

# *PROFESSOR J. GRESHAM MACHEN*

## His Life and Defence of the Bible

by

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### CHAPTER II

#### **THE MODERNISTIC MOVEMENTS WHICH MACHEN OPPOSED**

Prof. Machen's great struggle was with the modernistic movement of Theology. Very little of his efforts were directed against the various sects with which America literally swarms. Why wasn't he more interested in these sects? This question is never directly answered by him, but we can almost surmise the reason. Machen was of an intellectual mind. The various sects can be characterized by extreme superficiality, and undoubtedly this is one of the reasons why they didn't interest him more than is the case. In all of his works no extended refutation is found of "Undenominationalism," "Premillennialism" and the many other kinds of "isms" with which America is full. He was however not a "Premillennialist" neither a "Fundamentalist" but a Reformed Apologist in the true sense of the word. He took his stand squarely upon the Reformed truths as they are contained in the Westminster Standards of Faith. We will now discuss the movements with which he clashed.

#### **A. MODERNISM IN AMERICA**

Speaking of this anti-intellectualistic modernistic movement which is now so prevalent in America, Prof. Machen detects at least three features which characterize it.

In the first place it is PRAGMATISTIC. When pragmatism is discussed Machen informs us that he does not enter into its philosophical grounding, or questions of epistemology.<sup>1</sup> Pragmatism does not regard theology to

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *What is Faith*, 1917, p. 27.

have any permanent value, since it is only the changing expression of a unitary experience. "According to the pragmatist it is not merely inevitable that the theology of one generation should differ from the theology of another, but it is desirable that it should do so. That theology, according to the pragmatist, is the best which most perfectly expresses the experience of religion in the 'thought forms' of any particular age.--Indeed this pragmatist attitude toward differences in theology is applied not only to successive generations, but also to simultaneously existing nations and races. It is unreasonable, some advocates of missions are accustomed to say, for missionaries to ask Eastern races to accept Western creeds; the Eastern mind cannot be forced in a Western mould. . . . According to the logic of the pragmatist position two contradictory doctrines may be equally good; for doctrine, in the opinion of the pragmatists, is merely the symbolic expression of an experience really inexpressible, and must necessarily change as the generations pass."<sup>2</sup>

Another characteristic of Modernism is MYSTICISM. Of this Machen says, "Religion, the mystic holds, is independent of the intellect: when it is expressed in an intellectual mould it is cabined and confined; such expressions can be nothing more than symbolic; religious experience itself does not depend upon assent to any kind of creed."<sup>3</sup> By this Machen does not deny that there is real mysticism in the true Christianity. This is a vital matter. This "Christian experience is a thoroughly personal thing; the Christian holds fellowship with the Person Whom he knows."<sup>4</sup>

A third characteristic of this anti-intellectualistic modernism, according to Machen, is POSITIVISM. The name itself designates something that has affinity with the older positivism, but still is different. An example is found in the book of Prof. Ellwood, "The Reconstruction of Religion." Many popular preachers in our land show their positivism in the use of such phrases as the "Christlike God." By this is not meant God as He is known in the Second person of the Trinity. "What they mean is that all metaphysics having been abandoned or regulated to the realm of unessential speculation--all questions as to whether there is a God who made the world by the fiat of His will, or whether there is a life after death, or whether Jesus in very person is living to-day--all such questions having been abandoned, the soul of man may be transformed by the mere contemplation and emulation of the moral life of Jesus. Essentially such a religion is positivism; it regards as non-essential all extra-mundane factors, and sets up a religion of humanity--a religion of humanity symbolized by the name of Jesus."<sup>5</sup>

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2 Cf. idem, p. 27 f.

3 Cf. idem, p. 49.

4 Cf. idem, p. 37.

5 Cf. idem, p. 37, 38.

Thus, a three-fold result is seen as the fruit which is reaped of the Modernism in America. Not that all these three characteristics are found in every modernist, nor are they found in all in the same measure, but, nevertheless, these three substitutes are placed instead of the old tried faith which is based upon the Bible.

After these three general characteristics of the modernistic movement in America, we are now ready to discuss this current of thought somewhat more in detail. Also in this we hope to confine ourselves especially to that against which Machen contended. We will briefly discuss four things: 1. What the Modernist thinks of the Bible as the seat of authority. 2. What the Modernist thinks of God. 3. What the Modernist thinks of man. 4. What the Modernist thinks of Christ.

