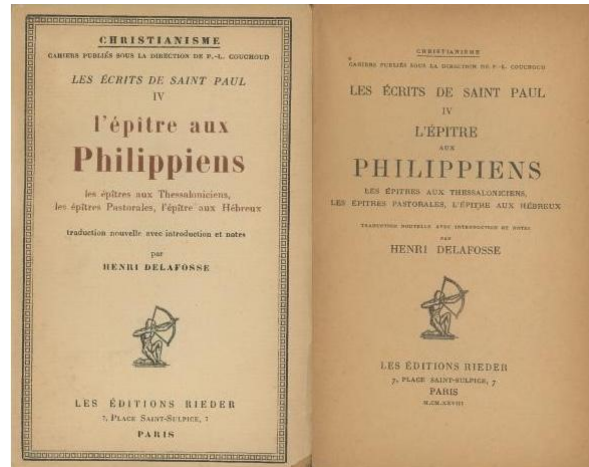


This file was created October 2021 as a translation for my personal use and without any thought of sharing publicly at the time. I only ask that you keep that in mind when using it. I have made a copy of the French text available at

<https://archive.org/details/turmel-les-ecrits-de-saint-paul-iv-l-epitre-aux-philippiens>

Neil Godfrey - November 2023



68

PASTORAL EPISTLES

Three Pauline letters are called pastoral epistles, two of which are addressed to Timothy and the third to Titus. They received, in the 18th century, the name of pastorals, because they are largely devoted to the duties of pastors. Let us say, however, that their objective is not exclusively moral, but that they also deal with the goodness of God and the redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ. They associate è; morality and dogmatics. They even make this one penetrate that one; because, among the obligations imposed on pastors, there is one which consists of combating heresies and heretics.

I

PAUL'S NOTES

Let us first stop at four small notes that we find there. Three of them belong to the second epistle to Timothy I, 15-18; IV, 9-16; IV, 19-21. The fourth ends the epistle to Titus, III, 12-14.

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In the first Paul praises Onesiphorus who rendered him many services in Ephesus, who, in Rome itself, set out to look for him and ended up finding him. But he notes at the same time that he was abandoned by everyone in Asia. In the second he declares that he only has Luc with him. On the contrary, when he wrote the third, Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia kept him company. In the fourth note he gives his instructions to Titus and asks him first of all to come and join him in Nicopolis.

Let's get to know these pieces. In the first Paul, as a testimony of gratitude, wishes Onesiphorus, who knew how to "find" him in Rome, to "find" mercy with the Lord "on that day". The formula "in that day" reappears in the second epistle to the Thessalonians 1.10. There it designates the day when the Lord Jesus, descending from heaven, will begin by exterminating the unbelievers, then inaugurate his kingdom in Jerusalem. In the light of this comment, we see that Paul wishes his benefactor Onesiphorus to escape the extermination with which the Lord will strike the unbelievers, and to be admitted into the kingdom which will have Jerusalem as its capital. We do not recognize the forger there.

In the second post Paul reports that the blacksmith Alexander did him a lot of harm, then he adds: "The Lord will reward him according to his works." This trait, which has nothing heroic about it, is very human; but a forger would have been careful not to introduce it into his painting.

The third note gives little information that a forger would have no interest in imagining.

In the fourth we read: "Ours also must learn to practice good works in pressing needs." The thought is this: "The Jews themselves do not refuse their services to those who need them. Ours must model themselves on these men; they too must do good when the opportunity presents itself." This morality based on emulation is the one to which all educators appeal. A forger would have found a higher motive. In short, a forger had no interest in making these pieces; several of them, on the contrary, could only serve him. Let us therefore say without hesitation that our four tickets are authentic.

The four posts that I have just examined are, with regard to their content, totally foreign to the pastoral epistles in which they are incorporated, and in which they occupy only an

accessory place. From now on I will study these epistles and distinguish the redactions through which they passed, as if the said notes did not exist.

70

II

ANTI-MONTANIST POLEMICS

In I Tim, II, II-15a we read an ordinance relating to women. It includes two parts. In one case, the woman is forbidden to teach and command the man; in the other, the considerations which motivate the ban are formulated. I have already pointed out ¹ the prohibition of teaching, made to women in the first epistle to the Corinthians XIV, 34. I have shown that it had been known neither to Irenaeus nor to the first opponents of Montanism, and that it could hardly be earlier than around the year 200. The prohibition of commanding man, which is mentioned here, obviously cannot be of an older date. Let us now move on to the considerations on which this double prohibition is based. Here they are :

For Adam was first formed; Eve next. And Adam was not deceived; it is the woman who, seduced, is guilty of transgression. Yet she will be saved by childbirth.

