

PAUL AND HIS THEOLOGY, A Brief Sketch by Joseph A. Fitzmyer S.J. Prentice Hall, 1989.

THE PAULINE CHURCHES: A Sociohistorical Study of Institutionalization in the Pauline and Deutero-Pauline Writings, by Margaret Y. MacDonald NTMS 60, Cambridge University Press, 1988. £27.50.

These books form an interesting contrast. Fitzmyer is an American scholar of renown, who here presents a revised version of a small book which aims to give a synopsis of Paul's thought and theology. MacDonald is not exactly without interest in such matters, but puts her focus rather on the development of the Pauline churches as institutions, so that matters of belief are handled only in so far as they illuminate or are illuminated by sociological considerations. She is thus part of a growing movement which tries to exploit modern sociology for the understanding of the New Testament.

As with the previous edition of his book, Fitzmyer here publishes as a separate book material from the large one-volume *Jerome Bible Commentary*, the new edition of which is due in 1990. As such it is doubly welcome: in itself, and as a harbinger of the larger work. At least in this reviewer's opinion, the *Jerome* is as good a one-volume commentary as we are likely to get, but it needs bringing up to date (the first edition was 1968). Fitzmyer does two separate things in this book, which looks small (pp. xviii + 119) but is so tightly packed with material and so fully equipped with references and bibliography that it can well serve as a summary of most aspects of Pauline study. The first part is a reconstruction of Paul's career, and the second part, by far the longer, is a synthesis of his thought.

Mapping Paul's life and ministry is a notoriously difficult task, in places a controversial one. Fitzmyer bases his work on the uncontroverted letters, and uses other material especially Acts with proper caution. In some places the condensation is such that the argument is not easy to follow, notably when he discusses Acts 15 and Galatians 2, and the so-called Council of Jerusalem. This first part was not in the earlier edition of the book, and its inclusion here is useful.

The condensed nature of the presentation also in the larger section on Paul's thought raises the question of the intended readership. A good deal of understanding of scholarly language is taken for granted, and it is doubtful whether the genuinely lay reader will follow all of what is said. On the other hand, anyone with a generally good knowledge of the theological scene who wants to be brought up to date with Pauline scholarship will find this book invaluable in most respects. There are, however, some gaps: in particular one would scarcely know from this book that in the last ten years there has been a major debate about Paul's relation to Judaism, and especially about his attitude to the Law. For the most part, however, the exceptionally rich bibliographies for a book of this size supplement the text so well that the whole book constitutes an unusually succinct yet comprehensive introduction to the modern study of Paul.

MacDonald, on the other hand, though much more specialized, is also much more easily read. She sees three stages of institutionalization as illustrated by and reflected in the letters of the Pauline corpus: community

building (the genuine letters), community-stabilizing (Colossians and Ephesians), and community-protecting (the Pastoral Epistles). Each stage is explored in terms of four matters: attitudes to the world and ethics, ministry, ritual, and belief. The second stage is characterized by adjustment to the loss of the leader, Paul, by death.

The author begins by a discussion and defence of the use of sociological categories in New Testament study, and interrogates the letters strictly from this perspective. She does not aim to write an account of Pauline theology. It must be said that the letters seem to fit her stages of development of institutions rather well, though inevitably one wonders what happens to the scheme if one holds that Colossians in particular was written by Paul himself. Presumably she would hold that its place in her scheme is in itself an argument that it is Deutero-Pauline.

Quite apart from its value in tracing the development of the primitive church for its own sake, this book usefully puts the Pauline churches within their probable social world. Theological ideas cannot be dealt with docetically, apart from the rest of the real world, though we are often guilty of doing just that. Changes in the 'symbolic universe' of the letters ought not to be seen simply as developments or corruptions of ideas, but rather as responses to new social situations. The apparently increased male hegemony of the Pastorals, for example, is to be understood as an attempt to maintain the community in the face of the need to protect its universal mission in a world where anything else would be seen as subversive of good order. The distinction between sect-type and church-type institutions is exploited also in this connection: with the Pastorals we are moving towards the latter.

She argues that it is wrong to contrast the earlier and genuine letters with the later and Deutero-Pauline ones in terms of charismatic as against institutionalized community life. On the contrary, the correct contrast is between stages of institutionalization, corresponding to reactions to the differing situations in which the churches found themselves. The whole treatment is cool and objective, with an absence of value judgments, that is until the last page, when the author understandably allows herself an expression of sympathy with those who suffered in this process of institutionalization.

JOHN ZIESLER

ONE GOD, ONE LORD. Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism by L.W. Hurtado, *S.C.M.*, 1988, Pp xiv + 178. p/b. £8.50.

This book provides a useful discussion and summary of scholarly studies of some post-exilic Jewish theological writings, namely, those which express beliefs in certain agents of God, whether personified divine attributes (chapter 2), exalted individuals from Jewish history like Enoch and Moses (chapter 3), or angels (chapter 4). Hurtado successfully argues that these agents do not infringe God's uniqueness, but that, on the contrary, post-exilic Judaism in its diverse traditions was monotheistic in belief and practice.

These chapters are intended to summarize information about some