, be surprised at his taking this standpoint.

Without trenching on the province of Professor Brown I may therefore express at all events my hearty sympathy with Professor Royce's statement of his problem, and with the viewpoint he proposes. His 'mode of approach,' as he terms it, has this in common with the apologists, that it postulates the supreme effectiveness of Christianity in the 'endeavors of mankind to bring to pass, or to move towards, the salvation of man,' and aims to present 'a sympathetic philosophical interpretation'

¹I, p. 29. Cf. II, p. 366, and Preface, p. xxi: "The Pauline communities first were conscious of the essence of Christianity. Consequently those are right who have held, what the 'modernists' of the Roman Church were for a time asserting . . . that the Church, rather than the person of the founder, ought to be viewed as the central idea of Christianity."

of this 'effective' religion. On the other hand it avoids the most objectionable features of an *ex parte* apologetic, inasmuch as the interpreter assumes the largest liberty to treat as obsolete almost indefinitely extensive domains of traditional Christianity.¹ Professor Royce's Christianity is that of the Pauline churches as reflected in the great historical Pauline Epistles of practically undisputed authenticity; hence he has, as he puts it, "no legends to defend from critical attacks."¹ Even his Paulinism is "not of the letter which killeth, but of the spirit which giveth life." The 'genuine modern man' to whom he introduces us in his closing lectures, as the one for whose benefit they are written, is one who having fully accepted Paul's doctrine in its exact historical sense is magically transported down the ages to our own time to learn, without contact with our Christianity, all modern science, history, and philosophy. To such a 'modernist' Pauline teaching must in large degree seem obsolete. The contrast between ephemeral form and perennial substance would assume to him its acutest phase. He would be equally unable to deny the real historical sense of the teaching of the first century, the historical facts of the intervening time, and the scientific truths of the twentieth century. In remaining loyal to essential Pauline Christianity, such a 'modern' would resort to no theory of allegory such as Philo's, to vindicate the infallibility of his erstwhile teacher. He would realize, however, that in the application made by Jesus and Paul of their own great religious intuitions to the beliefs and conceptions of their time they were using an unconscious symbolism, like prophets of a continuous 'social' consciousness searching what manner of time the Spirit which was in them did point unto.

It is the function of the philosophy of religion to translate this *unconscious* symbolism of the past into modern speech. Myth, legend, institution and observance, are the modes of expression instinctively seized upon by the intuitions of religious genius

¹ Preface, p. xxvi. "I must decline to follow any of the various forms of traditionally orthodox dogma or theory regarding the person of Christ. Legends, doubtful historical hypotheses, and dogmas leave us, in this field, in well-known, and, to my mind, simply hopeless perplexities."

² II, 373.

before philosophy has elaborated its dialectic. The translation must be made, but it is well to preserve the original; and before it is made the original terms must be understood not merely in context, but in perspective. Here the history and the psychology of religion must do their part. Criticism must effect its unsparing analysis of the records, and trace the development of ideas; psychology must make its own diagnosis of the psychic experiences. Only when this process is complete can the philosophy of religion give its reasoned valuation of what the past has handed down. This it is, then, which will be naturally understood in philosophic terminology by the Problem of Christianity. The words which Loescher applied to the fixation of the canon of sacred Scripture may be extended to cover these forth-puttings of the religious instinct of the race: Christianity itself came into being, *non uno, quod dicunt, ictu ab hominibus, sed paulatim a Deo, animorum temporumque rectore.*

Criticism of Professor Royce's historical and psychological survey of the Christian consciousness is doubly disarmed, first by his modest disclaimer of ability "to decide problems of the comparative history of religion,"¹ and secondly by the frankness with which he acknowledges a quasi-apologetic aim. It is quite important to realize just what is meant by this.