WHAT THE MODERNIST THINKS OF THE BIBLE AS [THE] SEAT OF AUTHORITY. It has been correctly stated that Modernism shows its first delineation in the realm of method.<sup>6</sup> In this it proves itself to be a true descendant of Unitarianism in America and of the theology of Bushnell.<sup>7</sup> In his "The Faith of Modernism," page twenty-three, Shailer Mathews says, "It is the use of the methods of modern science to find, state and use the permanent and central values of inherited orthodoxy in meeting the needs of a modern world." Modernism breaks away from the Christian conception of authority. This is motivated by the evolutionary conception involved in what Fosdick calls Progressive Christianity. In religion, says Fosdick, we are constantly seeking the truth. Progressive Christianity means constantly changing Christianity. It denies the necessity of authority that is binding for faith and practice. "Obviously, the point where this progressive conception of Christianity comes into conflict with many widely accepted ideas is the abandonment which it involves of an external and inerrant authority in matters of religion. The marvel is that the idea of authority which is one of the historic curses of religion, should be regarded by so many as one of the vital necessities of the faith. The fact is, that religion by its very nature is one of the realms to which external authority is least applicable."<sup>8</sup> We agree with Dr. Burggraaff when he tells us that this is the very heart of the matter in regard to the difference between the Modernist and the Orthodox.<sup>9</sup>

This leads us to the question, what is the liberal view of Revelation? What is substituted for this objective authority? The reply is, subjectivism. This it especially finds in the realm of experience. Machen tells us that the changing expression of an experience is widely prevalent in the modern

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6 Cf. Burggraaff, *The Rise and Dev. of Lib. Th. in Am.*, 1928, p. 178.

7 Cf. *idem.*

8 Fosdick, *Prog. Christianity*, 1922, p. 157.

9 Cf. Burgg., *The R. and Dev. of Lib. Th. in Am.*, 1928, p. 179.

world, and at no time has it been more prevalent than now. "It underlies the mysticism of Schleiermacher and his many successors; it underlies the Ritschlian rejection of 'metaphysics'; it underlies the popular exaltation of the 'abiding experience'."<sup>10</sup> Prof. Grosheide writes that during the last quarter of a century the experience-theology has waved its scepter over the New Testament science. This he finds to be especially true in Germany, but also in America and England. It is interesting to observe that Prof. Grosheide states that this theology of Schleiermacher has even penetrated the Reformed thought in America as is evidenced by the title of Dr. Machen's book, "The Origin of Paul's Religion."<sup>11</sup> Thus theology is no longer intended to be objectively true, but the convenient symbol in which a mystic experience is clothed. In his "Modern Use of the Bible" Fosdick speaks of "abiding experiences" and "mental categories." Christian experience is made the criterion of truth. Naturally all metaphysic is thus discarded. No wonder that Fosdick speaks of it as having no value when he states that unitarianism was "the intellectual revolt against an incredible metaphysic."<sup>12</sup> In this way theology results logically in the most complete skepticism. Dr. Fosdick also observes that the liberalism of today must necessarily produce an intellectual formulation which will become the orthodoxy of tomorrow, and which will then in turn give place to a new liberalism, and so on ad infinitum.<sup>13</sup> Thus the Nicene creed, it is said, was good for the 4th. century, and the Westminster Confession for the 17th. century, but these formulations will now of course give place to 20th. century statements, which so far as the intellectual or liberal meaning is concerned, are contradictory to them.

What this subjectivism leads to is concretely illustrated by the modern abandonment of the so-called "Grammatico-historical exegesis." The fundamental notion of it was that the modern student should distinguish sharply between what he would have said and what he would have liked to have the Bible writers say, and what the writers actually did say. The latter question only was regarded as the subject matter of exegesis. This principle in America is rapidly being abandoned by the most eminent scholars. Prof. Goodspeed abandons it, for example, when in his translation of the New Testament he translated ΔΙΚΑΙΩΟ, "Justify," by "make upright." Machen deplores this fact when he writes, "I confess that it is not without regret that I should see the doctrine of Justification by faith, which is the foundation of evangelical liberty, thus removed from the New Testament . . . It is not without regret . . . that I should return with Goodspeed to the merit-religion of the middle ages."<sup>14</sup> This old method of exegesis has not only

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10 Cf. Woman's Home Companion, Dec. 1925, Machen's Art. "My Idea of God", p. 15.

