

THE MEANING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IN PAUL. A Linguistic and Theological Enquiry, by J. A. Ziesler. Society for New Testament Studies, Monograph Series No. 20. Cambridge University Press, 1972. xii + 255 pp. £5.80.

The terms 'righteousness', 'justification', 'to make/account righteous', are words which in the past have been at the centre of a stormy debate in which opposing interpretations have been labelled as 'Catholic' or 'Protestant', and exegesis of the Pauline usage of the terms has tended to follow party lines. For a Methodist, asked to review the work of a fellow Methodist (from New Zealand) in a Catholic periodical, it is satisfying to find that the honours are divided: according to Dr Ziesler, neither side in the debate had a monopoly of the truth, but interpreted some aspects correctly, misunderstanding others. As in the Dodo's Caucus-race in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, the judgment delivered is that 'Everybody has won, and all must have prizes'. Protestant interpretation has emphasized the 'relational' aspect of righteousness, and has tended to interpret the noun in terms of the verb, 'to account righteous'; Catholic interpretation has done the reverse, emphasizing the ethical meaning of the words, since it has tended to interpret the verb in terms of the noun. Both were right, argues Dr Ziesler—the Protestant with regard to the verb, and the Catholic with regard to the noun: but both were wrong to transfer the meaning of the one to the other. He concludes that the idea of 'righteousness', as used by Paul, holds together these two aspects, variously stressed by different exegeses.

This is a very careful and able study of terms which are central to Pauline thought, as well as to later theological debate. The fact that less than a third of the book is directly concerned

with the Pauline literature is an indication of the importance for this particular investigation which the author attaches to the way in which writers before Paul used the terms. Paul cannot be correctly understood in a vacuum, and his usage of these Greek terms is interpreted by Dr Ziesler in the light of the normal meaning given to them by Paul's Jewish predecessors and contemporaries. In his writings, of course, they take on new meaning, because for him the righteousness of the Law is replaced by righteousness in Christ, but they retain the forensic and ethical meanings which they have elsewhere; now, however, they are fused with Paul's basic understanding of the believer's union with Christ: it is in him that men are declared righteous before God, and also become righteous through their renewal in the new humanity. Much of Dr Ziesler's interpretation is illuminating: he is certainly right to link his understanding of righteousness as a two-pronged idea, referring both to man's acceptance by God and to his moral renewal, with Paul's central doctrine of being-in-Christ, for we find precisely the same polarity in the usage of 'in Christ', a phrase used by Paul both of what God has done for man (in the death of Christ) and of what is now being done in terms of 'sanctification', or renewal in the image of Christ. Dr Ziesler points us away from the theological wranglings of past centuries to the central themes of Pauline theology, and his book is a solid contribution to a clearer understanding of Paul's thought.

MORNA D. HOOKER

AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH, by J. Paul Sampley. *C.U.P.*, 1972. 177 pp. £4.60.

As the sub-title tells us, this is a study of traditions in Ephesians 5, 21-33, and it arises from the hypothesis that Ephesians is a unique, syncretistic, collection of a variety of traditions extant in the early Church. The hypothesis was first suggested by Ernest Käsemann, and is taken up as the working hypothesis of this study. Only as the author writes on page 3: '... since Ephesians stands out so clearly as a mosaic of traditions current in the early Church', we see that the hypothesis has rapidly become established fact.

However that may be, this 'new phase in the study of Ephesians' (p. vii) provides us with an

introduction to the problem and perspectives, followed by an analysis of the whole epistle, and a discussion of the author's knowledge of his readers. Then comes the identification and study of traditional materials in 5, 21-33, with an examination of three passages from the homologoumena which seem specially relevant. Hermeneutical problems are dealt with, so too the movement and thought in 5, 21-33. The thoroughness of this investigation appears in the verse-by-verse analysis which follows, and this leads to the concluding observations which cover such points as the implications of 5, 21-33 for the remainder of the *Haustafel* and also for