

Preface

The original idea that led to the publication of these essays and lectures was that several of them are helpful companion pieces to my recent book, *Paul: The Apostle's Life, Letters, and Thought* (Fortress Press, 2015). In the introductory essay (“An Academic Autobiography”) and in part 2, on Paul, Judaism, and Paulinism, one will find aspects of the history of the development of my thinking about Paul and especially about his Jewishness. Moreover, some of these essays treat aspects of Paul and Judaism more thoroughly than was possible in the new book.

Since one cannot write about Paul without writing about Judaism, my second thought was to include some of my essays on Judaism (part 1). I think that these essays will clarify my previous positions about “covenantal nomism” and “common Judaism.” These two topics are relevant not only to the study of Judaism but also to understanding Paul.

The thirteen essays in parts 1 and 2 would not have filled the pages available, and I have attached, as a special section, part 3, on Inner and Outer in the Study of Religion. One will understand the meaning of *inner* and *outer* in this context if one thinks of familiar biblical phrases like “wolves in sheep’s clothing” and “by their fruits you will know them.” These lectures focus on views about hypocrisy, doing good deeds in public, and so on in Christianity and Judaism, but they sometimes range outside those parameters. The lectures, which have not been published previously, were given at the University of Birmingham as the Cadbury Lectures of 1999–2000. Those ten days or so with congenial colleagues stand out as a very satisfying and heartwarming experience.

I have thrown in for good measure (as the saying goes) an essay on “Christianity, Judaism, and Humanism.” I had intended to write a short

treatise, to be called “Democracy, Christianity, and Fundamentalism.” After about three years of study, I concluded that I would not be able to write about the Enlightenment in a few dozen pages, because the Enlightenment was complex, and I love to study details and complications. I would wander off into comparisons between (for example) the English and the Scottish Enlightenments. What survives of this intention is chapter 22 in the present volume.

Rebecca Gray, my beloved wife, once again spent numerous days helping to prepare the manuscript for the press. Some of these essays required restoration, partly because they were written using now out-of-date software. Becky’s assistance was invaluable. I am deeply grateful to our friends Wendy Bernhardt, who typed a corrected version of chapter 8, and Megan Chobot, who re-typed the Greek text in chapter 9.

E. P. Sanders
Durham, North Carolina
April 2016