

pride, or inordinate egotism, as the worm at the bud of Saul's self-righteousness, has hit, as we think, on the kernel of the question. He sees in Paul's conversion a case of sudden death to an old and evil selfhood and a resurrection as sudden to a new and full life of self-consecration or of a self-crucifixion of the old man, since the two expressions come to the same thing. This is the real key to the Apostle's conversion: "Sin revived and I died," is the sum-total of all that came of his undertaking to keep the law. If we reverse the expression and say: "Self died, and Christ lived in me," we have the summary of what he became under the new and altered condition of being which followed conversion.

We are in a position now to turn to the question itself, and trace the stages which led up to this wonderful conversion. There are three stages, as we hold, of his inner experience, which had to be gone through, and without which we may be sure that no light on the road to Damascus, however dazzling, and no voice, however deafening to the whispers of that ravenous tyrant of an imperious egotism, could have produced the mighty change. No intelligent interpreter has ever quite overlooked the preparation of the Gospel—that underground work, as we may call it, which led up to Paul's conversion. But, as a rule, it has been touched upon only to throw light on his fitness for his high calling, as by birth a Jew, by culture a Greek, and by citizenship a Roman. What he was in himself, apart from his birth and breeding, the basis of his soul, as we may call it, has been passed by. Divines of the old orthodox school have accepted a miracle as *per se* an unaccountable phenomenon, and hence have shrunk from the attempt to trace any co-ordination of the miraculous and the natural. The Apostle, they say, was a chosen vessel—this is true, but the fitness is generally limited to the fact of his Hebrew parentage, his Greek culture, and his Roman citizenship. These, like the letters on the cross, in Hebrew and Greek and Latin, have been adequately described and their full significance recognized. We may leave to the Farrars and Howsons and the historical school of evidential writers to fill up further details of this kind. But when we turn to the inner life of Saul of Tarsus, and, apart from his environment, consider him in himself, and note his mental struggles, we begin to see the true preparation for his life-work.

What, then, do we discover as the key to the inner life in the formation of such a character? His was a self-contained nature, set on one great prize, which is the attainment of a righteousness which is "of the law." This was the prize of his high calling in his unconverted state. A Pharisee of the Pharisees, touching the righteousness which is of the law blameless, he was likeliest of all men to the young man who is nameless in the Gospels, and whom some critics have identified with Saul of Tarsus, who came running and kneeling