1, Delafosse, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, p. 101.

72

In short, the woman must occupy a subordinate position in everything that concerns religious matters, and this subordination is, at the same time, the consequence of the method of Eve's training and the punishment of her conduct in the earthly paradise. This is the order. We can obviously only approve of the double prohibition it carries. But its considerations are nonetheless strange. Why go looking even in the earthly paradise for an explanation that common sense amply provided?

Let us now open the Panarion, XLIX, 2, of Epiphaneus. It is about the sect of the Priscillianists or Quintillianists, a sect which represented what we would today call the extreme left of the Montanist movement. And here is what we are told:

They receive both Testaments and believe in the resurrection of the dead. They attribute the founding of their sect to Quintilla and Priscilla... They appeal to various very frivolous authorities. They claim that the fact of having been the first to eat the fruit of knowledge was for Eve a great privilege... Often among them seven virgins dressed in white and carrying torches appear before the people at the church to deliver oracles. In the grip of a sort of enthusiasm, they make pretenses in front of the assistants, to make them shed tears which will be considered as a fruit of penitence. For they shed tears and, by their facial expressions, they deplore the life of men, and they women are bishops, priests and are admitted to other degrees. No account is taken of sex under the pretext that (Gai II, 28) "in Christ there is neither man nor woman".

73

This is the information that Epiphanius gives us, the documentation of which is here, in the opinion of all credible critics*. By comparing it with I Tim., II, II-15n we obtain the following observation:

Among the Montanists, women taught in the assembly, they even commanded men since they were admitted to the priesthood and to the epis-Copat. For his part, Paul does not want teaching to be entrusted to women; nor does he want women to command men. The Montanists, to justify the prerogatives which they entrusted to women, exalted Eve who was the first to eat the fruit of science (they also invoked the example of the sister of Moses who was a prophetess and the example of the four daughters of Philip who were also prophetesses, but it was on Eve above all that they relied; moreover Epiphanees expressly says (3): "They entrust to women the order of bishops and priests and they declare do this because of Eve). For his part, Paul, to prove that women must remain in a subordinate situation, also appeals to Eve; but he notes that she was formed after Adam and, moreover, that the woman was seduced but not the man.

74

The Montanists did exactly what Paul defends, and, to justify their conduct, they brought precisely the example that Paul uses to condemn it.

We are here in the presence of singular coincidences. Once we have observed them, we can, if we wish, leave it there and feel no need to explain them. This removes all difficulty, and this is what has happened up to now. If we consider that this attitude is

insufficient, that the above-mentioned coincidences must have a cause, and that this cause must be sought, we have before us two hypotheses.

We can assume that the text I Tim., II, 11 is a tit-for-tat response to the Montanist enterprise on which it is modeled. This solution perfectly accounts for the coincidences that we observed; it explains in particular the intervention of Adam and Eve in Pauline legislation. However, she postponed this legislation until around the year 180.

Alongside this solution, there is another which reverses the order of the factors, which places the regulation of the epistle either around the year 60 by attributing it to Paul himself, or around 125 by attributing to a fictitious Paul, who in any case gives the legislation of the 1st epistle priority over the Montanist organization. In this hypothesis Paul, or the one who takes his name, prohibited women from teaching and commanding men, without us knowing what need this double prohibition responded to. Moreover, for a very mysterious reason, he motivated his regulation by the respective situation of Adam and Eve and by the conduct that the latter held in the earthly paradise. Later, around 160, the Montanists appeared. A little extravagant but Catholic, they could not ignore the ordinance of I Tim., II, 11 which, written either around 60 or around 125, was thought to be by Paul. They knew it and... they took the exact opposite view. Paul forbade women to teach and command men; They instituted women bishops, women priests, they commissioned virgins to exhibit themselves in church with theatrical attitudes, to preach penance to Christians. Paul based his rule on the story of Adam and Eve; They appealed to this same history to authorize their institutions. They would have wanted to taunt the apostle that they would not have acted otherwise. Is this likely?

