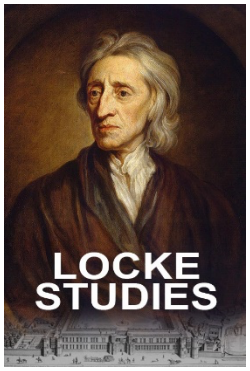

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John Locke's *Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul* in the Intellectual Culture of the Eighteenth-Century Church of England, 1707–1800

JACOB DONALD CHATTERJEE (UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD)

Abstract:
This article outlines a new account of the reception of John Locke's *Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul* (1705–7) in the eighteenth-century Church of England. Although the *Paraphrase* is rarely discussed in studies of the influence of Locke's writings, the work was widely used by later scholars and clergymen. The fierce early response to the *Paraphrase*'s apparently heterodox interpretations of St. Paul's accounts of the Resurrection and the Trinity soon gave way to a more positive appreciation of the commentary's merits. Even in these early years, some putatively orthodox divines had found much that was useful in the *Paraphrase*. After 1730, such positive readings of the *Paraphrase* became more prevalent. The growing status of Locke's philosophy facilitated a re-reading of his religious writings. The *Paraphrase* was lauded in Biblical commentaries, educational writings, sermons, and systematic treatises. Scholars and clergymen frequently imbibed Locke's hermeneutic principles; his judicious comments on St. Paul's style and argumentative strategy; his anti-Calvinist exegesis; and the contextual knowledge he provided for understanding the epistles. The enduring influence of the *Paraphrase* also ensured that it was deployed in several significant theological debates around Deism and obligatory subscription to articles of faith.

Keywords: John Locke, St. Paul, Catharine Trotter Cockburn, William Dodd, Abraham Tucker, John Jebb, Anglicanism.

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1. Introduction

In a 1780 sermon on the Old Testament prophets, Lewis Bagot, the Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, and a prominent high churchman, lamented the popularity of John Locke's *Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul* (1705–7). He challenged what he regarded as one of Locke's most absurd interpretations of Scripture in order to provide "an antidote to the powerful magic of a favourite name'' and to caution "those who set out in their study of these Scriptures, with Mr. Locke's Comment in their hand.''[1] Bagot was not alone in remarking upon the extensive influence of Locke's Scriptural exegesis. Other eighteenth-century writers referred to the *Paraphrase* as having "a numerous band of followers''; being "respected by every scholar''; and stimulating the inquiries of "many ingenious and rational men.''[2] Indeed, Locke's *Paraphrase* was continually utilized in eighteenth-century Biblical commentaries, educational writings, sermons, systematic treatises, and religious polemics. The work was even occasionally alluded to in poetry.[3]

That Locke's *Paraphrase* exerted a significant influence within the cultural and intellectual life of the Church of England is not, however, widely acknowledged. For though some studies have highlighted the heated Anglican response to the *Paraphrase* in the early eighteenth century,[4] analysis of the work's later reception has tended to focus on the Dissenters who utilized Locke's interpretative method and Scriptural readings.[5]

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[1] Lewis Bagot, *Twelve Discourses on the Prophecies Concerning the First Establishment and Subsequent History of Christianity* (Oxford, 1780), 136.

[2] John Jebb, *A Short Account of Theological Lectures Now Reading at Cambridge*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1772), 4; William Gilpin, *An Exposition of the New Testament; Intended as an Introduction to the Study of the Scriptures*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (London, 1793), 1:xxii; William Dodd, preface to *A Commentary on the Books of the Old and New Testament*, 3 vols. (London, 1765–70).

[3] Thomas James Mathias, *The Pursuits of Literature, or What You Will* (London, 1796), 19.

[4] See, for instance, Arthur Wainwright, introduction to *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*, by John Locke, 2 vols., *The Clarendon Edition of the Works of John Locke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 1:59–65; Mark Goldie, "Mary Astell and John Locke," in *Mary Astell: Reason, Gender, Faith*, ed. William Kolbrener and Michal Michelson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 65–85, at 81–5; Jacob Donald Chatterjee, "Christian Antiquity and the Anglican Reception of John Locke's *Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St Paul*, 1707–1730," *Locke Studies* 20 (2021): 1–36, https://doi.org/10.5206/ls.2020.10597. The later influence of Locke's *Paraphrase* is sometimes briefly alluded to. For example, see: Maria-Christina Pitassi, "Locke's Pauline Hermeneutics: A Critical Review," in *Locke and Biblical Hermeneutics: Conscience and Scripture*, ed. Luisa Simonutti (Dordrecht: Springer, 2019), 243–56; Michael Ledger-Lomas, "Paul," in *Making and Remaking Saints in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, ed. Gareth Atkins (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 29–43, at 32–3.

[5] See for instance, Arthur Wainwright, introduction to *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*, by John Locke, 2 vols., *The Clarendon Edition of the Works of John Locke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 1:59–74; Arthur Wainwright, "Locke's Influence on the Exegesis of Peirce, Hallett, and Benson," in *Locke and Biblical Hermeneutics: Conscience and Scripture*, ed. Luisa Simonutti (Dordrecht: Springer, 2019), 189–205; Alan Sell, *Philosophy, Dissent and Nonconformity, 1689-1920* (Cambridge: James Clarke and Co., 2004), 51; Scott Mandelbrote, "Introduction," *Dissent and the Bible in Britain*, ed. Scott

Studies of Locke's influence in the eighteenth-century rarely even mention the *Paraphrase*.[6] In more general accounts of Enlightenment Biblical scholarship, the *Paraphrase* also receives little analysis.[7]

Nevertheless, Locke's Scriptural commentary was an influential and widely discussed work within eighteenth-century Anglican circles. The *Paraphrase*'s popularity was reflected in its print history. In eighteenth-century England, the complete edition of Locke's *Paraphrase* went through seven editions by itself and was reprinted another nine times as part of Locke's *Works* (1714). Furthermore, Locke's commentaries on particular epistles, such as Galatians, were also occasionally reprinted individually in the early 1700s.[8] The *Paraphrase*, therefore, went through more than seventeen different editions. These reprints exceeded those of the other most popular Biblical commentaries in the eighteenth-century Church of England. Henry Hammond's *Paraphrase and Annotations upon All the Books of the New Testament* (1653) was reprinted seven times as a standalone edition and two more times as part of his *Works*.[9] Likewise, Daniel Whitby's *Paraphrase and Commentary on the New Testament* (1703) reached its seventh edition in 1760.[10]

The popularity of the *Paraphrase* would have seemed improbable in the immediate aftermath of its publication. In the first two decades of the eighteenth century, controversy erupted about the *Paraphrase*'s apparently

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Mandelbrote and Michael Ledger-Lomas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1–36, at 21–2; Robert Strivens, *Philip Doddridge and the Shaping of Evangelical Dissent* (London: Routledge, 2016), 71–2; Robert Strivens, "Moderation in Early Eighteenth-Century English Dissent: Philip Doddridge and his Academy Curriculum," *History of European Ideas* 50, no. 6 (2024), 1–14, at 9, https://doi.org/10.1080/01916599.2024.2319386; Diego Lucci, *John Locke's Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 213–14. The importance of the *Paraphrase* to Locke's influence in North America emphasised in: Claire Rydell Arcenas, *America's Philosopher: John Locke in American Intellectual Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2022), 2, 29–30, 64, 141.

[6] See, for instance, Alan Sell, *John Locke and the Eighteenth-Century Divines* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1997); Hans Aarsleff, "Locke's Influence," in *The Cambridge Companion to Locke*, ed. Vere Chappell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 252–89; Timothy Stanton, "Locke and His Influence," in *The Oxford Handbook of British Philosophy in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. James Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 21–40.

[7] Locke's *Paraphrase* is briefly referenced in Jonathan Sheehan's *Enlightenment Bible*, but it is not discussed as an influence on other Enlightenment scholars: Jonathan Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, Scholarship, Culture* (New Haven: Princeton University Press, 2005), 51.

[8] For discussion see: Jean S. Yolton, *John Locke: A Descriptive Bibliography* (Bristol: Thoemmes, 1998), 329–45, 399–26; Mark Goldie, "The Printing History of Locke's Writings, 1686-1800," *Locke Studies*, 5 (2005), 215–221. The *Works* reached a twelfth edition in 1824: Yolton, *Bibliography*, 429.

[9] Henry Hammond, *A Paraphrase, and Annotations Upon All the Books of the New Testament,* 7th ed. (London, 1702); Henry Hammond, *The Works of the Reverend and Learned Henry Hammond*, D.D., 2nd ed., 4 vols. (London, 1684).