Apologists of the type of Hugh Miller and of my own revered teacher of geology at Yale, James Dwight Dana, are quite a well-known type to us of the older generation. Professor Dana's class-room interpretations of the first chapter of Genesis still abide in my memory, and these and their like call forth today a kindly smile on the lips of the modern student, whether of Genesis or of geology. The apologist's idea of 'defending' Scripture was so naïvely transparent, so wonderfully innocent of historical perspective. What more sublime evidence of inspiration than that the Pentateuchal story of creation should correspond with nineteenth century geology? What loftier ambition for Moses than to be a teacher of 'modern science'? And if the fruits of Moses's scientific teaching were quite unapparent for three thousand years, until what he had

¹ P. 339.

been vainly attempting to make known was independently discovered, surely the corroboration of his wonderful knowledge was more than compensation for his wonderful inability to convey it. The kind of apologetic which can conceive no greater glory for Scripture than to teach the apologist's own views is familiar since the day Scripture acquired an authority which made Scriptural corroboration a convenience. But if the higher criticism has taught us anything it is that ideas have a history, and must be viewed in perspective. So recently as my own seminary days I believe there was not a theological school in the country that possessed a chair of Biblical Theology, the teaching of Biblical ideas in their historical development. Nowadays we think a school of theology does not deserve the name where biblical doctrines are not set forth from the historical point of view.

Needless to say Professor Royce does not treat the Bible in the fashion of Hugh Miller or Guyot. And yet it is to be recognized that his acknowledgment that he "takes his stand with the apologists, and against the hostile or the thoughtfully indifferent critics of Christianity,"¹ is borne out by the character and contents of the book. It is not the product of a dispassionate critical historian of religion, aiming only at the proportionate consideration of all factors and processes in the field of study. That work of critical analysis and research we must assume to have been performed to the extent Professor Royce's other occupations allowed before he undertook his interpretation of Jesus and Paul. Professor Royce finds a great deal in Paul which must at least be acknowledged to be not apparent on the surface. Others must pursue a similar course before they adopt his conclusions or their own. In the present work, as I have already expressed it, Professor Royce 'goes to find' the religion of loyalty in Jesus and Paul. He does not attempt to deal with all Christian doctrines. He chooses three which impress him as the most vital and essential: (1) the doctrine of the Kingdom of God, or, as he expresses it, salvation through membership in the beloved community; (2) the doctrine of moral inability, or original sin;

¹ I, II.

(3) the doctrine of the Atonement. Not a historical survey of Christianity as a whole followed by a valuation of it constitutes Professor Royce's contribution, but a 'discussion of the meaning and truth of each of these three ideas' which to his mind express its essence. Not even these three ideas are considered in their origin and mutual relation. Admittedly the second, moral inability, or the doctrine of original sin, plays no part whatever in the teaching of Jesus, and the third, the Atonement, is by most critical students of biblical theology regarded as almost or quite equally foreign to the thought of Jesus. Professor Royce thinks he can discover hints or foreleams of this in "the parables."¹ I must confess ignorance of what parables are meant—unless indeed Professor Royce includes what a leading New Testament scholar has well and nobly called 'the last and greatest of the parables,' the never-to-be-forgotten words, 'This is my body which is given for you.' Here we may indeed find a point of departure for the Atonement doctrine of the Church. But I imagine that Professor Royce himself would hardly attribute to Jesus a doctrine of the forgiveness of sins which made it dependent upon his own atoning death. I find it very difficult to imagine any student of the history of this doctrine treating Professor Royce's conception of it as reflecting in any save the remotest way the mind of the Master.