75

One more observation. In quoting the ordinance I Tim., II, 11 relating to women, I have assumed that it ends at II, 15a with the words: "She will be saved through childbearing." But, if we consult a version, we read sometimes one or the other of the following two translations, both of which assume that the sentence begun in 15 a continues in 15b:

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Yet she will be saved by childbirth (15b) if she perseveres in faith, charity, holiness with modesty.

However, she will be saved by having children (15b) if they persevere in faith, morality and immodesty.

I hasten to say that the first translation is a trompe-l'oeil, in that it conceals an important fact which occurs at this place in the Greek text (and also in the main Latin manuscripts), namely the substitution of the plural for the singular. From 11 to 15a inclusive, it is a question of woman in the singular; then in 15b the singular gives way to the plural: *éah trieïnôsin* (so perhaps in the old Latin texts that the Clementine Bible abandoned).

On the other hand, the second translation is also a sham in the sense that, to prepare the plural "if they persevere", it brings in the plural "of the children" which does not exist in the Greek. No doubt the word "child" is in the compound word *teknogohia* (procreation of children) given in the Greek text. He is there, but he has lost his individuality. It is there, just as the words "child" and "champ" are in the compound words "childcare" and "agriculture".

77

But no one will have the idea of saying: "Childcare is useful if they are well looked after" or; "The farmer becomes rich through agriculture if they are well cultivated." We no longer have the right to translate. "Yet she will be saved by childbirth if they (the children) persevere..."

So the translation "if they persevere" is grammatically unacceptable. However, it is the one that is commonly used. It undoubtedly owes the favor it enjoys to the good results it produces. Let's see these results. She makes the apostle say that the woman, who gives birth to children, will be saved if these children "persevere" in the practice of Christian virtues! She subordinates the salvation of the mother to the perseverance of her children; she makes her responsible for the behavior they will have throughout their lives! Such an assertion is monstrous. And the exegetes agree, because they explain to us that the meaning of the sentence is this: "She will be saved if she gives her children a Christian education." An interpretation which unfortunately is based on a falsification. The text is inexorable. We interpolate it when we insert the idea of a Christian education given by the mother to her children. He speaks of perseverance in the Christian life: *éan meïnôsin*. And, whether we like it or not, we make him support an inequity when, with most commentators, we suppose that he is talking about the perseverance of children, in other words when we translate: "if they persevere".

78

The transition from singular to plural that we see in the middle of II, 15 raises a literary problem. This problem is sometimes glossed over (notably by the Clementine edition of

the Vulgate); other times we give a monstrous solution. The real solution must be sought elsewhere. We find it when we compare 11 to 9-10. The transition from singular to plural that exists within 15 (between 15a and 156) is found between 10 and 11; but in the opposite direction. In 9-10 it is about women in the plural; in 11 the woman appears in the singular. Ordinance II-15a, the reaction of which is in the singular, is framed in a plural wording. In other words the plural which reigns in 9-10, which disappears in II-15a, reappears in 156; and this last fragment, if we take into account only the editorial point of view, connects to 10 over II-15a. This fact is surprising. The surprise grows even more when we compare 156 to 9. Both recommend *sôplirosuné*, that is to say modesty. Similar from an editorial point of view, they are also related from a vocabulary point of view.

Let us add that they are from a logical point of view. Verse 10 teaches us that the only appearance worthy of Christian women is that of good works. Verse 156 explains that women will have this adornment if they persevere in faith, charity, sanctification with modesty. It completes the thought expressed in 10.

79

Two consequences follow from this. First, 15 6, which today is separated from 9-10 by the ordinance relating to the place that women should occupy in the church, originally came immediately after 9-10 of which it is an integral part. Secondly, the above-mentioned ordinance which goes from 11 to 15a inclusive, and whose late origin was already known to us, is an added document. It was thrown into a dissertation that existed before it and with which it has nothing in common.

Since the ordinance I Tim., II, II-15a is an added document, it cannot inform us about the origin and the spirit of the pastoral epistles (we consider here these epistles apart from the authentic letters of Paul).

She wants to fight a Montanist institution; but having been artificially inserted into the text which serves as its framework, it does not authorize any induction on the purpose and date of the original writing.

Let us now examine some texts which have nothing in common with the Montanist controversy.