[10] Daniel Whitby, *A Paraphrase and Commentary on the New Testament*, 7th ed., 2 vols. (London, 1760).

heterodox conclusions about the Trinity and the Resurrection and Locke's dismissal of the witness of the early church fathers. Yet, even in this period, some purportedly orthodox Anglican writers found much to admire in Locke's perceptive and clear commentary on specific aspects of Scripture. These surprisingly positive early readings of Locke's Biblical scholarship prefigured the later reception of the *Paraphrase* after 1730. As Locke's reputation as a philosopher grew, a more laudatory view of the *Paraphrase* emerged. Promoters of Locke's wider thought often admired his Biblical scholarship and believed that his authority as the pre-eminent seventeenth-century philosopher lent weight to their own interpretations of Scripture. Indeed, many of the most important promoters of the *Paraphrase* were connected to the Cambridge Lockeans, a circle of Cambridge-educated followers of Locke's philosophy who were led by Edmund Law, the Master of Peterhouse.[11]

The distinctive value of Locke's *Paraphrase* for eighteenth-century scholars, however, transcended what Bagot described as the ''powerful magic of a favourite name.'' Commentators on the Bible often adopted Locke's methodological principles, from his comments upon the interpretative obscurity created by the division of Scripture into chapters and verses to his declaration that every individual should constantly study the plain meaning of Scripture. Clergymen regularly appropriated Locke's account of St. Paul's prolix, yet well-reasoned, arguments. Locke's departures from Reformed interpretations of St. Paul, moreover, proved to be a fruitful resource for a church in which an Arminian or anti-Calvinist[12] theological framework had become increasingly dominant in the late seventeenth century, and achieved a hegemonythat endured for most of the eighteenth century.[13] The rehabilitation of Locke's Biblical scholarship also

[11] For further discussion of this intellectual circle see: Brian Young, *Religion and Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century England: Theological Debate from Locke to Burke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 45–80, 82–119; Brian Young, "Newtonianism and the Enthusiasm of Enlightenment," *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part A* 35, no. 3 (2004): 645-63, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.shpsa.2004.06.011; Niall O'Flaherty, *Utilitarianism in the Age of Enlightenment: The Moral and Political Thought of William Paley* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 35–57; Natasha Bailey, "Academic Collaboration in the Early Enlightenment: Daniel Waterland (1683–1740) and his Cambridge Tyros," *The English Historical Review* 139, no. 596 (2024): 126–54, https://doi.org/10.1093/ehr/cead210.

[12] Throughout the rest of this article, I use the term 'anti-Calvinist' to denote theological positions that departed from standard Reformed perspectives. I have adopted this label in lieu of 'Arminian' because it would be imprecise to associate all the discussed theological tendencies with the theological thought of Jacobus Arminius.

[13] This anti-Calvinism grew in influence during the seventeenth-century: Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: the Rise of English Arminianism, c. 1590-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); Christopher FitzSimons Allison, *The Rise of Moralism: The Proclamation of the Gospel from Hooker to Baxter* (London: S.P.C.K., 1966); John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689* (New Haven and London: Princeton University Press, 1991); Isabel Rivers, *Reason, Grace, and Sentiment: A Study of the Language of Religion and Ethics in England, 1660–1780,* 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991–2000), 1:25–89; Samuel D. Fornecker, *Bisschop's Bench: Contours of Arminian Conformity in the Church of England, c.1674-1742* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022); Andrew Ollerton, *The Crisis of Calvinism in Revolutionary England, 1640-1660: Arminian Theologies of Predestination and Grace*

ensured that his *Paraphrase* became an indispensable weapon in several significant religious controversies. His exaltation of St. Paul's argumentative rigor and eloquence became a constant counterpoint to the Deist writers who depicted him as the corruptor of Christ's teaching of a purer natural religion. Yet, the *Paraphrase* was also turned to more radical purposes. Locke's emphasis on the individualistic interpretation of Scripture buttressed critiques of obligatory subscription to articles of faith and even attacks on the Trinity itself. Such was the multifaceted nature of Locke's afterlives that one eighteenth-century vision of him was as a penetrating and pious Biblical scholar.

2. The Early Anglican Reception of John Locke's *Paraphrase*, 1707–1727

In the first few years after the publication of Locke's *Paraphrase*, it appeared unlikely that the work would exert a substantial influence on the mainstream intellectual culture of the Church of England. The *Paraphrase* provoked fierce controversy soon after being published. It was quickly subjected to rigorous broadsides by Robert Jenkin, the Master of St. John's College, Cambridge; Daniel Whitby, the Oxford-educated Biblical scholar; and Winch Holdsworth, a Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford. Locke's Scriptural exegesis was charged with anti-Trinitarian Socinianism and skepticism about the Resurrection of the same body.[14] He was critiqued for dismissing the interpretative value of the reading Scripture in the light of the witness of the early church fathers.[15] Even the young Isaac Watts, a Dissenter who had lauded Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689), was dismayed by the apparent heterodoxy of the

(Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2023). The persistence of a Reformed theological tradition in the Church of England has been highlighted in: Stephen Hampton, *Anti-Arminians: The Anglican Reformed Tradition from Charles II to George I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Jake Griesel, *Retaining the Old Episcopal Divinity: John Edwards of Cambridge and Reformed Orthodoxy in the Later Stuart Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022). However, these studies largely only qualify the overall picture of growing anti-Calvinist dominance.

[14] Robert Jenkin, *Remarks on Some Books Lately Publish'd* (London, 1709), 151–2, 149; Daniel Whitby, *Additional Annotations to the New Testament* (London, 1710), 61–3, 103; Winch Holdsworth, *A Sermon Preached before the University of Oxford at St. Mary's on Easter-Monday, 1719* (Oxford, 1720), 3, 11, 17; Winch Holdsworth, *A Defence of the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Same Body* (London, 1727), 54–8, 108–10. Mary Astell also critiqued Locke's view that St. Paul had argued for the natural subjection of women: [Mary Astell], *Reflections Upon Marriage*, 3rd ed. (London, 1706). Interestingly, Astell's argument relied upon the premise that *"the Apostle is his own best Expositor*," which turned Locke's hermeneutic principles against himself. For further discussion see: Goldie, "Mary Astell and John Locke," 81–5.

[15] Jenkin, *Remarks*, 124–7; Holdsworth, *Sermon*, 23–6; Holdsworth, *Defence*, 124, 141–2. For further discussion of the importance of Patristic scholarship to post-1660 Anglican orthodoxy see: Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity: the Construction of a Confessional Identity in the 17th Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 284–99.

Paraphrase.[16] Anglican admiration for Locke's *Paraphrase* appeared to be confined to similarly unorthodox figures, such as the Newtonian mathematician William Whiston.[17] Nevertheless, even in these early years, there were signs that Locke's *Paraphrase* could be accepted by many clergymen within the Church of England.

Some mainstream Anglican writers discovered much of value in the *Paraphrase* in the first two decades after it was published. One overlooked example of this positive reception of the *Paraphrase* was a 1707 anti-Quaker polemic by Fox Bohun, the Vicar of Melksham in Wiltshire. This work responded to Thomas Beaven's *Second Part* (1707), which had defended Quaker women's preaching in church by appealing to the authority of "a valuable Piece writ in favour Women's *Praying* and *Prophecying*'': Locke's *Paraphrase* on St. Paul's first epistle to Corinthians.[18] Bohun, however, believed that Locke's *Paraphrase* could be wrested from Quaker apologetics. He remarked that: "I have read Mr. *Lock*'s Paraphrase also'' and he was clear that ''the [women's] Prophesying mention'd by St. *Paul*, was a spiritual Gift perform'd by the immediate and extraordinary motion of the Holy Ghost.'' Indeed, Locke made it clear that women were not usually allowed to preach in church or even "*so much as to ask Questions there, or to enter into any sort of Conference.*''[19]

Another largely unnoticed early use of the *Paraphrase* was made by Edward Wells, a Student of Christ Church, Oxford, high church polemicist, and educationalist, in his own series of paraphrases and annotations: the *Help for the More Easy and Clear Understanding of the Holy Scriptures* (1709–15).[20] Connected to a circle of high church writers at Christ Church who admired Locke's *Essay*, Wells took a fair-minded approach to Locke's

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[16] Isaac Watts, *Horae Lyricae. Poems Chiefly of the Lyric Kind*, 2nd ed. (London, 1709), 207.

[17] William Whiston, *Sermons and Essays* (London, 1709), 254–55. Notably, Whiston continued to use Locke's *Paraphrase* in his later writings, referring to him as "our most exact Commentator upon several of his [St. Paul's] Epistles": William Whiston, *A Collection of Authentick Records Belonging to the Old and New Testament*, 2 vols. (London, 1727), 2:611, 636, 637, 660, 1077, 1080. For further discussion of the *Paraphrase*'s early reception see: Chatterjee, "Christian Antiquity," 14–28.

[18] Thomas Beaven, *Thomas Beaven's Second Part, in Relation to the Quakers* (Bristol, 1707), 17. Beaven had earlier criticised the Quakers: Thomas Beaven, *Quaker's Speech, To the Rest of his Brethen, at their Monthly Meeting held at Warminster, in the County of Wilts, Nov. 8, 1706* (London, 1706).

[19] Fox Bohun, *Agrippa Almost Perswaded to be a Christian: or, The Self-Condemn'd Quaker* (London, 1707), 50. Beaven responded by simply arguing that Quaker women did indeed possess the divine inspiration that authorised them to speak in church: Thomas Beaven, *The High-Priest of Melksham, his Reasonings, his Concessions, and his Self-Contradictions* (London, 1707), 52–3. For further discussion of the influence of Locke and women's preaching amongst the Quakers see: Naomi Pullin, "The Quaker Reception of John Locke and the Eighteenth-Century Debate over Women's Preaching," *The English Historical Review* 139, no. 597 (2024): 426-54, https://doi.org/10.1093/ehr/ceae081.

[20] As discussed in greater detail in: Jacob Donald Chatterjee, "The Reception of John Locke's Writings at Christ Church, Oxford, c. 1690–1800," *Locke Studies* 23 (2023): 1–34, at 9–12, https://doi.org/10.5206/ls.2023.16785.