11 Cf. De Geschiedenis der N. T. Godsopenbaring, 1925, p. 8.

12 Fosdick, Mod. Use of the Bible, 1924, p. 201.

13 Idem. p. 190, compare Princeton Th. Review, XXIII, 1925, p. 73.

14 Christian Education, Dec. 1924, Vol. 8, no. 3, art. by M. "The Bible Teacher and Bible Facts," p. 100.

been abandoned in the case of Paul but also in the case of Jesus, by confusing the question what they could have wished Jesus had been, with the question what Jesus actually was. Prof. Ellwood in his popular book, "The Reconstruction of Religion" makes the amazing assertion that, "Jesus concerned himself but little with the question of existence after death."<sup>15</sup> It may be that Prof. Ellwood cares little about the doctrine of the future life, but the question whether Jesus did so is not a matter of taste but a matter of Christian faith, a faith which is not without historical evidences. As a matter of fact, not only the thought of Heaven but also the thought of Hell runs through the teaching of Jesus.

WHAT THE MODERNIST THINKS OF GOD. Fosdick, as we have already indicated, rejects metaphysics and speaks of unitarianism as an intellectual revolt against it. This in one word expresses the liberal doctrine of God. In America the ontological trinity is repudiated and he substitutes for it an instrumental, a historical trinity. "The Trinity that matters is the Trinity of experience. To know God as the Father of all, God as revealed in the historic Son, and God as the unseen Friend in our hearts--that is to know the Trinity of the New Testament."<sup>16</sup> This rejection of metaphysic is shared by Dr. McGiffert in his book, "The God of the Early Christians." Dr. McGiffert himself is an advocate of "Ethical Theism." He admits that this view of God was not taught by Jesus. Jesus, Dr. McGiffert admits, is a "Theist" in the usual meaning of that word. He rejects the picture of the "liberal Jesus" with the one-sided emphasis on the Fatherhood of God as over against His justice, as being contrary to fact. He also classifies Paul as a "Theist" with the same Jewish view of God which Jesus had. But the early Christians, unlike Jesus and Paul, says McGiffert, were not monotheists,--they were not interested in the connection between Jesus and the Maker and Ruler of the world. It was a decline in Christianity when Jesus was made the "creator, ruler, and judge of all the earth."<sup>17</sup> Dr. McGiffert goes on to make a distinction "between a God of moral and a God of physical power."<sup>18</sup> According to this distinction he holds that it is a matter of indifference to Christians how the world came into being; the doctrine of creation belongs to a region of metaphysics with which religion has nothing to do. This same is true of God's providence. The Christian reveres God's goodness without fearing His power or relying upon his providence. Dr. McGiffert fails to see that "goodness" apart from a Being who is powerful and apart from a personal Being, is a mere abstraction and without meaning. With Liberalism the immanence of God becomes pantheism. According to it, not only does the world not exist apart from God, but neither does God exist apart from the world. "God is either identified with the totality of the world

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15 Ellwood, *The Reconstruction of Rel.*, 1922, p. 141.

16 Fosdick, *Modern Use of the Bible*, 1924, p. 188-189.

17 Cf. p. 44 ff.

18 Cf. p. 154.

process, or else he is described as connected with the world process as the soul of man is connected with the body."<sup>19</sup> The modern pantheism is evident from what is said of science in this connection. "It (science) reveals man as a being with a soul which is progressing more and more toward divinity in a universe of unbroken continuity . . . You see, science is constantly revealing divinity and man's relationship to divinity."<sup>20</sup>

DOCTRINE OF MAN. Nothing is more characteristic of present-day Liberalism than the loss of the consciousness of sin. The modernist preacher deplores the sad defects of human life and the need of divine assistance,--but sin is not a transgression of God's law.<sup>21</sup> God is conceived of as the universal Father of all. God is higher than we are, but He is not different from us. Does not McGiffert speak of his "goodness" toward all mankind?<sup>22</sup> "Sin brings about no rupture between Father and child. God is Father and all men are His children. They are made in His image. This image has been blurred a bit now and then,--but that does not take away from the correctness of the image. . . . What then about Sin? . . . Mathews and Fosdick have not finished speaking of the sins of mankind that drag like ball and chain, hindering the progress of the human race. But this sin is an ethical idea, and not a forensic conception."<sup>23</sup> Of course the Reformed Theology also speaks of a fatherhood of God which extends over all men whether good or evil, but this is the fatherhood in the Creative sense, and must be sharply distinguished from His fatherhood in the Redemptive sense,--namely, His fatherhood over the believers. This is not done by the modernists.

THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST. With the denial of sin must go the denial of the Cross as having redemptive significance. No marvel that Fosdick speaks with disgust of those who believe "that the blood of our Lord, shed in a substitutionary death, placates an alienated Deity and makes possible welcome for the returning sinner."<sup>24</sup> Every weapon of ridicule is used against the doctrine of the Cross. Christ's death is looked at rather as "an ideal of vicarious sacrifice,--as an historical fact which moves our hearts God-ward; as a sign of Christ's loyalty to the Kingdom of God--but it is not propitiation, not expiation, and cannot have as its glorious result the reconciliation which is the message of the historic church."<sup>25</sup>

We have not given a system of the Modern Theology of America in full detail. But enough has been said to indicate that this present Modernism is

19 Machen, *What is Faith*, 1925, p. 52.

20 Prof. Pupin of Columbia, as quoted by Burggraaff in, "The Rise and Dev. of Lib. Th. in Am., 1928, p. 183, 184.

21 Cf. Machen, *What is Faith*, 1935, p. 122 ff.

22 Cf. cit. above.

23 Cf. Burggraaff, *The Rise and Dev. of Lib. Th. in Am.*, 1928, p. 189 ff.

24 Fosdick, *Shall the Fundamentalists Win?* 1922, p. 5.

25 Cf. Burggraaff, *The Rise and Dev. of Lib. Am. Th.*, 1928, p. 191.

humanistic in its essence and has for its basis a pure naturalism. The infallibility of the Scriptures, the real immanence and transcendence of God, the total depravity of man, the substitutionary death of Christ,---these have all been repudiated. A subjective revelation based upon human experience, a pantheistic conception of God, a humanistic conception of man, and a purely human Jesus has been offered as an impoverished substitute for the Divine Son.

## **B. MODERNISM IN EUROPE**

The modernism of America was not original, but was imported from Europe,--largely from the German schools of theology. Therefore, if we are to understand the modernistic movement with which Machen clashed in America, we must also take a glance at the European current of thought. Most of the apologetic works of Machen are directed against this German theology. Also here we shall confine ourselves to those phases of the European Modernism against which Machen fought.

THE TUBINGEN SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY. Machen especially clashes with this school in his famous book, "The Origin of Paul's Religion." It is imperative in a study of Machen as Apologist to have at least a general knowledge of the drift of this theology. The influence of Hegelianism on theology is most conspicuous in the province of historical and Biblical criticism. When the Tubingen School was inspired by "das Leben Jesu" of D. F. Strauss (1874) the New Testament criticism entered upon a new stage. F. C. Baur continued the historical criticism. He took as his starting point the supposed conflict which he thought to find between the original Christianity represented by Peter, James and John, and the apostle Paul. In other words, the original church and Paul disagreed. He finds positive proof of this conflict in the four epistles of Paul, Romans, Corinthians and Galatians, which are accepted as genuine. According to Baur these major Epistles of Paul constitute the primary source of information. They should, therefore, be interpreted without reference to any other source, and in this way Baur thinks he finds traces of a conflict between Paul on the one side, and the original apostles on the other. Baur believes that this conflict is exceptionally plain in Galatians and Corinthians which emphasize the complete independence of Paul with reference to the pillars of the Jerusalem Church, and his constant opposition to the endeavors of Jewish Christians to bring the Gentiles into subjection to Jewish Law--efforts which must have been supported to some extent by the original apostles. This conflict is to have continued to about the middle of the second century when by means of the gradual rise of gnosticism and because of persecution, a reconciliation was effected between the Gentile Christian