80

III

ANTI-MARCIONITE POLEMIC

1. *Against Antitheses.*

The first epistle to Timothy ends with the following phrase: “O Timothy, guard the deposit, fleeing from ungodly chatter and the antitheses of false knowledge.”

Of the three thoughts that make up this text, two reappear elsewhere. Timothy receives again, in fact, in the second epistle, I, 14, the order to keep the deposit and, II, 1Θ, to avoid impious chatter. On the other hand, the “antitheses” (opposed in the Vulgate) only intervene here. And this phenomenon is surprising in an author who delights in repetitions.

If we turn to ancient commentators, some tell us that the “antitheses” designate the objections of false science against Christian dogma. According to others, we should rather see the oppositions that the doctrines of false science make between themselves.

There is someone who frequently speaks to us about antitheses: it is Tertullian in his book against Marcion. Let us report some of his texts: (I, 19) “The opposition of the Law and the Gospel is Marcion's own work, his capital work... Here are the Antitheses of Marcion; they strive to put the Gospel in opposition to the Law; from the conflict of the two Testaments they want to deduce the distinction of their Gods”; (II, 29): “I would have refuted Marcion's Antitheses in more detail, if the defense of the Creator had required a long polemic”; (IV, 1): “To accredit his gospel Marcion accompanied it with a commentary intended to bring together the oppositions and which he called Antitheses. This book places the Law and the Gospel in conflict, to deduce that there exist two opposing Gods, each of whom has his own instrument, or, as they say, his Testament”; (IV, 4): “In his Antitheses Marcion claims that our Gospel of Luke... was interpolated by the partisans of Judaism” (see again II, 16; IV, 2, 6, 9, etc.).

81

So the epistle to Timothy condemned the “antitheses of false science” and Marcion wrote the book of Antitheses. Strange coincidence! Let's try to clarify it. Who has priority? At the sentencing? or composition? Were the “Antitheses” proscribed before being written? Did their proscription follow their appearance? It goes without saying that, for theologians, the question does not even arise. According to them, the pastoral

epistles emanate entirely from Paul. The book written by Marcion dates from around 140; Paul's letters belong to around 60: the condemnation preceded. She preceded; but it only has a fortuitous relationship of homonym with Marcion's book. What Paul wanted to denounce was not the impieties that Marcion was to utter around 140, it was the heretical doctrines which were circulating before his eyes and of which he was aware (yet it would not have cost Paul any more to announce Marcion's blasphemies than to prophesy, as he does in I Tim., IY, 1 and II Tim., III, 1, what will happen "in the last days"; but theologians have vaguely realized that the Holy Spirit could not logically denounce the book of Marcion without denouncing the books of Celsus, Luther, Calvin, Renan, etc. They took the wise course of refusing the "antitheses" a prophetic significance). This is the theologians' solution.

82

Many critics arrive at the same result, although by a different route. According to them the pastoral epistles were written, under the name of Paul, around 125 (perhaps using notes from Paul). The "antitheses" that they denounce are the systems in vogue in the first quarter of the second century and not Marcion's book.

Let's take a closer look at this. The pastoral epistles attributed to Paul — rightly or wrongly — are widespread in churches, at least in the main churches, either since 60 or since around 125. Equipped with the stamp of the great apostle, they are the object of universal veneration. Marcion, too, especially him, venerates them. Him especially; here's why. According to him, the Twelve, led astray by their carnal appetites, have disfigured the doctrine of the divine Master. Paul alone understood the mystery of Christ, Paul alone preached it. Paul is the only true apostle of Christ. Marcion is Paul's disciple. He therefore reads the epistles attributed to Paul with eagerness, with fervor, with attention. And consequently, he knows the stigma imposed by his master on the "antitheses of false science". He knows her better than anyone. And when, around 140, he sets out to prove that the religion of Christ is diametrically opposed to the religion of Moses, that the two religions emanate from two different Gods, he calls his book Antitheses! He can't imagine anything better than this title to ruin his work.