Paraphrase.[21] In his own Biblical commentaries, Wells declared his agreement with Locke's view that the division of Scripture into chapters and verses often obscured its overall meaning.[22] He reproduced Locke's synopsis of St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians in its entirety because it "could not be Better express'd."[23] He frequently repeated Locke's "well observed'' comments on particular passages of St. Paul.[24] Wells did warn his readers against some of Locke's interpretations. For instance, he suspected that anti-Trinitarianism was behind Locke's description of St. Paul as referring to his audience in his epistles to the Corinthians as those who were called by Christ, rather than those who called upon Christ. He claimed that Locke's erroneous account may have stemmed from a belief that men worship God alone, so they would not have been calling upon Christ.[25] Nevertheless, Wells clearly recognized the usefulness of the *Paraphrase*.

The philosopher Catharine Trotter Cockburn's debate with Holdsworth produced another attempt to rehabilitate Locke's *Paraphrase* as being compatible with at least one mainstream Anglican tradition. This controversy began when Holdsworth preached a sermon in 1719 before the University of Oxford, which challenged Locke's apparently heterodox notions of the Resurrection of the same body. Cockburn responded in *A Letter* (1726), which led Holdsworth to publish a *Defence* (1727).[26] She, in turn, wrote a further reply, which was published posthumously in her *Works* (1751).[27] Throughout this debate, Cockburn's strategy was to defend Locke from aspersions of heterodoxy by situating his writings within what

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[21] For further discussion of the Christ Church reception of Locke's *Essay* see: Jacob Donald Chatterjee, "Christ Church, Oxford, Anglican Moral Theology, and the Reception of John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, c. 1690–1725," in "The Mind is its Own Place? Early Modern Intellectual History in an Institutional Context," edited by Alex Beeton, Eli Philip Bernstein, Emily Kent and René Winkler, special issue, *History of Universities* 36, no. 2 (2023): 98–136, https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198901730.003.0006.

[22] Edward Wells, *A Specimen of an Help for the More Easy and Clear Understanding of the Holy Scriptures: Being St. Paul's Two Epistles to the Thessalonians, and his Epistle to the Galatians,* 2nd ed. (London, 1716), sig. A3r–B1r.

[23] Edward Wells, *An Help for the More Easy and Clear Understanding of the Holy Scriptures: Being St. Paul's Two Epistles to the Corinthians* (Oxford, 1714), 1.

[24] Edward Wells, *An Help for the More Easy and Clear Understanding of the Holy Scriptures: being St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (Oxford, 1715), 64, 72; Wells, *Corinthians*, 37, 43, 157, 167.

[25] Wells, *Corinthians*, 3–5.

[26] Holdsworth, *A Sermon*; Catharine Trotter Cockburn, *A Letter to Dr Holdsworth Occasioned by His Sermon Preached Before the University of Oxford: on Easter-Monday, Concerning the Resurrection of the Same Body* (London, 1726); Holdsworth, *Defence*.

[27] Catharine Trotter Cockburn, *The Works of Mrs. Catharine Cockburn*, ed. Thomas Birch, 2 vols. (London, 1751), 1:157–378.

could be broadly described as a latitudinarian Anglican tradition. Her *Letter* (1726) denied that Locke had explicitly contested the fundamental articles of faith in the Church of England.[28] Cockburn's posthumously published rebuttal, moreover, claimed that Locke's focus on Scripture as the rule of faith reflected Anglican traditions. She associated his religious thought with various writers within the Church of England, such as William Chillingworth.[29] Clearly, Cockburn at least believed that Locke's *Paraphrase* could be assimilated to some Anglican theological traditions.

3. Locke's *Paraphrase*, and Anglican Biblical Commentaries, 1707–1800

By the time that Cockburn's final response had appeared in 1751, moreover, her belief in an Anglican reading of the *Paraphrase* had become commonplace. A persistent admiration for Locke's Biblical scholarship emerged after 1730. Positive comments were frequently made on Locke's hermeneutical principles, his understanding of St. Paul's style and purpose, his reasoning skills, his anti-Calvinism, and his knowledge of Jewish customs. These aspects of Locke's *Paraphrase* were widely remarked on in other eighteenth-century Anglican paraphrases, commentaries, translations, harmonies, and notes on Scripture.[30] Within these works, the *Paraphrase* was often referenced as an important established commentary. To take one of many examples, William Scott, a scholar who had been educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, declared in the title-page of *The New Testament Illustrated* (1775) that he had included "the best notes from the most approved commentators, such as Hammond, Whitby, Locke &c.'' Indeed, he inserted what he claimed was "Mr. Locke's Preface to St. Paul's Epistles'' before St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, though this was in fact a summary of Locke's argument interspersed with quotations from the actual preface.[31] Such was the influence of Locke's *Paraphrase* that new

[28] = Cockburn, *A Letter to Dr Holdsworth*, 19.

[29] Cockburn, *Works*, 1:194, 267, 258. For further discussion see: Chatterjee, "Christian Antiquity," 23–8. For more on Cockburn's philosophical thought see: Ruth Boeker, *Catharine Trotter Cockburn* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023).

[30] For other uses of Locke in such works see: John Butley, *The Holy Bible Illustrated and Explained: Or, A Complete Treasure for Every Christian*, 5th ed., 2 vols. (London, 1762); William Luke Phillips, *The Grand Imperial Bible*, 2 vols. (London, 1764–6); Samuel Rogers, *The Elegant Family Bible: or, A Treasury of Divine Knowledge; Containing the Sacred Text of the Old and New Testament at Large*, 2 vols. (London, 1765–7); Edward Harwood, *A New Introduction to the Study and Knowledge of the New Testament*, 2 vols. (London, 1767), 1:304. The use of Locke's *Paraphrase* in Biblical commentaries persisted in the nineteenth century: James Slade, *Annotations on the Epistles, Being a Continuation of Mr. Elsley's Annotations, and Principally Designed for the Use of Candidates for Holy Orders*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1816), 1:251; John Hewlett, *Commentaries and Annotations on the Holy Scriptures*, 5 vols. (London, 1816), 4:375; Thomas Belsham, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle Translated with An Exposition and Notes*, 2 vols. (London, 1822), 1:174, 439.

[31] William Scott, *The New Testament Illustrated, On A Plan Never Attempted Before* (London, 1775), sig. A1r, 328–31. For other examples of this appeal to Locke as an established and influential commentator

commentaries were often compared to it. On 11 January 1755, Edmund Pyle, a Chaplain-in-Ordinary to George II, sent a letter in which he remarked to his friend Samuel Kerrich that the Cambridge-educated clergyman Arthur Ashley Sykes would soon "put forth, in a week or two, a Paraphrase & Commentary (in Locke's manner), on the Epistle to the Hebrews.''[32]

Indeed, many Biblical commentators admired Locke's methodological and hermeneutic principles. William Newcome, the pre-eminent Biblical scholar of the Church of Ireland, frequently referenced Locke to elucidate the best way of interpreting St. Paul's digressive style and argumentative strategy in his *Attempt Toward Revising our English Translation of the Greek Scriptures* (1796).[33] In his appendix summarizing the most useful commentaries, he recommended Locke for the study of the epistles and declared that "The preface on the manner of interpreting St. Paul's epistles is entitled to the strictest attention of every theological student.''[34] As late as 1800, Peter Roberts, a Cambridge-educated clergyman, was commenting in his *Harmony of the Epistles of the Holy Apostles* on the aptness of Locke's observation that the "plain sense of Scripture'' was sufficiently clear that few who genuinely made an unbiased study of the Bible could fail to understand its meaning. In response to this methodological agreement, Roberts remarked that he would use his notes to illustrate Scripture, rather than to propound strong conclusions on its meaning. Nevertheless, he appealed to Locke's *Paraphrase* in dozens of places.[35]

In his *Exposition of the New Testament* (1790), William Gilpin, the Vicar of Boldre in Hampshire, outlined a more ambivalent view of Locke's method. He declared that other commentators believed that Locke's method relied too much on individual judgement but could still promote the understanding of Scripture:

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see: John Lewis, "The History of the English Translations of the Bible," in *The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, by John Wycliffe (London, 1731), 90; John Lewis, *A Complete History of the Several Translations of the Holy Bible, and New Testament, Into English*, 2nd ed. (London, 1739), 352; John Marchant, *An Exposition on the Books of the New Testament, Extracted from the Writings of the Best Authors, Antient and Modern* (London, 1743), vi, 413, 414, 415, 419, 427, 442, 447, 463, 512, 515, 518, 528, 530, 537, 541, 568, 615.

[32] Edmund Pyle, *Memoirs of a Royal Chaplain, 1729-1763; the Correspondence of Edmund Pyle, D.D. Chaplain in Ordinary to George II, with Samuel Kerrich D.D., Vicar of Dersingham, Rector of Wolferton, and Rector of West Newton*, ed. Albert Hartshorne (London and New York: John Lane, 1905), 226–7.

[33] William Newcome, *An Attempt Toward Revising Our English Translation of the Greek Scriptures*, 2 vols. (Dublin, 1796), 2:3, 69, 170.

[34] The appendix is unpaginated, but the passage comes under the sub-section entitled: "Useful Comments on Some of the Epistles." Newcome also regularly referred to Locke to explain specific Pauline passages: Newcome, *Attempt*, 2:67, 81, 103, 123, 124, 152, 169, 202, 209, 211, 214.

[35] Peter Roberts, *An Harmony of the Epistles of the Holy Apostles* (Cambridge, 1800), v, 466, 472, 473, 494, 496, 502, 503, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 523, 525, 526, 527, 531, 532, 538, 539, 540, 541, 549, 550, 552, 55, 557.