party appealing to Paul, and a Jewish Christian party appealing to Peter. Finally a compromise was reached in which the Pauline party gave up what was really distinctive in it, namely the Pauline Doctrine of Justification; and the Petrine party surrendered the demand of circumcision. Baur says that the New Testament books are to be dated according to the attitude they assume to this conflict; the books which take sides and are either strongly anti-Pauline or anti-Petrine are to be dated in the first stage of this conflict--early, while those which reveal a tendency toward compromise were written when the conflict was almost settled,--therefore later. Such was the "tendency-criticism" of Baur. According to this view the book of Acts was dated well in the second century as it especially displays a tendency toward compromise. This tendency, Baur supposes, shows itself in Acts by a deliberate falsification of history, in order to bring about the desired peace between the Pauline and the Petrine parties. The author of Acts tried to give a new revised account of the Apostolic history by showing that Paul and Peter really were in agreement. "To that end in the book of Acts Paul is Petrinized and Peter is Paulinized; the sturdy independence of Paul which actually kept him long away from Jerusalem after his conversion, gives place, in Acts, to a desire of contact with the Jerusalem church, which brought him early in Jerusalem and finally lead him even to accept for his gentile converts, at the Apostolic Council a portion of the ceremonial law. Peter on the other hand, is represented in Acts as giving expression at the Apostolic Council to Pauline sentiments about the Law; and all through the book there is an elaborate and unhistorical parallelism between Peter and Paul."<sup>26</sup> The best known followers of Baur were, A. Schweigler, E. Zeller, Kostlin, Volkmar, Holsten, Bruno Bauer and Hilgenfeld. Also Ritschl belonged to his disciples, but after 1857 Ritschl went his own way and criticized many of the hypotheses of the Tubingen School. Criticism was also brought against this school by Bottger, Dietlein, and especially by Thiersch and Ebrard, Wiesinger, Wieseler, Grau and Lechler.

THE SCHOOL OF COMPARATIVE RELIGION. This school is represented by Troeltsch, Bousset, Wrede, Wernle, Weinle, Julicher, Arnold Meyer and others. Machen came in direct contact with this type of thought when he studied under Bousset, Heitmuller, Julicher and others at Gottingen. His books abound with references to these theologians, and it is not only because this school exerted such a tremendous influence upon the Liberalism of this age, but also because it was made the direct subject of attack by Machen, that we shall now briefly refer to this current of theology. This school contends that the early Christianity absorbed many elements from other religions. Sometimes this resulted in an advancement for Christianity, but generally the fruits appeared to be unfavorable. Very often the opinion is found that the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ was entirely

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26 Cf. Machen, *The Orig. of P's Rel.*, 1921, p. 38.

falsified. The Reformed position is that God revealed Himself in the new dispensation and as a result of that Christianity is a religion of revelation. The School of Comparative Religion teaches the exact opposite. It is true that with some all revelation is not denied, yet in principle it proceeds from the supposition that the Christian religion developed in a natural way, just as is the case with the other religions. Christ first preached this Christianity,--if at least His existence is not denied or that He is Himself made to be an eclectic who gathered from everywhere--and then it was brought into a world where it made contact with many other religions. In its development it received from and surrendered to these other religions. After a continued reciprocal influence Christianity finally came to some kind of consolidation in the Catholic Church.

This can be brought out with one concrete illustration. Let us refer to the theories of Heitmuller and Bousset. Briefly it comes down to this: Jesus preached in Galilee and Juda what we might call a simple Christianity. The churches in Palestine heard Him and believed that God is the Father, and Jesus is the Son of Man, the Messiah. But now by means of propaganda the Greek Christianity of Antioch adds to this the Kyrios-Cult from the Pagan religions. The result was that the title and the cult of the Kyrios were applied to Jesus. By this the content of the Christian preaching is entirely changed. New thoughts borrowed from the heathen religions were thus absorbed by Christianity. Prof. Grosheide correctly states two objections to this view, namely, 1. The exclusiveness of the Jewish race which was also shared by the Christians, closed the door for heathen influences. This is evident from the polemics found in the letters of the apostles against these Jewish and heathen influences; 2. the short time in which this whole process is supposed to have taken place. In addition to this--which is especially true of Bousset--this position cannot be maintained without decisive mutilation of the original text.<sup>27</sup>

## **WHAT MODERNISM THINKS OF JESUS AND OF PAUL**

This brings us to the second part of our discussion of the Modernism in Europe. We shall now endeavor to state very briefly the main views of this modernism concerning Jesus and the main views of this Modernism concerning Paul.