83

No doubt he has supporters almost everywhere; but much more numerous are those whom he calls Judaizers - whom we call Catholics - to whom his doctrine seems a tissue of blasphemy, who are preparing to condemn it or who, perhaps already, have condemned it, according to that we are before or after 144. These bitter adversaries will triumph when they see the Antitheses appear. They will say: "This is the book that the

apostle Paul, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, announced 1 This is the book against which he warned us when he wrote -. "Flee impious chatter and the antitheses of false science! » Marcion could easily, without affecting the content of his book, give it another title. He doesn't do anything about it. Among a hundred possible names, he chooses the one that his master Paul discredited, the one that will facilitate his next condemnation or justify his past condemnation! Who does not see that we are in an abyss of impossibilities?

84

But, it will be said, why would Marcion necessarily have known the pastoral epistles written around 125? Could he not ignore them and, consequently, ignore the text which prescribes fleeing "the antitheses of false science".

This objection is that Marcion ignored writings which, around 125, circulated under the name of Paul. Marcion arrived in Rome before 140; he stayed there for a long time; he was condemned there in 144. No one will believe that this exalted disciple of Paul could have ignored texts which, before his eyes, were presented to the faithful of Rome as coming from his master. So that it is simply a question of knowing whether the Roman church had, around 140, given hospitality to the pastoral epistles which, for around twenty years, had been spreading under the name of Paul in Christian communities. . Reduced to these terms the question is resolved without much difficulty ¹.

1. Naturally it does not even arise for the partisans of integral authenticity; they, in fact, must believe and believe that the pastoral epistles have, from 60 and everywhere, enjoyed canonical authority.

85

Here is a forger who, around 125, launched into the public, under the name of Paul, letters that he himself had fabricated either completely or using authentic notes.

The name of the great apostle is, under his pen, a means of publicity, an advertisement for ideas that he wants to propagate; his writings testify that he is not devoid of culture. He cannot ignore that Rome, which is the mistress of the world in the political domain, also makes the law in the domain of thought. He knows that nothing serious, nothing lasting can be attempted outside of Rome. He, who is so keen on the propagation of his theories, must therefore have taken or had his so-called letters from Paul carried to Rome where Marcion necessarily encountered them around 140.

Let's assume he rejected them. In any case he read them. He could not have failed to read them, if only to be able to motivate his attitude towards the Catholics who, for their part, venerated them because of their supposed apostolic origin. The patronage with which they covered themselves aroused his curiosity and even his sympathy. He therefore read them carefully, and he only rejected them after having acquired serious knowledge of them. Let us also note that the precept relating to the flight from the antitheses of false science is not submerged in wordy developments on ecclesiastical discipline. He closes the first epistle to Timothy, he is featured; it catches the eyes; we cannot fail to see it when we only have in our hands a manuscript of the pastoral epistles. Marcion read the said epistles and he did not see it! And as fate would have it, he gave the title to his book precisely the "antitheses" that the epistles condemn! Who will believe such enormity?

86

These are the impossibilities we come up against when we claim that the "antitheses of false science" were written in the first epistle to Timothy before the book of Marcion. Is this not proof by the absurd that the order of priority must be reversed? Let us therefore reverse it without fear of being mistaken, and say that the "antitheses of false science" are intended to combat Marcion, the man of "Antitheses"

2. Against the resurrection "already arrived".

The second epistle to Timothy, II, 17-18, denounces two heretics, Hymenaeus and Philetus, "who have turned away from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already come", and who "overthrow the faith of some". Hymenaeus and Philetus want to destroy the dogma of the resurrection; but they intend to carry out their project without directly clashing with the faith of the masses. They therefore preach the resurrection; but a resurrection "already arrived", a resurrection which has nothing in common except the name with the true resurrection. They use the traditional pavilion to spread new merchandise.

87

Now Irenaeus, II, 31.2, reproaches the Gnostics for claiming that the resurrection consists in the knowledge of the truth as they conceive it ¹.

1. Esse autem resurrectionem a mortuis agnitionem ejus quae ab eis dicitur veritatis. [= But the resurrection from the dead is the acknowledgment of what is said by them to be the truth.]

And Tertullian, *De resurrectione carnis*, 19, expresses himself thus:

They take in a figurative sense the resurrection which the prophets clearly announce, saying that death itself must be understood in a spiritual sense. What really constitutes death, they say, is not the separation of soul and body, it is ignorance of God. Through it, in fact, the man who died to God is in error as in a sepulchre. This is why the resurrection takes place when one has resumed life in God through the acquisition of the truth, and when one comes out, so to speak, from the sepulchre of the old man after having triumphed over the death of ignorance .