> Nobody, I apprehend, has contributed more to bring commentators into disrepute than Mr. Locke. He condemns them all in a body; which is not perhaps quite fair, as he is a commentator himself. The learning and abilities of this great man will be respected by every scholar, and every Christian: and the method he prescribes of reading St. Paul's epistles *frequently over*, to get hold of the scope of the writer, must certainly be acknowledged rational and just. But still, perhaps, if Mr. Locke himself had not trusted his own reason so much but had ventured a little more to look into commentators and sift their observations with that penetration, of which he was master, he might perhaps have avoided some mistakes that are laid to his charge, and might on the whole have made a better work.[36]

On the whole, therefore, Gilpin admired Locke's method and remarks on Scripture but believed that he should have given greater recognition to the importance of Biblical commentaries. He was also complimentary about Locke's other methodological proposals. He agreed with Locke that the division of Scripture into chapters and verses often obscured its meaning and that St. Paul's ideas "croud upon him" in his rich writings.[37] He accepted Locke's view that the epistolary format could create interpretative difficulties because the letters were intended for readers who had a wider contextual knowledge. Unsurprisingly, therefore, he continually referenced Locke's specific interpretations of St. Paul in his own notes.[38]

Scholars also found Locke's *Paraphrase* to be a useful resource for their Biblical commentaries for several other reasons. First, Locke's anti-Calvinist exegesis dovetailed with an emerging theological consensus in the Church of England. William Rider, a Chaplain to the Worshipful Company of Mercers, in his *Christian's Family Bible* (1770) appropriated Locke's *Paraphrase* in a remark on 2 Corinthians 5:16, which prioritized obedience over faith in attaining the knowledge of Christ. Rider went so far as to declare that "no man knows Christ any otherwise than in proportion as he obeys his laws.''[39] Similarly, Gilpin appealed to "a very long and useful note'' from Locke's *Paraphrase* in opposition to those who referred to St. Paul's epistle to the Ephesians to defend predestination. St. Paul had begun the epistle by declaring the God had adopted the Ephesians before the foundation of the world—a passage that some theologians had used to

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[36] William Gilpin, *An Exposition of the New Testament; Intended as an Introduction to the Study of the Scriptures*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (London, 1793), 1:xxii–xxiii.

[37] Gilpin, *Exposition*, 1:xx; 2: i, ii (pagination for pages i and ii comes from Gilpin's "General Preface to St. Paul's Epistles," which is numbered differently to the New Testament texts).

[38] Gilpin, *Exposition,* 2:242, 126, 200, 237–8.

[39] See the note in volume 3 on 2 Corinthians 3:16: William Rider, *The Christian's Family Bible*, 3 vols. (London, 1770). The text is not paginated.

support God's predestination of the elect. But Gilpin referred to Locke's note on this passage to argue that St. Paul was not portraying the election of particular persons but "only *in general* to Jews and Gentiles'' who were being admitted to the blessings of the Gospel.[40]

Secondly, Locke's reputation as a philosopher often supported his status as a Biblical commentator. For instance, Gilpin referred to Locke when he remarked that St. Paul "is considered as a close reasoner by those, who are themselves the greatest masters of reasoning.''[41] Thirdly, a positive view of the *Paraphrase* was often facilitated by an admiration for Locke's other writings. Zachary Pearce, the Bishop of Rochester, in his posthumously published *Commentary* (1777) referred regularly to both Locke's *Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695) and his *Paraphrase*.[42] Fourthly, his *Paraphrase* was referenced to explain the linguistic meaning of particular passages in the New Testament. Indeed, the Cambridge-educated scholar John Parkhurst's frequently referred to the *Paraphrase* in his influential *Greek and English Lexicon* (1769).[43]

The most striking example of the high status of Locke's *Paraphrase* amongst Biblical commentators was William Dodd's *Commentary on the Books of the Old and New Testament* (1765–1770). Dodd was a colorful figure. Dubbed the "Macaroni Parson'' for his extravagant lifestyle, his spendthrift habits led him to accrue enormous debts. To escape those debts, he forged a bond for £4,200 in the name of the Earl of Chesterfield, and was hanged for this crime on 27 June 1777.[44] Before these tragic events, however, Dodd had emerged as a leading promoter of Lockean and pseudo-Lockean ideas. In 1759, Dodd had preached a sermon that depicted Methodists as meeting Locke's criteria for being enthusiasts—a polemical strategy that he also adopted in his *Conference* (1761).[45] As the editor of the

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[40] Gilpin, *Exposition*, 2:237–8.

[41] Gilpin, *Exposition*, 2:i (in Gilpin's "General Preface to St. Paul's Epistles").

[42] Zachary Pearce, *A Commentary, with Notes, on the Four Evangelists and the Acts of the Apostles*, ed. John Derby, 2 vols. (London, 1777), 1:282, 544; 2:222, 238, 244.

[43] John Parkhurst, *A Greek and English Lexicon to the New Testament* (London, 1769), vii, 34, 137, 273, 335, 426, 470, 473, 477, 542, 609, 647. The work reached a fifth edition in 1809: John Parkhurst, *A Greek and English Lexicon to the New Testament*, 5th ed. (London, 1809).

[44] For more on Dodd see: Gerald Howson, *The Macaroni Parson: A Life of the Unfortunate Dr. Dodd* (London: Hutchinson, 1973); John Money, "The Masonic Moment; Or, Ritual, Replica, and Credit: John Wilkes, the Macaroni Parson, and the Making of the Middle-Class Mind," *The Journal of British Studies* 32, no. 4 (1993): 358–395, https://doi.org/10.1086/386040.

[45] William Dodd, *Cautions Against Methodism; or, Unity Recommended: in a Sermon on Ephesians, Chap. iv. Ver. 3. Preached Before the Religious Societies in and about London, at their Annual Meeting, in the Parish Church of St. Mary-Le-Bow, on Easter-Monday, 1759*, 3rd ed. (London, 1769), 34; William Dodd, *A Conference, Between a Mystic, an Hutchinsonian, a Calvinist, a Methodist, a Member of the Church of England, and Others* (London, 1761), 67–9.

Christian's Magazine (1760–67), Dodd continued to promote Lockean ideas. Contributions to this periodical often mentioned the *Essay*, the *Reasonableness*, and the *Paraphrase*.[46] Within the *Christian's Magazine*, Dodd published a life of Locke, and his congratulatory verse upon the Restoration of Charles II.[47] Extraordinarily, he also published what he claimed were two previously unpublished Locke manuscripts from Lord Masham's estate at Oates: the conclusion of a dissertation on the prophecies of Daniel and a treatise on free-will. These works were in fact written by the Platonist philosopher Ralph Cudworth, but they evince both Dodd's interest in Lockeana and his belief that the reading public shared his interest.[48]

Indeed, Dodd's belief that he had discovered some other forgotten Locke manuscripts—two of his interleaved Bibles—persuaded him to publish the *Commentary*. The subtitle of this work referred to the fact that he had inserted the notes and collections of Locke in the *Commentary*, and the frontispiece was an engraved picture of Locke. In the preface, Dodd declared that he had only been led to contribute to the proliferation of Biblical commentaries because:

> The manuscripts of Mr. Locke, which had long been confined to lord Masham's library at Oates, were put into my hands; among these were two of Locke's Bibles interleaved, containing several observations of his own, amidst a variety of collections from different commentators. The possession of these papers, which, upon a cursory view, I thought more considerable than were afterwards found to be, induced me to propose the present work to the publick.[49]

To emphasize the importance of this discovery, he quoted from Pierre Coste's account of Locke's character to illustrate his pious devotion to Scripture. Throughout the entirety of his *Commentary*, Dodd referred to Locke's apparent manuscript notes. Although these interleaved Bible notes seem to have been written by Cudworth as well, Dodd's insertion of them

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[46] William Dodd, *The Christian's Magazine, or A Treasury of Divine Knowledge*, 7 vols. (London, 1760–67), 3:193–4, 359; 2:32; 6:277. Dodd owned Locke's *Works*: John Burton, *A Catalogue of All The Genteel and Fashionable Household Furniture, Dresden China Pictures by Esteemed Masters, Capital Prints Framed and Glazed, &c Late the Property of the Rev. W. Dodd, D. D.* (London, 1777), 386.

[47] Dodd, *Christian's Magazine*, 6:484–95; 7:610–11.

[48] Dodd, *Christian's Magazine*, 4:263–69; 5:37–9; 7:37–40. For discussion of the manuscripts see: John Arthur Passmore, *Ralph Cudworth: An Interpretation*, new ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 107–113. The attribution of these manuscripts to Locke seems to have been convincing to some contemporaries. As late as 1777, they were still being referred to as authentic works of Locke: Isaac Reed, *An Account of the Life and Writings of William Dodd, LL. D.* (London, 1777), 28.

[49] William Dodd, preface to *A Commentary on the Books of the Old and New Testament*, 3 vols. (London, 1765–70).

under the name of Locke testifies to the esteem in which his actual Biblical scholarship was held.