### **A. THE MODERN VIEW OF JESUS**

The twentieth-century Liberal Protestant Theology was deeply interested in

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<sup>27</sup> For this section the author acknowledges his debt to Dr. Grosheide, *De Geschiedenis der N.T. Godsopenbaring*, 1923, p. 39 ff.

Christology. This can especially be said of the German theology during the closing half of the past century. It can lay claim upon some of the best known scholars such as Holtzmann, Weizsacker, Wellhausen, Schmidt and Keim, in the first period, and later on such scholars as Harnack, Schmiedel, Bousset, Heitmuller, Julicher and von Soden were numbered among their ranks. This liberal school claims to use only the scientific historical method in their study of religion, and in their study of Jesus they almost exclusively confine themselves to the Synoptic Gospels,--not to these Gospels as a whole however, but only to those parts which they deem to be genuine. From these "unquestionable" sources they then derive their conception of what Jesus thought of Himself. The parts in the Gospels which speak of Christ as God are ruled out, because according to these scholars, they are incapable of proof on scientific principles. "Thus the absoluteness of Christ for the life of religion is challenged, and he comes to be included under a general notion, as one of a series, the greatest religious 'genius' or 'hero of history' far above all other men, and in virtue of His life and message truly our Lord and Master, but yet only one among many. The religion of the New Testament is treated again as only one phenomenon by the side of others in the general history of religion, the purest and highest form to which religion has yet attained, but differing only quantitatively and not qualitatively from other systems."<sup>28</sup>

Conception of the Person of Christ. This is variously conceived of, but practically all of the modernists assert that Jesus was a great character who founded the Christian religion. One says, "He desired no other belief in His person and no other attachment to it, than is contained in the keeping of His commandments," and "The Gospel, as Jesus proclaimed it, has to do with the Father only, and not with the Son, . . . and yet He is the way to the Father, and as He is the appointed of the Father, he is the Judge of the world."<sup>29</sup> In this book Harnack does admit His Messianic claim, since He spoke of Himself as the Messiah. Harnack regards the Miracles as natural events upon which the contemporaries of Jesus placed a supernatural interpretation.

Other modernists such as Bousset and Schmiedel, speak of Him as being purely human and fallible. The right attitude toward Him is not that of worship but of reverence.<sup>30</sup> These scholars allow only a few of the Lord's sayings to stand as being trustworthy.

Another group of modernists have advanced to greater extremes. Some of the main features connected with Jesus in the Gospels, are attributed to current mythology. Thus the Virgin Birth is considered to be a stock legend

28 Cf. M. Jones, *The N.T. in the 20th. Cen.*, 1934, p. 14, 15.

29 Cf. Harnack's, *What is Christianity*, 1903, p. 125, and 144.

30 Cf. Jones, *N.T. in the 20th Cen.*, 1934, p. 15 f.

of antiquity. Similar stories are connected with a number of ancient heroes, such as Plato, Julius Caesar and Perseus. The deification of Jesus was made possible only after Christianity spread among the pagans and was borrowed from the heathen deification of kings and emperors.<sup>31</sup>

Concerning the Resurrection of Jesus the opinions differ, but all agree that the bodily resurrection is impossible and, therefore, did not occur. Harnack is certain that the grave of Jesus was the birth-place of the indestructible belief that death is vanquished and that there is life eternal.<sup>32</sup> The generally accepted view in regard to this is that Jesus was regarded by His disciples as an extraordinary person who was shamefully put to death. After his death His discouraged disciples by means of hallucinations, in which they thought they saw Him risen from the dead, attributed to Him divine attributes and made Him not an example of faith only, but also an object of faith.<sup>33</sup>