88

So the Gnostics had, with regard to the resurrection, the same attitude as Hymenaeus and Philetus. They too wanted to overthrow dogma without clashing head-on with popular belief; they too kept the word and destroyed the thing. It remains to be seen which side initiated this tactic. Here we find the question that arose before us regarding antitheses. The same question. And also the same answer which just needs to be summarized briefly to avoid unnecessary repetition.

The Gnostics - above all the Marcionites - would have worked to discredit themselves, they would have been insane, if they had adopted an attitude and a formula unmasked and denounced, either since 60 or since 125 in a text emanating from Paul or attributed to Paul, venerated by the faithful and which they themselves could not ignore. The mind cannot stop at such a hypothesis. The order of priority must be reversed. These are the people targeted by the fictitious names Hymenaeus and Philetus. And the text II, 17-18 which condemns their theory of the resurrection "already arrived" is not earlier than around Ide 150.

89

3. Against the adversaries of marriage and certain foods.

In I Tim., IV, 1 Paul pierces the veils of the future and predicts what will happen "in the last times", Authentic predictions are always confused, muddled, imprecise: it is by

these signs that we recognize them . Nothing like this here. The men that our prophecy announces and denounces will prohibit marriage and certain foods. They will even add that marriage and certain foods are intrinsically evil; because the author – who clearly wants to refute them – believes it is necessary to note that “every creature of God is good”. We are faced with precise features, and this precision is the infallible indicator of fiction. Our so-called prophecy is not one. The one who wrote it has before his eyes the impostors whose doctrine he summarizes, and the “last times” designate the era in which he lives¹.

1. Let us not forget that the belief in the proximity of the end of the world then reigned among Christians who, moreover, kept it for a very long time, since we still find it in the writings of Pope Saint Gregory.

For us, it is a matter of identifying these impostors using the report given to us.

Here is what we read in Tertullian (Adv. Mark., I, 29): “With the God of Marcion the flesh is only baptized if it is a virgin, widow, single, only if it has purchased baptism at the price of divorce... Obviously this discipline is motivated by the condemnation of marriage.” (I, 24): “In the God of Marcion the flesh is baptized and removed to marriage”. — (I, 1): “Who is the beaver who insists on castrating his flesh as much as Marcion who suppressed marriage? » (See also IV, 11, 17, 23, 29, 34, 38; V, 8, 15). And here is what Epiphanius says in the Panarion, XL II, 12, refuted. 24: “Marcion does not want us to take as food what has had life. He believes that those who eat flesh will be condemned, under the pretext that by eating the flesh we eat the soul that is within it. On the other hand, Tertullian (II, 6-9, especially 6 end) strives to prove against Marcion that evil comes exclusively from the freedom of man and that God has nothing to do with it. We see that the disciples of Marcion respond to the report of the heretics denounced to us here. Only they respond to it, since among them only creation is considered an evil work. And the proof is made that the oracle I Tim., IV, 1-5 is a piece of anti-Marcionite polemic.

91

4. *The man Jesus Christ mediator.*

Here is what we read in I Tim., II, 5:

For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ.

The verse which precedes this text speaks of the savior God, who wants all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. The verse that follows it says that the ransom was given for all. Our text begins with the particle "car" which is, by its nature, explanatory. It is therefore supposed to explain why the savior God wants all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

But it explains nothing, it proves nothing. If 5 is linked to 4 or even to 3, it is, in any case, not by the link which connects the effect to the cause. You have to look for another link. But no matter how much we look, we won't find any. The particle "car" is a passport. It gives the assertion that follows it the right to enter here. But the passport is false. Originally verses 1 Tim, II, 3-6 (basically identical to Tit., II, 13-14) simply said that the savior God Jesus gave himself as a ransom for all. Verse 5 is an added piece which, to deceive the reader's attention, is unduly equipped with the particle "because", that is to say which conceals its intrusion by a ruse.