Dodd recognized this esteem, remarking that:

> I have united the labours of those many ingenious and rational men, who, after the example of our great Mr. LOCKE, (the chief of whose notes on St. Paul's Epistles are inserted) have gone on to give us such expositions of this part of the sacred volumes, as do no less honour to themselves, than to our country.[50]

As this passage suggests, Dodd also made extensive use of Locke's authentic writings. In the "Dissertation on the Gospels" that he prefaced to volume three, he referenced Locke's *Paraphrase* to argue that the division of Scripture into chapters and verses obfuscated its overall meaning. In the "Introduction to the Epistle to the Romans," he repeated the Lockean view that: "the whole Epistle is to be taken in connection, or considered as one continuous discourse, and the sense of every part must be taken from the drift of the whole." He concluded the 'Introduction' with a recommendation of Locke's synopsis to the same epistle. Unsurprisingly, therefore, Dodd's notes included dozens of references to Locke's *Paraphrase*. Thus, Dodd's commentary exemplified many of the methodological, personal, and interpretative reasons for the *Paraphrase*'s success.[51]

4. Locke's *Paraphrase*, and Anglican Educational Writings, 1707–1800

The *Paraphrase* was not only utilized in new commentaries on Scripture but was also continually recommended in educational writings. Within these works, a wider admiration for Locke's writings tended to support a positive reading of Locke's *Paraphrase*. This common pattern was manifest in the writings of John Clarke, the Master of Hull Grammar School who had spent much of the 1720s and 1730s defending what he regarded as Locke's moral philosophy.[52] In 1731, he published *An Essay Upon Study* for the use of university students and others engaged in advanced courses of study. Throughout this work, Clarke averred that he based his account of the best way to study on Locke's principles of knowledge. Unsurprisingly, therefore, Locke's *Essay* was recommended as the best philosophical work and worthy of being read through two or three times. He also included Locke's

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[50] Dodd, preface to *A Commentary*.

[51] See the "Introduction to the Epistle to the Romans" and dozens of notes on St. Paul's epistles: Dodd, *Commentary*, 3: unpaginated.

[52] See, for instance, John Clarke, *An Examination of the Notion of Moral Good and Evil* (London, 1725), 47; John Clarke, *The Foundation of Morality in Theory and Practice Considered* (York, 1726), 9–23; John Clarke, *An Examination of What has been Advanced Relating to Moral Obligation* (London, 1730), 8, 15–17.

Paraphrase in a survey of the "best'' commentaries on Scripture that included Whitby, Hammond, and Locke's friend Jean Le Clerc's writings. All of these commentaries were strongly anti-Calvinist, and Clarke recommended a variety of other texts from this theological tradition, such as the Dutch Remonstrant Simon Episcopius's *Opera Theologica* (1650).[53] Clearly, Clarke had theological as well as philosophical reasons to admire Locke's *Paraphrase*.

Lockean promoters of the *Paraphrase* often lauded his hermeneutic principles. When John Jebb, a Fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge, and an educational reformer, gave a series of theological lectures on the interpretation of Scripture at Cambridge from 1768, he relied upon Locke's principles. These lectures were almost immediately controversial, and some of his colleagues forbade undergraduates from attending them. In response, he published a 1770 defense of "his endeavours to call the attention of youth to the study of the scriptures, and his asserting of the right of private judgement in the interpretation of them."[54] Jebb sought to contest the accusations that he had denied "the immaculate conception of Jesus, and the doctrine of free-will," though he later admitted to doubting the Trinity. Jebb's defense of his lectures appealed continually to the *Paraphrase*. He described himself as following Locke's method of interpreting Scripture:

> Upon reading the preface to Mr. Locke's comment upon the Epistles, I was struck with his representation of the advantages, which might be expected to arise from a course of study upon the Plan he recommended; and was particularly delighted with the Idea of making Scripture its own interpreter.[55]

Towards the end of his lectures, moreover, Jebb advised "the perusal of those authors," such as Sykes, "who have so happily completed the scheme of Mr. Locke."[56]

By 1772, Jebb had republished this defense with an additional proposal for how students ought to harmonize the Gospels and compare them. Once again, Locke's method was central to this scheme. He decried those who sought to impose their doubtful opinions of uncertain Scriptural notions upon others, remarking:

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[53] John Clarke, *An Essay Upon Study: Wherein Directions are Given for the Due Conduct Thereof, and the Collection of a Library, Proper for the Purpose* (London, 1731), 90, 94–7, 99, 100, 105, 109, 228, 235–6, 316, 161, 162, 327–31.

[54] Jebb, *Theological Lectures*, 1.

[55] Jebb, *Theological Lectures*, 4.

[56] Jebb, *Theological Lectures*, 1, 8, 9, 17.

> The great Mr. Locke appears to have seen this Evil in its strongest point of view. He attempted its cure, and hath in part succeeded. His method of studying Scripture by making it its own Interpreter, which has now been adopted by a numerous band of followers, opens to us the fairest prospect of succeeding in our attempts to investigate the real meaning of the sacred writers; at the same time, that his treatise upon the Reasonableness of Christianity has prevailed with thousands to believe that in their acknowledgement of the Messiahship of Jesus, they hold the fundamental article of faith, which with reason claims the high Prerogative—the exclusive Privilege of being essentially necessary to our salvation.[57]

Later, he added "The resemblance, which the plan of Harmonizing the Gospels bears to this scheme of Mr. Locke, may with justice be esteemed its greatest praise." Indeed, many of his prescriptions for harmonizing Scripture closely echoed Locke's own proposals. The student was instructed to note down passages of Scripture on similar subjects parallel to each other. He was then supposed to work out the meaning of each passage by relating it to the general aims of each Apostle. Upon these foundations, he could construct a paraphrase of the general meaning of this part of Scripture. In a Lockean vein, Jebb made Biblical commentators supplementary to the student's own reading of Scripture. These works were useful for linguistic insights and historical context, but they were not the most important means of encountering Scripture itself. Strikingly, Jebb related his proposal of moving from an understanding of the general purpose of each Apostle to the explicate the meaning of particular passages as following: "Mr. Locke's Preface to his Comment on the Epistles, which the Author of these Papers, again and again, recommends as the most sensible performance ever written upon the subject of Interpretation."[58]

Despite the radicalism of Jebb's inferences from Locke's method, his *Paraphrase* was partly popular because his proposals for interpreting St. Paul could be also read as supportive of many established pieties. One example of this more conservative interpretation of Locke's method was presented by Abraham Tucker, an Oxford-educated gentleman who was closely connected to Cambridge Lockean circles. Tucker lauded Locke's *Paraphrase* in the posthumous part of his *Light of Nature Pursued* (1777). As with Clarke, Tucker was a disciple of Locke's philosophy. In the first part of the *Light of Nature* (1768), Tucker had outlined Lockean ideas about the nature of knowledge and nature of the good as pleasure.[59] He had also proposed an extended conceit of an out-of-body experience in which he found himself in conversation with a variety of other past figures, such as

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[57] Jebb, *Theological Lectures*, 4.

[58] Jebb, *Theological Lectures*, 4, 5, 27–9, 32.

[59] For discussion see: O'Flaherty, *Utilitarianism in the Age of Enlightenment*, 58–74.

Locke and Plato. When Plato reported his thoughts on St. Paul, his description could have easily been adapted from Locke's *Paraphrase*. Plato depicted St. Paul as possessing "great knowledge but no happy facility in expressing himself," and often talking "in far-fetched extravagant figures." Strikingly, Tucker made Plato remark: "If he [St. Paul] had staid among us till my brother Locke here came up he would certainly have been a great favourite with him. I am persuaded he would have said nobody understood him so well since his immediate scholars."[60] Thus, Tucker suggested that St. Paul himself would have admired Locke's interpretations of him.

The posthumous part of the *Light of Nature* turned this laudatory view of Locke's *Paraphrase* to an educational purpose. In his chapter on the Christian scheme of religion, Tucker declared that "I would have every man judge [Scripture] for himself," but only once he had acquired sufficient knowledge to understand it. This necessity of having some prior knowledge ensured that one must have "recourse to the written word with the aid of Mr. Locke and other learned expositors." He, therefore, propounded Locke's method of reading Scripture, but did so in a way that made space for the study of his *Paraphrase*. Tucker himself frequently used Locke's *Paraphrase*, referencing that work to explain St. Paul's purpose in explicating how Christ had come to save both Jew and Gentile and to evince the necessity of regularly receiving Communion.[61]

Another clergyman who embedded Locke's *Paraphrase* in a wider plan of Lockean theological education was William Warburton, the renowned controversialist and Bishop of Gloucester. In an account of theological study that was published posthumously by his associate Richard Hurd in 1788, Warburton recommended the "daily and long continued use'' of Locke's *Essay* in order "to teach him to think justly." According to Warburton, one should then prepare to study the New Testament by reading Locke's *Reasonableness*. That study should be supported by "*Grotius's* Critical Comment on the *Gospels*, and *Locke* on the *Epistles*," which "will open all the treasures of our Faith to one so happily employed."[62] Once again, the Scriptural commentaries being recommended were broadly anti-Calvinist in their conclusions, and the study of Scripture was supported by a wider Lockean philosophical framework.

This pattern of professed Lockeans using the *Paraphrase* in educational works continued late into the eighteenth century. John Hey, the Norrisian Professor of Divinity at Cambridge after 1780, was emphatic on the scholarly value of Locke's *Paraphrase* in his *Lectures in Divinity* (1796–

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[60] Abraham Tucker, *The Light of Nature Pursued*, 5 vols. (London, 1768), 4:127–8, 259–60.

[61] Abraham Tucker, *The Light of Nature Pursued. By Edward Search, Esq; ... The Posthumous Work of Abraham Tucker*, 4 vols. (London, 1777), 3:175–6, 218, 415–16.

[62] William Warburton, *A Supplemental Volume of Bishop Warburton's Works, Being a Collection of All the New Pieces, Contained in the Quarto Edition*, ed. Richard Hurd (London, 1788), 428, 437.