All this does not trouble Professor Royce, because he limits himself to 'the Christianity of the Pauline churches' and does not greatly care to interpret it genetically. Such study as he has given to the question of the history and mutual relation of these chosen ideas is prior to the present work. If he has followed up with Tennant and our own Professor Porter the antecedents of the Pauline doctrine of moral inability and original sin in the rabbinic theory of the *yetser ha-ra'* he says nothing about it, because it is a mere preliminary to his subject. If he has trodden in the footsteps of some of the many scholarly and critical historians of the doctrine of atonement and traced it back with Dalman, Oesterley, and even, I may add, Schechter, to its connection with the Isaian doctrine of the Suffering Ser-

¹ P. 240.

vant,—if he has examined the doctrine traceable in the Hellenistic period of Judaism of the atonement wrought by the Maccabean martyrs and compared it with that of the *Zachuth Aboth* of the rabbis, of this too he finds it needless to speak. This is because his ‘problem of Christianity’ is not exclusively, perhaps not primarily, a historical problem but to an appreciable degree ‘apologetic’; and I think we must understand the word to mean as here employed that Professor Royce to some extent has gone to Christianity, more especially ‘the Christianity of the Pauline churches,’ to find his own philosophy in it. Whether the discovery is real or not will depend upon the thoroughness and impartiality of the historico-critical studies which appear only by implication. If his volume does not produce the unfavorable impression of the typical apologist who notoriously finds in the Bible just what he carries to it, this may be because of the more disinterestedly critical character of these preliminary studies. I am disposed to think it largely is. It may also be, however, to some extent because his philosophy of loyalty was Christian to begin with.

I am not finding fault with Professor Royce’s book, I am defending it. It does not pretend to be a critical survey of the origin and development of the Christian faith, and we have no right to criticize it for not being what it does not pretend to be. Professor Royce wisely avails himself of Harnack’s pregnant distinction between ‘the gospel of Jesus’ and ‘the gospel about Jesus.’ Then with something more than Loisy’s modernism he plants himself firmly on the principle that Christianity is what it came to be, regardless, or almost regardless, of what it had been, or how the development was effected. He can make, therefore, comparatively short work of his historical survey. We have the Pauline Epistles. They reflect at certain angles the three vital ideas and their psychological reaction. What need, then, of any historical Jesus? If the purpose be merely that of finding the philosophy of loyalty somewhere in the beginnings of this most ‘effective’ of religions, why not leap at once *in medias res* about the sixth decade, regardless of whether the Christianity of the Pauline churches has fact or fiction as its

foundation? Why not dismiss entirely those perplexing, laborious historical problems of the relation of the Greek-Christian to the Jewish-Christian churches, of Paul to Jesus, of Christianity as a universal religion of individual redemption, to Judaism as a national religion of social well-being?

As a matter of fact this is very nearly the course which Professor Royce pursues. "This book (he tells us) has no positive thesis to maintain regarding the person of the founder of Christianity. I am not competent to settle any of the numerous historical doubts as to the founder's person, and as to the details of his life. The thesis of this book is that the essence of Christianity, as the Apostle Paul stated that essence, depends upon regarding the being which the early Christian Church believed itself to represent, and the being which I call, in this book, the "Beloved Community," as the true source through loyalty, of the salvation of man."¹ Now if the object is simply to find the philosophy of loyalty in Paulinism, then to be sure the fictitious Jesus of the mythical idealists, A. Drews, or W. B. Smith, will serve the purpose quite as well. Indeed if Van Manen or Van den Berg van Eysingha gives any trouble about the historicity of Paul, then Paul too may take the same road. Rome in the third decade of the second century will do just as well as Greece in 50-60 A.D. for the origin of the Epistles. Questions of Judaism and Hellenism and their fusion in Christianity are really academic if our 'problem of Christianity' is not an attempt to assign to this most effective of religions exactly its true position in the progress of the religious consciousness of humanity. We may deal quite lightly with that great transition from social and national religious ideals to ideals of personal redemption, the transition from Jesus to Paul, if our problem is only to find the Philosophy of Loyalty in the Pauline Epistles. If on the contrary we are studying the transition of civilization in 200 B.C. to 200 A.D. from national religions of various types to the typical religion of personal and social redemption, we have a more considerable task. It all depends on whether we are trying to connect up with the eternal Spirit of Truth whose witness is

¹ Preface, p. xxvi.

world-wide and eternal, or only with the spirit of the Pauline churches.