92

Let's not believe that this intruder has no reason to exist. He has one. Only, to find it, one must look for it within oneself and see what he teaches. What's he saying? That there are not several gods, that there is only one God, that Jesus is not this unique God, that he is only the mediator between God and men, and that this mediator is man. It teaches that Jesus is man; obviously because the need was felt around the author to proclaim this dogma. But who refused to put Jesus in the ranks of men? It was certainly not among the pagans or the Jews that this strange opinion was current. Nor was it among the Judeo-Christians that we encountered it. But she was law in Marcion's house. For the Marcionites Jesus was the good God who came in person to earth, with an ethereal envelope, to rescue men from the yoke of the evil God. He was God, he was not a man; he was the good God opposite whom was an evil God. Let us take the opposite view of these assertions and we have exactly the verse I Tim., II, 5: "There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus". Let us conclude that the text I Tim., II, 5 is a piece of anti-Marcionite polemic.

93

As such it extends a list on which we had already included several texts. But until now we did not know if the anti-Marcionite polemic, which is spread out in the pastoral epistles, belonged to their original writing (apart from Paul's posts), or if it had been inserted in excess. The text I Tim., II, 5 puts an end to this uncertainty. He teaches us that all the passages, which denounce and combat Marcionite theology, must be

considered as pieces added and foreign to the primitive writing which we now have to study.

IV

PRIMITIVE WRITING

Today the pastoral epistles are disfigured by the contribution of the anti-Montanist polemic and the anti-Marcionite polemic. It is now a question of restoring to them their primitive physiognomy, of knowing the goal that they pursued before suffering the outrages of interpolation. To do this, let's keep excesses away from them; then let's see what they don't say and what they do say.

First, what they don't say. They do not say that Christ will return to restore the kingdom of Israel. They do not speak of this earthly kingdom, of which Paul speaks in the epistles to the Galatians and the Romans, of which the Apocalypse speaks, of which Justin will speak and also Irenaeus . They make, it is true, a veiled allusion to this kingdom; but it is only to treat it as a "fable". Because the "Jewish fables", from which Titus (I, 14) must divert Christians, can only designate the beliefs grouped around the kingdom of Israel restored by Christ. And the "fables", the "old wives' tales" that Timothy, too, must reject (I Tim., 1,4; IV, 7; II Tim., IV, 4), have the same meaning. Moreover, Tit., 1.10 warns us that false doctrines mainly come from the world "of circumcision". Fables, Jewish fables, old wives' tales: this is how the pastoral epistles describe the belief which was that of Paul, of the Apocalypse, which will be that of Justin and Irenaeus! But they shoot these poisoned arrows at her slyly and without seeming to do so, since, as I said, they do not name her. Same silence regarding the resurrection of the body. The anti-Marcionite polemicist of whom I spoke above denounces two men whose heresy consists of saying that the resurrection has already arrived. But, apart from this interpolated text, the pastoral epistles do not speak of the resurrection of the body. Let it not be said that they missed the opportunity. They did not miss it since, in various places, we encounter the mention of the future life, of eternal life. The pastoral epistles have several times been able to speak of the resurrection of the body. Their silence is therefore deliberate, calculated.

95

Let us add that this silence extends to the incarnation of Christ. Here again the anti-Marcionite polemicist intervened in the name of Catholic belief by mentioning "the man" Jesus (p. 92). But, apart from this piece, the pastoral epistles make no allusion to

the incarnation of Christ. They do not even once use the words “body” and “blood” to which the other writings of the New Testament, starting with the Epistle to the Romans, attach such great importance. Yet they dealt with the work accomplished by Christ, with the mission he came to accomplish on earth. But they found a way to describe this work, to describe this mission without saying a word about the blood of Christ. This silence, too, is calculated.

We know what the pastoral epistles do not say. Now let's see what they say. First of all, they identify Christ with God. For it is indeed as the supreme God that Christ is presented to us in the following texts, the meaning of which has been tried in vain to distort: Tit., II, 13;

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Waiting for the blessed hope and the appearance of the glory of our great God and Savior the Lord Jesus.

I Tim., II, 3, 6:

This is good and pleasing to God our Savior... who gave himself as a ransom for all.

So the pastoral epistles say that Christ is the supreme God, whereas, for Justin, for Irenaeus, for Tertullian, Christ is the minister of God and the executor of his wishes.

It does not matter that in other places they distinguish God from Christ. To make this distinction it was enough to follow the flow, to conform to tradition, to speak like everyone else, to adjust to the appearances according to which Christ differed from God. To identify Christ with God, it was necessary to go upstream, to confront tradition head-on, to reject the usual formulas as well as appearances. Only texts which identify Christ with God are the fruit of personal effort, reflection and conviction. Only they count, just as in an astronomy book which sometimes talks about the rising and setting of the sun, and sometimes talks about the rotation of the earth, this last group of texts is the only one that counts.