8).[63] Hey had impeccable Lockean credentials. He had defended a Lockean hedonistic moral philosophy in lectures to his pupils at Sidney Sussex in the 1770s, and his *Lectures in Divinity* frequently appealed to Locke's other works, such as the *Essay*.[64] Strikingly, however, his admiration for Locke's *Paraphrase* was in these lectures more prominent than his adherence to the *Essay*. In the first book, he provided a series of introductions to particular studies in divinity. In discussing the usefulness of the church fathers to the study of Scripture, he remarked:

> Be it that *Mr. Locke* has best explained *St. Paul's Epistles**; his explanation may not supersede all attention to remarks of the ancients on particular passages: were any one about to see whether Mr. Locke could not be improved upon, I apprehend he should consult the ancients occasionally; though possibly they may afford greater help on other parts of Scripture, than on those which Mr. Locke has explained.[65]

In other words, Hey was concerned that some of his readers believed that Locke's *Paraphrase* had entirely superseded the Patristic commentators, and he himself accepted that Locke's scholarship made the Church Fathers considerably less important for the study of St. Paul's epistles. Hey practiced what he preached. He referred to Locke's *Paraphrase* on dozens of occasions throughout the *Lectures*. These appeals varied from invocations of Locke's view that the division of Scripture into chapters and verses obscured its meaning to repetitions of Locke's anti-Calvinist exegesis.[66] Hey's lectures were extremely influential. One contemporary described the *Lectures* as having had "the singular honour of having served as the mother's milk to many a babe in divinity'' and the latest edition of them was published in 1841.[67]

The way that Hey's lectures transmitted Lockean ideas reflected the wider popularity of the *Paraphrase* in educational writings. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the *Paraphrase* was frequently added to

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[63] John Hey, *Lectures in Divinity, Delivered in the University of Cambridge*, 4 vols. (Cambridge, 1796–98), 1:110.

[64] John Gascoigne, *Cambridge in the Age of the Enlightenment: Science, Religion and Politics from the Restoration to the French Revolution*, new ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 246; Hey, *Lectures in Divinity*, 1;463.

[65] Hey, *Lectures in Divinity*, 1:110.

[66] John Hey, *Lectures in Divinity, Delivered in the University of Cambridge*, 4 vols. (Cambridge, 1796–98), 1:39; 3:223; 1:39, 77, 110, 314, 385, 415, 437; 2:100; 3:46, 58, 156, 223, 267, 294–5, 408, 415, 419, 465; 4:30, 31, 33, 41, 186, 187, 303, 304, 367, 401, 430, 433.

[67] David Rivers, *Literary Memoirs of Living Authors of Great Britain*, 2 vols. (London, 1798), 2:255; John Hey, *Lectures in Divinity, Delivered in the University of Cambridge*, 3rd ed., 2 vols. (London, 1841).

reading lists of approved texts for students, clergymen, and general readers. The *Paraphrase* was especially prominent in reading lists for students of divinity and clergymen. When in 1763 Thomas Newton, the Bishop of Bristol, gave a charge to the clergy of his diocese "On Reading the Scripture," he recommended Locke's approach to the Bible. He remarked that continually reading each epistle through—"the method that Mr. Locke purposed in his paraphrase"—"hath done more towards clearing and ascertaining and fixing their sense than any commentator, I had almost said than all the commentators before him."[68] Vicesimus Knox, the Anglican clergyman and popular essayist, recommended in his 1777 essay on the choice of books that students in divinity should consult "Locke on the Epistles."[69] The anonymous *Affectionate Address to Candidates for Holy Orders* (1789) declared that the clergyman-in-training should own "a few books as a beginning to your collection," which included Whitby's commentary on the New Testament and Locke's *Paraphrase*.[70] John Napleton, a Canon of Hereford Cathedral, remarked in his *Advice to a Student in the University* (1795) that "you may take the joint assistance of Dr. Hammond, Dr. Whitby, Mr. Locke, and Poole's Synopsis." He, then, added:

> Mr. Locke has considerable discernment in tracing the occasion and circumstances of St. Paul's Epistles. He may be read with advantage after one caution. In translating and explaining passages which have reference to the Divinity our Lord and the Assistance of the Holy Spirit, his mind seems to be under a bias; and his opinion ought not to have weight with you.[71]

Despite the stain of Locke's anti-Trinitarianism, therefore, Napleton believed that the *Paraphrase*'s perceptive analysis of Scripture made it indispensable to students. Only two years later, George Croft, the Chaplain to the Earl of Elgin, was referring to Locke's *Paraphrase* in a reading list for theological students as one of the best commentaries on Scripture.[72]

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[68] Thomas Newton, *The Works of the Right Reverend Thomas Newton*, 3 vols. (London, 1782), 2:667.

[69] Vicesimus Knox, *Essays, Moral and Literary*, 2 vols. (London, 1778), 2:305.

[70] [Anon], *An Affectionate Address to Candidates for Holy Orders, and to the Younger Part of the Clergy* (London, 1789), 18.

[71] John Napleton, *Advice to a Student in the University, Concerning the Qualifications and Duties of a Minister of the Gospel in the Church of England* (Oxford, 1795), 34.

[72] George Croft, *A Short Commentary, With Strictures, on Certain Parts of the Moral Writings of Dr. Paley &c Mr. Gisborne* (Birmingham, 1797), xxxv. Some works were more critical of Locke's Biblical exegesis. One commentator decided not to recommend Locke's *Paraphrase* in a reading list for a Christian preacher because it valorised "learned ingenuity, and critical conjecture, often at the expense of truth": Edward Williams, *The Christian Preacher, or, Discourses on Preaching* (London, 1800), 436.

Indeed, as late as 1802, Henry Kett, a Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, was in the appendix to his *Elements of General Knowledge* (1802)—a treatise based on lectures that he had given to his pupils at Trinity—recommending "Locke on the Epistles" for the study of Scripture.[73] Such advice was often accepted. When Hannah More, the campaigner for the abolition of slavery and literary writer, read through St. Paul's epistles in the summer of 1778, she studied Locke's *Paraphrase*.[74]

European scholars also recommended the *Paraphrase*. The renowned German Biblical scholar Johann David Michaelis's introductory lectures on the New Testament were published in English in 1761. In this work, Michaelis recommended Locke's *Paraphrase* of St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians as "a work of great merit."[75] Such reading lists even provoked controversy. When William Cleaver, the Bishop of Chester, published in 1791 *A List of Books Intended for the Use of the Younger Clergy*, he focused on works that would enable the clergy of his diocese to defend and propound the essential doctrines of the Church of England. This orthodox orientation dismayed John Disney, a Unitarian clergyman, who proposed what he regarded as a more liberal reading list. Notably, however, both Cleaver and Disney recommended Locke's *Paraphrase* for the study of Scripture.[76]

The *Paraphrase* was also recommended in reading lists for the general reader, such as the bookseller John Whiston's *Directions for a Proper Choice of Authors to Form a Library* (1766), for those who could only read in English. Confining himself to those authors "who have been universally esteemed," he recommended Locke's *Essay* for the study of morality and the *Two Treatises* as reading on government. For the study of divinity, he recommended "Locke's judicious work on St. Paul's Epistles" and the *Reasonableness of Christianity* alongside a variety of other broadly anti-Calvinist works.[77] Recommendations of Locke's *Paraphrase* were not always connected to a positive mention of the *Essay*. The bookseller Thomas Cadell's *Select Catalogue of the Most Approved English Books* (1768), for instance, listed the *Paraphrase* and the *Reasonableness*, but not the

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[73] Henry Kett, ''Appendix," in *Elements of General Knowledge*, by Henry Kett, 2 vols. (London, 1802), 2:30.

[74] William Roberts, *Memoirs of the Life and Correspondence of Mrs. Hannah More*, 3rd ed., 3 vols. (London, 1835), 1:142.

[75] Johann David Michaelis, *Introductory Lectures to the Sacred Books of the New Testament* (London, 1761), 304.

[76] William Cleaver, *A List of Books Intended for the Use of the Younger Clergy, and Other Students in Divinity, within the Diocese of Chester* (Oxford, 1791), 49; John Disney, *A Letter to the Students in Divinity in the Diocese of Chester* (London, 1792), 15.

[77] Josiah Whiston, *Directions for a Proper Choice of Authors to Form a Library* (London, 1766), 32–3, 29, 31.

Essay.[78] The upshot of these educational writings is that Locke's *Paraphrase* had become firmly embedded in theological study.

5. Locke's *Paraphrase*, and Anglican Sermons, 1707–1800

The clergy clearly imbibed this advice because they utilized the *Paraphrase* in numerous sermons. In the early years of the eighteenth century, these sermons were often critical of Locke's Scriptural readings. Holdsworth's debate with Cockburn had, after all, emerged from his criticisms of Locke's exegesis in a sermon preached in 1719 before the University of Oxford on Easter Monday. Some of these critical approaches to Locke's *Paraphrase* reoccurred in later discourses, but a positive appreciation for that work became increasingly dominant in English sermon culture.[79] The *Paraphrase* was appealed to on a variety of subjects, including zeal, marriage, the Eucharist, charity, St. Paul's pastoral aims, freedom of thought, the relationship between faith and works, and political obedience.[80]

Indeed, Lockean clerics started using the *Paraphrase* in their preaching soon after the work was published. Benjamin Ibbot, who had been educated at Clare Hall, Cambridge, under the Lockean Richard Laughton referenced both Locke's *Essay* and his *Epistola* in his sermons. Adopting these resources, he defended the reduction of the good to pleasure and religious

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[78] Thomas Cadell, *A Select Catalogue of the Most Approved English Books* (London, 1768), 7. The popularity of Locke's *Paraphrase* in educational works only declined gradually in the nineteenth century. See, for instance, Thomas Hartwell Horne, *An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*, 3 vols. (London, 1818), 1:629; Richard Warner, *A Chronological History of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* (London, 1819), xxi; William Goodhugh, *The English Gentleman's Library Manual; Or A Guide to the Formation of a Library of Select Literature; Accompanied with Original Notices, Biographical and Critical of Authors and Books* (London, 1827), 7; Henry Thompson, *Pastoralia, a Manual of Helps for the Parochial Clergy* (London, 1830), 420.