I have spoken thus far only of the second respect in which Professor Royce disarms our criticism. Pray do not assume that judgment is already passed if I ask that his book be judged for what it professes to be and not for what it frankly acknowledges that it is not. Surely the candid acknowledgment that the 'problem of Christianity' is not confronted here from the strictly impartial standpoint of the critical historian of religion, but more or less in the interest of a particular philosophy, may be accepted without seeming to put disparagement upon the book, or to retract the encomiums uttered at the outset. Let me remind you that I have not said that the author dispensed with that critical historical analysis and research which alone can qualify anyone to define 'the essence of Christianity' even with the limitation 'as the Apostle Paul stated that essence.' I have only said that, whatever expectations might be aroused by the title, this volume does not contain the researches in question and expressly disclaims the effort to present them. They must be presupposed. Our judgment of it from this point of view must be based on what we read between the lines rather than in the lines themselves. Does the author give evidence of a historical appreciation of Paulinism?

Here we may be perhaps a little less ready to take Professor Royce's modest disclaimers *au pied de la lettre* than in the case of his acknowledgement of a method and mode of approach which are perhaps something more, at all events something else, than purely historical. If he has not allowed us to underestimate the extent of his study of Christian origins and of the development of Christian ideas, then we can only say that in this case the largeness of mind and the critical judgment naturally developed by philosophical studies have in considerable degree supplied the place of special research.

Professor Royce, as we have seen, makes no attempt to determine the historical relation between Jesus and Paul. To the question which he assumes to be put by some "kindly critic" whether "the whole meaning of the Christian religion does not

center in the founder, in his life, and in his person," he answers: "This book has *no* hypothesis whatever to offer as to how the Christian community originated. Personally I shall never hope, in my present existence to know anything whatever about that origin, beyond the barest commonplaces. The historical evidence at hand is insufficient to tell us how the church originated. The legends do not solve the problem. I have a right to decline, and I actually decline to express an opinion as to any details about the person and life of the founder. For such an opinion the historical evidences are lacking, although it seems to me natural to suppose that the sayings and the parables which tradition attributed to the founder were the work of some single author, concerning whose life we probably possess some actually correct reports."¹ The Christianity which he considers, therefore, is simply 'the Christianity of the Pauline churches.' In view of this limitation the selection of the three supreme ideas of these churches as (1) Salvation through membership in the Beloved Community, (2) Moral Inability, (3) Atonement, is to me an evidence of great perspicacity and real historical appreciation, however strange the phraseology may sound in our ears, and however we may be on our guard against a choice dictated by other motives than the effort to attain pure historical fact. The fact is, Professor Royce's view of Christianity is—I will not say like a drawing without perspective, but—like a photograph all in one plane. As we have seen, the whole emphasis of critical study for a generation of historical interpretation has been to put these photographs under a stereoscopic lens and draw out the perspective. He disclaims acquaintance with this research and yet in fundamental points coincides with it. May I for a moment assume the task which might properly fall to my colleague in the chair of Biblical Theology, Professor Porter, and apply the stereoscopic lens to what Professor Royce sets forth as the essential ideas of Pauline Christianity?

Of the three ideas named we are probably nearest to genuine Paulinism, and at the same time furthest from all other forms of Christianity both in the generation before and the generations

¹ Preface, p. xxvi.