Modern view in regard to the Virgin Birth Narratives in Mt. and Lk. In this there is also some difference of opinion. Harnack, for example, accepts the Lucan authorship of Acts as well as of the third Gospel. Hilgenfeld and many others believe that the Virgin Birth narrative does not belong to the original Gospel of either Mt. or Lk., but was added later on. Many of the modernists believe it to have been an idea borrowed from the pagans, who also have stories in regard to the so-called supernatural birth of their kings, resulting of the union between their Gods and virgins.<sup>34</sup> Some of the advocates of the "Pagan Derivation Theory" are also advocates of the "Jewish Derivation Theory." Most of these claim that the story of the Virgin Birth as it is found in the Gospel narratives comes from the Jewish conceptions concerning the Christ of the O.T.--especially appeal is made to Isa. 7:14 and certain passages in Philo regarding the Logos doctrine,--but this Jewish view in turn was borrowed from pagan sources. So ultimately it is again traced back to paganism. Some have maintained that Jesus was born out of wedlock and that the whole Virgin Birth narrative was invented to hide the shame of both Mary and Jesus. This view is, however, contradicted by such a mass of evidences that it hardly deserves any mention, and is practically abandoned by all the scholars of this school today.

## **B. THE MODERN VIEW CONCERNING PAULINISM**

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31 Strauss, Pfleiderer of Berlin, Loisy, F. C. Conybeare and others.

32 Cf. What is Christianity, p. 160.

33 Cf. Machen's Origin of P's Rel., p. 23.

34 Cf. Machen's V.B. p. 322, where it is shown that this view as advanced by Bunkel, Cheyne, F. C. Conybeare, Grassmann and others.

The question here is, from where did Paul derive his lofty conception of Jesus? It is plain from Paul's letters that he thinks of Jesus as being divine, and constantly places Jesus on the side of God. For the devout Christian this does not seem strange, as he accepts Christ's deity as a fact; but for the modernist it means that Paul deified a man who had lived only a few years before and had died a shameful death on the cross. Three possible answers have been proposed by those who reject the supernatural fact of Christ's deity, as to how Paul received this supernatural conception of Jesus.

1. The "Liberal" view. This maintains that Paul derived his conception of Jesus from the so-called "Liberal Jesus." This view says that the religion of Paul was derived from the real historic person of Jesus. Paul had received many impressions of the historic Christ in various ways, but especially from the lives of the disciples whom he had persecuted. From this Paul derived his religion. But his theology must be regarded as something entirely independent from his religion. Paul's theology consists in the terminology which he applies to Jesus, and this was borrowed from the categories that were at that time applied to Jesus. Paul was, therefore, obliged to express his religious impressions of Jesus or His religion, in a language that was used at that time. His theology or the language then applied to Jesus may now be abandoned; but his religion which he derived from the historic Jesus of Nazareth is permanent and of continued value for the human race. This view was advanced by Harnack and many others.

2. The Jewish derivation theory. This rejects the "Liberal" emphasis upon the historic Christ as accounting for Paul's lofty conception of Jesus. It was especially Wrede who said that Paul derived his view of Jesus, as being a divine person with pre-existence before the world, from his pre-Christian Jewish conception of the Messiah. Already before his conversion, Paul believed that the Messiah that should come was to be divine. All that was necessary, therefore, was to connect this view with Jesus. Paul did not derive the lofty conception of Jesus from the historic Christ, but on the contrary, had Paul known the historic Jesus with all of His limitations, he perhaps would have been hindered to come to such an exalted Christology. Jesus, for Paul, only meant that the expected Messiah had really come to earth and had died and was risen again. Paul was, therefore, not the theological expounder and successor of the real Jesus, but rather the creator of the Christian theology which in later years influenced the church.

3. The Pagan derivation theory. According to this hypothesis Paul's Christology was derived from contemporary pagan religions. Here the method of Comparative Religion is applied to Paulinism. This view is well reproduced by Bousset in his book, "Kyrios Christos" which appeared in 1913. Bousset says that Jesus' disciples first regarded Jesus merely as the

heavenly "Son of Man" but later on, through influence from the pagan religions by means of the Christian churches in Antioch and vicinity who were separated from Palestine, Jesus was regarded as Lord. Among the pagans the term "Lord" was used to designate their cult-gods in their mystery religions. The Antioch Christians took over this term, and naturally applied it to Jesus. It is from here that Paul derived his Christology.

We believe that the above is a concise statement of the Modernistic movements which Machen combated. The review of course had to be very brief and consequently incomplete. Yet if we have succeeded to give the reader a general view of this Modernism, we feel that we have attained our purpose in preparing the mind for the understanding of that which now follows.