[79] For a later critique of Locke's Scriptural exegesis on the Resurrection see: Thomas Skeeler, *Fourteen Sermons on Several Occasions Preached before the University at St. Mary's in Oxford* (Oxford, 1740), 228.

[80] William Stevenson, *Zeal and Moderation Reconcil'd: A Sermon Preach't in the Cathedral of Hereford, on the 12th of September, 1728* (London, 1728), 5; Matthew Horbery, *Eighteen Sermons on Important Subjects*, ed. Jeoffrey Snelson (Oxford, 1774), 206–7; Philip Pyle, *One Hundred and Twenty Popular Sermons*, 4 vols. (Norwich, 1789), 1:251; William Berriman, *A Sermon Preach'd before the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, the Alderman and Governors Of the Several Hospitals of the City of London, At the Parish Church of St. Bridget, on Wednesday in Easter-Week, April I. 1730* (London, 1730), 19; Edmund Law, *Considerations on the State of the World with Regard to the Theory of Religion* (Cambridge, 1745), 166. For some other allusions to Locke's *Paraphrase* in eighteenth-century sermons see: Charles Willats, *The Religion of Nature, Which is Now Set Up in Opposition to the Word of God, Proved to be a Mere Idol from the Very Text that Has Been So Often Produced in its Favour. In a Sermon Preach'd in York-Minster, July 8. 1744* (London, 1744), 7; Glocester Ridley, *The Christian Passover in Four Sermons*, ed. Thomas Hopkins, new ed. (Dublin, 1770), x; George Andrew Thomas, *The Predictions of Christ and the Apostles Concerning the End of the World. Strictures on a Sermon, Preached before the University of Cambridge, May XXIII, M.DCC.XC.* (London, 1793), 36. Locke's *Paraphrase* continued to be used in nineteenth-century sermons: Edward Maltby, *Sermons Preached in the Chapel of Lincoln's Inn* (London, 1831), 170; Edward Denison, *Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford* (Oxford, 1836), 160–61.

toleration.[81] In his Boyle Lectures, given in 1713 and 1714, he also appealed to the *Paraphrase*. Directed against the Deist writer Anthony Collins's *Discourse of Free-Thinking* (1713), Ibbot's lectures sought to defend what he regarded as the true notion of free-thinking as the unbiased search for truth. He contrasted this true freedom with the endeavours of modern freethinkers to debase reason into a defense of corrupt lives. In accordance with this polemical aim, he appealed to Locke's "excellent Note" on Romans 12:6 to argue that even the gift of prophecy mustbe circumscribed by the necessity of keeping to a reasonable interpretation of Scripture. Later, he argued that free-thinking in the true sense of the word encompassed what Locke had written in his preface to *Paraphrase*: that everyone must rely on their own judgements and not the interpretations of another person. Throughout these lectures, Ibbot frequently referred to Locke's *Essay* as an exemplar of the true methods of free reasoning, showing how an admiration for his philosophy often led to the use of his *Paraphrase*.[82]

Locke's exegesis on questions of salvation and redemption was an important aspect of the positive reception of the *Paraphrase* in Anglican sermon culture. In 1784, Richard Sandilands, a Chaplain to the Dowager Viscountess Hereford, preached a sermon in which he referred to Locke's judicious note on Romans 11:6 as revealing that St. Paul had regarded the performance of moral duties as instrumental to justification for salvation.[83] The *Paraphrase* was also used for more political purposes. As the British government was cracking down on domestic radicals during the French Revolution, Thomas Collins, Chaplain to the Prince of Wales, preached a sermon at the assizes in York on 16 March 1794. In this sermon, he sought to defend the superiority of the British constitution against the radical rabble. In doing so, he appealed to Locke's *Paraphrase* to argue that anyone who obstructed the purposes of government in promoting justice resisted the ordinances of God. Notably, Locke's exegesis of Romans 13:1–7 had earlier in the century been interpreted as a politically radical position because it confined the duty of obedience to magistrates exercising lawful power, but Collins believed that it was still apt for the well-ordered British constitution.[84] Thus, Locke, the anti-Jacobin, emerged from Collins's reading of the *Paraphrase*.

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[81] Benjamin Ibbot, *Thirty-Six Discourses on Practical Subjects*, 2 vols. (London, 1776), 1:207–8; 2:432–66.

[82] Benjamin Ibbot, *A Course of Sermons Preach'd for the Lecture Founded by the Honourable Robert Boyle Esq; at the Church of St. Mary le Bow, in the Years 1713, and 1714* (London, 1727), 1–30, 5, 268, 41, 171, 172, 255, 269.

[83] Richard Sandilands, *Faith and Works. A Sermon, Preached at St. Luke's, Chelsea, February the 29th, 1784* (London, 1784), 10.

[84] Thomas Collins, *An Assize Sermon Preached in the Minster at York on Sunday, 16th March, 1794* (York, 1794), 12.

6. Locke's *Paraphrase*, and Anglican Philosophical and Theological Treatises, 1707–1800

Philosophical and theological treatises also regularly appealed to Locke's *Paraphrase*. The work was frequently referenced as a repository of useful knowledge in discussions of St. Paul's actions; the conversion of the Jews before the Second Coming of Christ; the happiness of Heaven; the obscurity that originates from the division of the Bible into chapters and verses; the linguistic meaning of St. Paul's Greek; St. Paul's account of the married state; the influence of Mosaic law amongst the early Christians; and the operation of the Holy Spirit.[85] Anti-Calvinism remained an important reason why theologians studied Locke's *Paraphrase*.[86] When John Francis, the Vicar of Lakeham, near Norwich, published some epistolary *Remarks* (1770) against several central Calvinist doctrines, he concluded his polemic against predestination by referring the reader to: "Mr. *Locke*'s Paraphrase, the clearness and perspicuity of which will, I hope, appear as evident to you and give you the same satisfaction as it has done me."[87] Indeed, James Newton, the Vicar of Nuneham Courtenay in Oxfordshire, continually referred to Locke's *Paraphrase* in his *New Theory of Redemption* (1789) to propound its own idiosyncratic anti-Calvinist theory of God's dispensations for redeeming humanity.[88]

Admirers of Locke's philosophical writings were again prominently represented amongst those who utilized his *Paraphrase*. Archdeacon William Paley, the pre-eminent exponent of a Lockean ethic in late eighteenth-century England, made extensive use of Locke's *Paraphrase* in

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[85] William Newcome, *Observations on our Lord's Conduct as a Divine Instructor*, 2nd ed. (London, 1795), 492; [Anon], *The Folly and Danger of Enthusiasm: or, the Wickedness of Attempting to Know the Secret Councils of God* (London, 1756), 33; Thomas Broughton, *A Prospect of Futurity in Four Dissertations on the Nature and Circumstances of the Life to Come* (London, 1768), 394; William Ashdowne, *Two Letters, Addressed to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Landaff* (Canterbury, 1798), 8, 9; Henry Murray, *The Evidences of the Jewish and Christian Revelations* (Dublin, 1790), 246; Henry Coventry, *Philemon to Hydaspes, or, The History of False Religion in the Earliest Pagan World: Related in a Series of Conversations*, 4 vols. (London, 1736–44), 2:62; 3:46; Joseph Milner, *Gibbon's Account of Christianity Considered: Together with Some Strictures on Hume's Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* (York, 1781), 160; Edward Barry, *The Friendly Call of Truth and Reason to a New Species of Dissenters* (Reading, 1799), 48–53. The use of Locke's *Paraphrase* in philosophical and theological treatises continued in the nineteenth century: David Bowker Wells, *St. Paul Vindicated: Being Part I. of a Reply to a Late Publication by Gamaliel Smith Esq., Entitled "Not Paul, but Jesus."* (Cambridge, 1824), 82–3, 133–4; Joseph George Tolley, *St. Paul's Thorn in the Flesh Explained, in a Discourse on 2 Corinthians xii. 7* (London, 1823), iv, viii.

[86] For other uses of Locke's *Paraphrase* in anti-Calvinist works see: Thomas Edwards, *The Doctrine of Irresistible Grace Prov'd to Have No Foundation in the Writings of the New Testament* (Cambridge, 1759), 116, 339.

[87] John Francis, *Remarks upon the Following Moral and Religious Subjects* (Norwich, 1770), 27.

[88] James Newton, *A New Theory of Redemption Upon Principles Equally Agreeable to Revelation and Reason*, 2 vols. (London, 1789), 2:397–401, 409–11, 421, 431–2.