which followed Paul, in the doctrine of original sin or moral inability. If there is anything in the New Testament peculiarly personal to Paul, based in its origin on his individual religious experience, not derived from earlier Christians and equally incapable even through the logic, the eloquence, the authority of a Paul of being impressed on the succeeding generation, it was his doctrine of the law as the strength of sin, the doctrine which Professor Royce most philosophically develops into a psychology of the moral sense. Yes, if primitive Christianity had cared for the Data of Ethics it might very well have developed a theory from the Epistle to the Romans, and if sufficiently modernized this psychology of the moral sense might very well have come out in the philosophical form Professor Royce has given it. As a matter of historical fact, Romans was taken to be as a whole what in part it really was—merely a polemic against Mosaism. Average Christianity of Paul's time had only a doctrine of Repentance, in which 'dead works' played a part as giving rise to self-righteousness. It had no theory of the origin of conscience. The Pauline dialectic was very real to Paul, and more or less effective against the Judaizers. Of the next generation it is scarcely too much to say with a learned church historian: "Nobody understood Paul but Marcion, and he misunderstood him." There is much to be said for taking the religious experience of Paul as the basis for a psychology of religion, and I wish to acknowledge my own great indebtedness to Professor Royce for his philosophical modernization of the Pauline 'data of ethics.' I fear, however, that when it comes to ranking the doctrine of original sin among the three most vital tenets of Christianity in the Pauline period I shall have to be classed with James and his individualistic mode of approach. Historically speaking, the doctrine of Christianity in the Pauline period was simply the universal need of *Repentance*. Paul's was a 'Variety of Religious Experience.'

Of the doctrine of the Atonement as it appears in the philosophy of loyalty we may say we are more or less reminded of Paulinism, although here we are no longer on peculiarly Pauline ground, but are dealing with an idea expressly declared by Paul to be part of

the common gospel, antecedent to his own preaching, an idea completely obliterated from the Lucan writings and almost completely from Matthew and Mark. As I have intimated, something of the kind is traceable far back in the history of Judaism, though with increasing opposition in legalistic circles. Noah is an ἀντάλλαγμα ἐν καιρῷ ὀργῆς in Ecclus. 44: 17, the blood of the Maccabean martyrs in Second and Fourth Maccabees is an expiation (καθάρσιον) for the sin of Israel, their life a vicarious offering (ἀντίψυχον) for its life.¹ Paul has his own distinctive doctrine of the καταλλαγή, but fundamentally he does not depart from the more primitive view that it is accomplished by the real intercession of an actual mediator who was "raised for our justification" and who in the visible presence of God "maketh intercession for us."² Otherwise "if Christ were not raised" we should be "yet in our sins."³ Translate this semi-mythological form of atonement doctrine into a philosophy of loyalty if you will, with consideration of the irrevocableness of the past, the need of the 'traitor to loyalty' to forgive himself, and the like, all of which may be—to psychological experience—profoundly true; but do not let us lose the Apostle Paul, and those who before him preached the gospel of the Suffering Servant, entirely out of sight in the historical background. Nothing would interest me more than to go into the question of the relation of the Pauline doctrines of Original Sin and Atonement to the common Christian doctrines of Repentance and Faith and the antecedents of both in Judaism; but I must limit myself to the third idea: Salvation through the Church.

As an interpretation of Paul's doctrine of the Kingdom of God I am afraid the "thesis of the book" that "the essence of Christianity as the Apostle Paul stated that essence, depends upon regarding the being which the early Christian church believed itself, and the being which I call in this book, the Beloved Community, as the true source, through loyalty, of the salva-

¹ II Macc. 7: 37 f.; IV Macc. 6: 29.

² Rom. 8: 34; cf. Heb. 9: 11-22 and the intercession of Enoch (Eth. En. xiii-xv.) Noah, Abraham, Moses, Daniel and Job in Jewish literature (Ezek. 14: 12-21).

³ I Cor. 15: 17.

tion of man"¹ would hardly be acceptable to the Apostle Paul himself. An 'essence of Christianity' from which the person and work of the historic Christ disappear entirely would be apt to draw from Paul words somewhat like the following: "There are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. . . . As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema." Speaking strictly from the historical point of view, and never relinquishing that stalwart independence which can venture to differ even with Paul, I think we must here take the side of that "distinguished authority upon Christology" and "kindly critic" whom Professor Royce cites in his Preface, who continues to think that the historic Jesus had much to do with Paul's doctrine of the Kingdom of God.