The pastoral epistles further say that Christ God is our savior, the savior of all men; they add that, to save us, the Christ gave himself as a ransom and that he carried out our redemption. This doctrine is expressed precisely in the two texts that we have just read. It is true that we are not told to whom the ransom was paid; but we are informed that our

salvation was the object of a ransom and that Christ himself was that ransom. Let us add that, according to II TL, I, 10, the Christ destroyed death.

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The pastoral epistles frequently speak of "eternal life." This eternal life, which is also the "future" life, is promised to piety (ITim.,IV,8). The Christian is, in hope, heir of eternal life (Tit., III, 7). He believes in Jesus to have eternal life (I Tim., I, 16). This life which will exist in Jesus Christ (II Tim., I, I), will have heaven as its abode (II Tim., IV, 18). It will be for the Christian a "crown of righteousness" (II Tim., IV, 8), that is to say the reward of acquired merits. These acquired merits that the Christian obtains here below, form a "deposit" which he will surely find "in that day", because the said deposit is guarded by God who cannot deceive (II, Tim., 1,12). It remains to be seen what "in that day" means. This formula, derived from Isaiah (II, 11, 17), is read in one of Paul's authentic notes (II Tim., I, 18), who uses it to designate the day when Jesus will return to restore the kingdom of Israel. It is from Paul that it is borrowed here and in II Tim., IV, 8, where we find it. But, in this last text - and, consequently, in II Tim., I, 12 which is related to it, - "that day" is the day of "departure", that is to say the day on which the soul leaves the body in which it was captive. The Christian receives the crown of righteousness immediately after his death, just as the runner receives the reward when he has reached the end of his race. It is also under the symbol of a race that the Christian life is presented to us in I Tim., VI, 12, where the author says to the Christian: "Seize eternal life".

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The pastoral epistles speak several times of the devil and Satan. They give the word "devil" several meanings (see the note on I Tim., III, 7); but they use it several times to designate a character who holds men in his trap (II Tim., II, 24). And it is this same character that they indicate under the name of Satan (I Tim., I,20;V, 15).

Let us now open Tertullian's book *Adversus Marcionem*. In the description he gives us of the doctrine of Marcion we notice the following features: Christ is the good God who himself came to earth (I, 14, 19; II, 27). — This good God came to earth to "deliver" men, to provide them with salvation. And this deliverance and this salvation consisted in the fact that he tore men from the empire of the creator God (I, 17, 25). — Christ came to save all men, while the Christ awaited by the Jews must limit his action to restoring the kingdom of Israel (III, 21; IV, 6). — The Creator, seeing that Christ was coming to ruin his empire, had him crucified (I. 25). — Christ promised men heaven (III, 24).

To this information provided by Tertullian add all that given to us by Irenaeus and the author of *Quaestiones veteris et novi Testamenti*¹. Irenaeus, V, 31, speaks of certain men who claim that one goes to heaven immediately after death. He denounces this doctrine as heresy, which he accuses of despising matter created by God and denying the resurrection. Now these two characteristics belong precisely to Marcion's theology. The author of *Quaestiones*, III, 127, tells us that Marcion attributed creation to the devil.

1. In the appendices of volume III of Saint Augustine.

The primitive writing of the pastoral letters, that which we first encounter when we have discarded the four letters of Paul, is a work of Marcionite propaganda. The business letters written by the great apostle to his disciples Timothy and Titus, are for her a pavilion which serves to cover with the name of Paul a course of Marcionite theology and discipline. It has reached us in a Catholic edition which introduced dogmatic and disciplinary additions. We already know the main products of this retouching work, those for which there are material traces of interpolation. Now that the principle is acquired, we are authorized to consider as Catholic interpolations all texts irreconcilable with Marcionite theology, even if traces of retouching do not exist. The notes will carry out this sorting work.

Marcionite theology course in which four posts from Paul were incorporated and which was then neutralized by Catholic glosses: this is the definition that can be given to the pastoral epistles. The study of the epistle to the Philippians led us to the same results. The pastoral epistles are therefore, from the point of view of composition, closely related to the epistle to the Philippians, the program of which differs from theirs in part.