

(p. 10). Moreover 'widespread scholarly opinion' holds that the Gospel was written in the last decades of the first century to meet the needs of a specific body of Christians living somewhere within Syro-Phenicia.

These assumptions are followed by a brief investigation of modern trends in parabolic interpretation, from A. Jülicher to A. T. Cadoux, C. H. Dodd and Joachim Jeremias. Structure and content of chapter 13 are analysed, and this is followed by a treatment of Matthew's concept of the Kingdom of Heaven, 'the most important single concept in St Matthew's entire Gospel'. Our author, however, persistently rejects any identification of the Kingdom with the Ecclesia: but this is at least debatable when we remember among other things that the Church of Matthew is a community called to perfection through its understanding or knowledge: and this knowledge is defined in 13, 10 as a knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The main body of this study consists of a critical appraisal of Jesus' Parables to the Jewish crowds by the Sea (13, 1-35), and then of the Parables to the Disciples in Private (13, 36-52). There are some valuable insights and much is rewarding reading.

The observations and conclusions which follow stress how this chapter 13 is a great turning-point in the Gospel, not simply as a matter of past history but as one of immediate relevance for the Church to which St Matthew belongs. Negatively he depicts the Jews as those who do not know and do God's will; positively he depicts the disciples who represent the church of this day as those who know and do God's will (p. 132).

The portrait of Jesus which emerges from this chapter is unusually variegated, yet for the most part Jesus appears as Kyrios and as Son of Man. These two concepts can denote the

present activity of Jesus between Resurrection and Parousia, and his future activity of coming as Judge (p. 133). The Church, portrayed in some detail, incorporates Jews and gentiles and is marked by missionary endeavour and persecution.

Matthew had no theory of parables in the formal sense. He appropriates the Marcan tradition according to which parables are riddles. He then attributes to disciples or the Church an ability to comprehend such revelatory riddles, but no such ability is granted to the Jews who are obdurate in the face of God's revelation (13, 10-13, 16).

However, the most important principle established in this study is that Matthew employs parables of Jesus in order that Jesus Kyrios, who lives in the midst of the Church, can address himself to the situation of the Church in Matthew's day. The underlying supposition all through is that the Church of that day was far from Christ's own time, far enough for the parables of Jesus 'to be exposed to the influences of both an oral and a written tradition' (p. 50). The space of time needed for all this is more easily assumed than proven to have existed.

The other underlying supposition running all through this study, is that Matthew depends on Mark. Yet even this can be debated in the light of some excellent recent work (cf. E. P. Sanders, *The Tendencies of the Synoptic Tradition*, Cambridge, 1969).

Whatever the truth about the critical problems, the parables of Jesus certainly remain 'a living tradition, for through them Jesus Kyrios brings men face to face with that total grace and that total demand' that are part and parcel of the Kingdom of Heaven, effective today as they were in St Matthew's time.

ROLAND POTTER, O.P.

GALATIANS: A DISCUSSION OF ST PAUL'S EPISTLE (Householder Commentaries: No. 1), by John Bligh, S.J. *St Paul Publications*, London, 1969, 544 pp. 90s.

These engaging lectures on the Epistle to the Galatians are too diffuse and too idiosyncratic to make a satisfactory book.

The chief idiosyncrasy is Fr Bligh's conviction that Paul arranged his whole argument and each part of his argument in a deliberate chiasmic pattern; that is, if he said A B C at the beginning of the book or at the beginning of any single section, he would be sure to say C' B' A' at the end. There is, in fact, a beautiful chiasmic structure of words in Galatians 4,

4-5, as Lightfoot has shown, but the economy and verbal felicity of this section is in such contrast with what I can only see as the loose and disorderly correspondences which Fr Bligh finds lying on each side of this section, that Fr Bligh's theory can hardly be right. The man who knew how to write a chiasm like Galatians 4, 4-5 would not have contemplated a chiasmic pattern for the epistle as a whole in which 1, 13-2, 10 is supposed to be balanced by 5, 11-6, 11. When we find that Fr Bligh often

has to move odd sentences around in order to restore Paul's chiasmus, and when we are also told that Acts, the Gospel behind the Synoptic Gospels, and John follow the same structural pattern, we are forced to conclude that Fr Bligh has not allowed his ability to conceive hypotheses to be sufficiently checked by self-criticism.

There are wise and interesting discussions scattered through the book, which would have made many a lecture-hour more fascinating and profitable, but I should have welcomed greater brevity, compression, and concentration. The book is beautifully printed.

J. C. O'NEILL

THEOLOGY AND MEANING, A Critique of Metatheological Scepticism, by Raeburne S. Heimbeck. *George Allen and Unwin*, London, 1969, 274 pp. 50s.

DO RELIGIOUS CLAIMS MAKE SENSE?, by Stuart C. Brown. *SCM Press Ltd*, London, 1969, 188 pp. 36s.

THE CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE OF GOD, by H. P. Owen. *The Athlone Press*, London, 1969, pp 341. 80s.

Not only aspects of religion but religion as such has become problematic in modern Western society, and it is for this reason that Fundamental Theology or Philosophical Theology, or whatever you want to call it, has become the most favoured of theological subjects. The dominating publication in this field is doubtless *New Essays in Philosophical Theology*, edited by A. Flew and A. MacIntyre. In *Theology and Meaning* R. Heimbeck discusses the arguments of the 'metatheological sceptic's', as he calls them. They deny to God-sentences any cognitive meaning that implies reference to a transcendental reality called God. The author suggests that we see the Sceptic's demand for checkability as a demand for 'evidence' rather than for 'criteria'. A child can know from evidence that its brother is in love without knowing what it is to be in love. It then becomes possible to show that God-statements can and do in fact have entailments and incompatibles, by which they satisfy the

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