Paul had his own characteristically enlarged and universalized doctrine of the Kingdom. He could not have been an Apostle to the Gentiles if he had not. His doctrine is not only transcendentalized after the fashion of the apocalyptic writers to include "things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth," "angels and principalities and powers," but it has taken on a strong tincture of Stoicism, the doctrine of the cosmic organism animated by the divine Spirit, the body of Christ, whereof every redeemed soul and body is a member in particular. It is the great merit of Professor Royce's book that it gives us a philosophical valuation of this adaptation of the doctrine of the Kingdom of God under the Pauline mysticism. Nevertheless it is well to remember that there never would have been a Pauline doctrine of the Beloved Community in mystical union of life with its glorified Head, if there had not first been a Jesus obedient unto death in the preaching and service of that Kingdom. We may go further and declare that whatever Hellenized and universalized form the doctrine of the Kingdom assumes in Paul, no stretch of the historical imagination of which I, for one, am capable can ever conceive him as giving assent to a formula wherein the mystical body is everything and the Head of the body disappears from the plan of salvation altogether.

¹ Preface, p. xxvi.

Stoic pantheism may or may not be nearer the truth than Jewish monotheism. That is for the philosophers to decide. We historians of biblical ideas must take our stand upon plain historic fact. Paul, with all his tincture of Hellenistic ideas, was and remained fundamentally a Jewish theist. Idealistic monism may or may not be nearer the truth than the traditional type of Christianity which attaches special significance to the person of Jesus; but actually Paul was not an idealistic monist. He did not hold with Buddhism 'that the very form of the individual self is a necessary source of woe and of wrong,' and was far from indifferent to the character and career of the historic Jesus. On the contrary, Paul expresses his sense of salvation in terms of mystical union with a very definite historical individual. "I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me . . . the Son of God who loved me, and gave himself up for me."¹ Nor did he lose his own individuality in this mystic union with the Spirit of God in Christ. He believed that he was working out his own salvation, and working with fear and trembling too, even while confident that God was working in him even to will as well as to do. He held with the orthodox Pharisaism of his time which Josephus calls Stoic that 'All things are foreordained and yet freedom is given.'

Nevertheless there is a sense in which, as I believe, even Paul might have endorsed so radical an utterance as this of Professor Royce's, and herein I think we are all debtors to him as an interpreter of Paul's doctrine of the Kingdom. "Not through imitating nor yet through loving any mere individual human being can we be saved, but only through loyalty to the Beloved Community."² The Lord and Christ, by loving and imitating whom Paul is saved, is not a "mere individual human being." He is preëminently the eternally glorified head of the Beloved Community, and it is just because he is no longer a 'mere individual human being,' no longer 'a Christ after the flesh' that Paul can preach salvation in the name of Jesus as one manifested to

¹ Gal. 2: 20.

² Preface, p. xxv.

be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead. We recognize that the Christ whom Paul proclaims as universal Lord, Savior, Deliverer from the impending wrath, Son and Heir of God, is a very different being from the mechanic Jesus of Nazareth. We cannot help perceiving that even the features of his earthly career, as Paul depicts them, are idealized traits, more distinctive of the Suffering Servant of Deutero-Isaiah than of the historical Jesus, and we recognize here a tremendous problem, perhaps the very greatest the historian of religion can confront: How was it possible within that brief period of Paul's own lifetime for the Jesus of history to become the Christ of dogma?

Professor R. H. Charles has shed, as I believe, more than a little light on this great question—more, I think, than he himself realizes—by the observation based on his wide studies of late Jewish and apocalyptic literature, that all the many titles applied to the Messiah, the Saint, the Just One, the Beloved, the Elect, the Son, and the like, are simply the individualized form of the titles which primarily were applied to the Beloved Community. He is their representative, and as such obtains the title in the singular, which was first applied to Israel in the plural. In other words, the messianic hope does not begin with the promise to David: "Of thy seed I will set one upon thy throne. . . . I will be to him a father and he shall be my son." It begins with the adoption of the chosen people: "Say unto Pharaoh: Israel is my son, my first born; let my son go, or I will slay thy son, thy first-born." Jesus is to Christians the Suffering Servant because it is the function of *the people of God* to suffer that it may bring redemption and the knowledge of God to all humanity. Christ became to the first believers the Suffering Servant-Son, because his career had incarnated this national ideal of Israel the missionary and martyr people. Christianity—the Christianity of the Pauline churches—therefore need not cease to be a religion of loyalty to the Beloved Community because it makes salvation dependent on the person of Christ, rather than on membership in the community as Professor Royce assumes. It does not need that detachment from the historic ideals of Judaism nor

from the individual life of the founder which Professor Royce seems to think essential, because this historic ideal of Israel and this typically loyal life of the founder are precisely what give it a tangible and real content, instead of the vague generalities of the ancient religions of personal redemption or of modern idealistic monism.

Unfortunately it is precisely at this point that Professor Royce declines even to consider the evidence, not venturing to hazard an opinion about "the origin of the Church" or "the person and life of the founder." In reality the Pauline doctrine of saving loyalty to the Beloved Community is at least as much bound up with loyalty to this glorified Head as loyalty to the Empire in his time was bound up with loyalty to the genius of Cæsar. We cannot imagine any devotion of emperor worship in ancient or modern times, any consecration of patriotism evinced in love and loyalty to the symbolic person of king or emperor, which can equal the Christian's devotion to his heavenly Lord. He who makes appeal to the Christianity of the Pauline churches as displaying at least the elements of a philosophy of loyalty should take some account, it seems to me, of this tremendous fact; for it is by no means confined to Paulinism, but everywhere the fundamental creed of the Christian is the same. He is saved if he confesses with the mouth that 'Jesus is Lord,' and believes in his heart that God hath raised him from the dead. This faith in a glorified eternal 'Lord' is in Paul's time the one distinctive badge of the Christian, the very hope and ground of his salvation. His citizenship is in heaven, because his life is hid with Christ in God.

It is not the fault, certainly not wholly the fault, of the guest in the domain of historical theology that he has not solved this problem in the history of religious ideas, which yet lies so near to his own line of argument. If we ourselves have not solved it we cannot expect the solution from one who only pays us a passing visit from the domain of philosophy. But the very intuitions of such a guest should inspire us to new research. Professor Royce's book, as I have said, takes but little account of the historical method of biblical interpretation. It can hardly

be called *religionsgeschichtlich*. It presents what it takes to be the dominant ideas of the Christianity of the Pauline churches and presents them all in one plane, practically without perspective. The author does not attempt to tell us how the Pauline idea of saving membership in the Beloved Community stands related to the teaching of Judaism and of Jesus about having part in the Kingdom of God. He does not attempt to relate the Pauline doctrine of moral inability to the earlier preaching of repentance. He does not attempt to explain the doctrine of the Suffering Servant, nor how the Atonement doctrine which he elaborates from Paul stands connected with Jesus and 'the last and greatest of the parables.' In short, he has not done our work for us. It is for us students of the history of biblical ideas, and through them of the history of religion, to solve these problems; and after the coolest, most dispassionate critical research to say whether or not the philosophy of loyalty was 'preached beforehand' in the gospel of Jesus and of Paul.

Professor Royce, as I have said, explicitly declines to attempt an answer to the question which to the historical critic of Christology must, I think, appear the greatest raised by his book: How could the Jesus of Synoptic tradition become so soon the Christ of Paul? It seems to be enough for Professor Royce to observe that he did. The people's rabbi, the prophet and healer of Nazareth, the friend of publicans and sinners, became the center and focal point for the highest human loyalty to the end of time. He was 'declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead.'

Professor Royce hesitates to deal with 'legends.' Legends? I have no more to do with legends than Professor Royce. I will dismiss them with the most radical critic that you can name. I am not asking *what* the psychological experiences were which we call the resurrection manifestations. I am asking *why* they were. Take whatever experiences you choose to posit as those which actually did lead to the confession of Christ as 'Lord.' *Why* were they? How could they produce the most 'effective' religion of the world's history, save for something in the character and career of Jesus the Nazarene? If, as we have reason

to believe, the first experience leading on to all the rest was Peter's, what was the psychology of Peter? Did it merely so happen that the Galilean fisherman and his associates, and the five hundred who soon joined them, were all ecstasies and visionaries? Or was there something in Jesus which fitted him for the part he was to play in their religious experience?

It would be presuming in me to attempt to account for all. But I think that in his philosophical definition of Christianity as the religion of loyalty, whether by research or by intuition, Professor Royce has given us the real key to the psychology of the resurrection faith. 'Loyalty' is the root-idea. Only he should not have called it the "Christianity of the Pauline churches"; for what is most distinctive in it, the doctrine of absolute devotion to the Kingdom, is the doctrine of Jesus. It is the point in which the gospel 'of' Jesus and the gospel 'about' Jesus coincide.

Is it accident only that Professor Royce in one of his rare attempts to define the gospel 'of' Jesus declares it to have been "a religion of whole-heartedness"?¹ That is the very essence of the matter. That, if I mistake not, is the key to Jesus's character and life, and the explanation of that new form of the religion of loyalty which centers upon his person. The unqualified, unreserved, absolute devotion to God his Father and the interests of God's kingdom laid down in Jesus's teaching, lived out to the uttermost in his life, made imperishable by his death, this is the essence of the religion of Jesus, and *as such* becomes 'the essence of Christianity.' This made him the incarnation of Israel's religious ideal. This made his exaltation in the faith of Peter and the rest to the rôle of eternal Lord and Christ a natural and reasonable thing, whereas without it their faith would have been hypocrisy. No visions or apparitions could have made it seem anything else to sincere and religious-minded Jews.

Take, I ask you, the last public teaching of Jesus as recorded in the earliest of the Gospels. Look upon it not as a precept for others but as the key to his own life. A scribe, a teacher of the

¹ P. 229.

law, asks him (asks him, as the reply assumes, in a genuinely sympathetic spirit): "Master, what is the great commandment of the law?" Is there a way to sum it all up? Jesus answered him with the *Shema*', the Credo of Israel, the first expression of whole-hearted loyalty learned by every Jewish boy, the last triumphant confession of every martyr to its faith: "Jehovah our God is *one* Lord, and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with *all* thy heart, and *all* thy soul and all thy strength." This is the first commandment of the religion of loyalty. And the second is like unto it, and gives direction and content to its whole-hearted devotion: Thou shalt serve the Beloved Community. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." We have been accustomed to regard this 'summary of the law' as a rule formulated by Jesus for the conduct of others. He would never have so employed it if it had not first constituted the principle of his own living. The *Shema*' is for the Jew the supreme expression of what he calls the principle of 'the Unity,' an expression not merely of the unity of God, but also of the unity or wholeness of devotion which is God's due from man. Since God is one, no divided allegiance can be acceptable to him. In such a spirit of unre-served, whole-hearted devotion to God and his kingdom, Akiba, the great martyr of Israel in the age of its division from nascent Christianity, breathed his last breath with the *Shema*' upon his lips or, as the expressive Jewish phrase has it, "taking upon himself the yoke of the kingdom (i. e., sovereignty) of God." Jesus, as we have seen, finds likewise in the *Shema*' the full expression of man's ideal relation to God. In combination with the golden rule it summarizes for him religion and ethics together. His life, and even more his death, proclaimed this undivided fealty as the essence of his own inner life. He bequeathed to the church as a blood-stained token 'the yoke of the kingdom of God.' Jesus, then, and not Paul, is the true founder of the religion of loyalty. Because in his life and in his death he had been the incarnation of this principle, he could without sense of strain or incongruity be 'declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead.'

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