Horae Paulinae (1790).[89] This influential exercise in Biblical scholarship sought to demonstrate the authenticity and veracity of the Acts of the Apostles by comparing them with St. Paul's epistles. Locke's *Paraphrase* was indispensable for this project. He referenced the work on at least seven occasions. These appeals to Locke's Biblical scholarship ranged from discussions of St. Paul's tendency to digress to accounts of his notion of faith.[90]

Similarly, Robert Graves, a Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, sought in his *Essay on the Character of the Apostles* (1798) to combine Locke's *Essay*, his *Reasonableness*, and his *Paraphrase* into a cohesive whole. He challenged the Deist claim that the Apostles had been enthusiasts who were driven by their passions, rather than their reason. Graves made Lockean ideas pivotal to this argument. He quoted Locke's *Essay* to distinguish true enthusiasm from believing in revealed authority distinguished by the miraculous marks of divinity. He referred to the *Reasonableness* to argue that Christ had concealed the knowledge that he was the Messiah during most of his life to ensure that he could continue in his ministry until the final sacrifice. Graves also made the *Paraphrase* central to his refutation of those who imputed fanaticism to St. Paul. He admitted Locke's claim that St. Paul had used a Hebrew idiom in his Greek but argued that such an idiom was necessary to explain religious truths that were inherently related to Judaism. He referred to the view of Locke "who was surely no despicable judge of intellectual excellence" that St. Paul could propound a clear argument. Later, he referenced Locke ''who was surely a competent judge of conclusive reasoning" to contend that St. Paul's lack of artificial rhetoric should not detract from argumentative coherence of the epistles.[91]

Perhaps the most interesting of these longer treatises was the *Sacred Classics Defended* (1725) by Anthony Blackwall, the Cambridge-educated headmaster of Market Bosworth Grammar School and a leading educational writer. Blackwall's aim in this work was to defend the eloquence and grammatical fidelity of the New Testament writers, an aspect of St. Paul's epistles that Locke had often commented upon in the *Paraphrase*. Locke's commentary provided an ambivalent legacy for Blackwall. He wished that Locke had not commented that St. Paul had used a Hebrew idiom in his Greek language because he had also often adopted Greek stylistic conventions. He remarked in opposition to Locke that when St. Paul did indeed neglect grammatical convention, he usually had a specific apologetic

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[89] For more on Paley's moral philosophy see: O'Flaherty, *Utilitarianism in the Age of Enlightenment*, 77–106. For Locke's influence on Paley see: George Wilson Meadley, *Memoirs of William Paley, D.D.* (London, 1809), 41.

[90] William Paley, *Horae Paulinae, or The Truth of the Scripture History of St. Paul Evinced* (Dublin, 1790), 122, 202, 203, 219, 232, 247, 408.

[91] Robert Graves, *An Essay on the Character of the Apostles and Evangelists: Designed to Prove That They Were Not Enthusiasts* (Dublin, 1798), 5–6, 18–19, 146–7, 156, 209–10.

purpose, such as addressing the audience in a more familiar tone. But he also agreed with much that Locke had written, and frequently made complimentary references to his *Paraphrase* to explain particular passages. He lauded some of Locke's remarks on St. Paul's style and coherence. He reproduced Locke's claims that when St. Paul's overall design is taken into account hardly a word seems out of place, and that he rightly laboured to find words to express the divine mysteries.[92] Blackwall's use of the *Paraphrase* thus evidences the importance accorded to engaging with Locke's exegetical and stylistic judgement when reading Scripture.

7. Locke's *Paraphrase*, and Eighteenth-Century Religious Controversies, 1724–1800

The wider significance of the *Paraphrase* in the eighteenth-century Church of England can also be discerned in the ways in which it became embroiled in some of the most important religious controversies of the era. The *Paraphrase* had a contested legacy in these debates. In the first three decades of the eighteenth century, Locke's Biblical scholarship was occasionally used by Deist writers, but the broader rehabilitation of the work ensured that it was most often adopted by opponents of Deism. Clerics appealed to the *Paraphrase* to demonstrate that Christ had fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies, to defend St. Paul against the aspersion that he had corrupted Christianity with a Hebrew mysticism, and to argue that faith and reason support each other. Nevertheless, the effort to conscript Locke to the side of mainstream Anglicanism had its dangers. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, several of the Cambridge Lockeans who had promoted the *Paraphrase* more generally also adopted this work in their critique of obligatory subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England.Some of these authors even used Locke's interpretations to challenge the Trinity.

The first of the Deist debates to involve the *Paraphrase* was initiated by Locke's close associate Anthony Collins. In his *Discourse of the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion* (1724), Collins argued the Old Testament prophecies foretold a temporal ruler, rather than a spiritual Messiah in Christ, so they were not literally fulfilled by His arrival.[93] Understandably, this claim provoked a polemical storm and Collins received at least thirty-five responses in print.[94] Collins responded in *The Scheme of Literal Prophecy Considered* (1726), which referred to Locke's

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[92] Anthony Blackwall, *The Sacred Classics Defended and Illustrated; or, An Essay Humbly Offer'd Towards Proving the Purity, Propriety, and True Eloquence of the Writers of the New Testament* (London, 1725), 39–40, 101–2, 110–11, 216, 295, 309, 336–7, 365–6.

[93] Anthony Collins, *A Discourse of the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion* (London, 1724), 39–50.

[94] These works were proudly listed in: Anthony Collins, *The Scheme of Literal Prophecy Considered*, 2 vols. (London, 1726), 1:ix–xiv.

Paraphrase to show that St. Paul had presented Christ as allegorically, rather than literally, fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies.[95]

The importance of Locke's *Paraphrase* to the debate over prophecy, however, did not end with Collins's treatises. In the spring of 1724, Thomas Sherlock, the Dean of Chichester and later the Bishop of London, preached a series of sermons at the Temple Church in London. In these sermons, he argued that understanding the Old Testament prophecies as an inseparably connected whole demonstrates that they were clearly the result of divine guidance, which pointed towards the coming of Christ. He declared that, rather than attacking Collins directly, he was presenting an alternative scheme.[96] When twenty-six years later Sherlock's sermons came under attack from the heterodox Anglican clergyman Conyers Middleton in his *Examination of the Lord Bishop of London's Discourses* (1750), the debate once again involved Locke's *Paraphrase*. Middleton argued that the Apostles had understood Christ to have fulfilled a series of separate and individual prophecies, rather than the connected whole put forward by Sherlock.[97] In response, Thomas Rutherforth, an admirer of Locke's moral philosophy and later Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, argued that Christ and his Apostles often appealed to all of the prophets in general before foregrounding individual prophecies.[98] In doing so, he referenced Locke's *Reasonableness* and his *Paraphrase* to contend that St. Paul's notion of the prophecies being fulfilled in Christ's redemptive sacrifice depended on Adam's Fall.[99] Similarly, Laurence Jackson, a prebendary of Lincoln Cathedral, utilized Locke's *Paraphrase* to argue that the Pauline epistles had a unity of purpose in demonstrating that Christ fulfilled the

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[95] Collins, *Literal Prophecy*, 1:9; 2:356.

[96] Thomas Sherlock, *The Use and Intent of Prophecy, in the Several Ages of the World: In Six Discourses, Delivered at the Temple Church, in April and May, 1724* (London, 1725).

[97] Conyers Middleton, *An Examination of the Lord Bishop of London's Discourses Concerning the Use and Intent of Prophecy* (London, 1750), 9–14. For more on Middleton see: Brian Young, "Conyers Middleton: The Historical Consequences of Religious Heterodoxy," in *The Intellectual Consequences of Religious Heterodoxy, 1600-1750*, ed. John Robertson and Sarah Mortimer (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), 235–65; Tim Stuart-Buttle, *From Moral Theology to Moral Philosophy: Cicero and Visions of Humanity from Locke to Hume* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 149–78; Tim Stuart-Buttle, "The Notorious Dr. Middleton: David Hume and the Ninewells Years," *History of European Ideas* 49, no. 2 (2023): 267–94, https://doi.org/10.1080/01916599.2021.1975152.

[98] See, for instance, Thomas Rutherforth, *An Essay on the Nature and Obligations of Virtue* (Cambridge, 1744), 75, 239, 274, 173–94; Thomas Rutherforth, *Institutes of Natural Law; Being the Substance of a Course of Lectures on Grotius De Jure Belli et Pacis, Read in St. John's College, Cambridge*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1754), 1:8–22.

[99] Thomas Rutherforth, *A Defence of the Lord Bishop of London's Discourses Concerning the Use and Intent of Prophecy* (Cambridge, 1750), 99, 110–11, 146.

prophecies in general, paraphrasing Locke as commenting that "they, who think the Apostles to be loose Writers, are themselves loose Readers."[100]

Those who wished to highlight the contradictions of Scripture, therefore, increasingly found it necessary to refute Locke's *Paraphrase*. The debate surrounding the posthumous *Philosophical Works* (1754) of Viscount Bolingbroke, the Tory politician turned Deist writer, exemplifies the increasing centrality of Locke's *Paraphrase* to ostensibly mainstream Anglican apologetics. In his fourth essay on authority in matters of religion, Bolingbroke wielded Locke's philosophy as a weapon against his theological writings. In the process of arguing against holding beliefs upon authority, he appealed to the *Essay* and frequently reproduced purportedly Lockean ideas about the uncertainty of testimonial evidence and the sufficiency of natural reason to discover useful knowledge. This polemic against authority was directed at St. Paul whom he depicted as the patron of priestcraft. He contrasted the simple promulgation of a natural religion by Christ with what he regarded as St. Paul's wordy, arrogant, and rambling discourses, which were reliant on obscure Hebrew learning. From St. Paul, Bolingbroke argued, had originated "an intricate and dark system" full of unintelligible mysteries.[101]

To demonstrate St. Paul's incoherence, Bolingbroke challenged Locke's efforts to prove the opposite. At first, he contested Locke's view that St. Paul's reference to "my gospel" towards the end of his epistle to the Romans reflected his distinct aim in explicating God's purpose in taking the Gentiles to be His people without subjecting them to the law of Moses. Yet, Christ's other apostles had also preached on this subject, so this could not have been St. Paul's personal mission. Instead, Bolingbroke argued that St. Paul distinguished himself by arguing that Christians *must* abstain from the ceremonial law, whereas before they had simply been permitted not to obey its decrees.[102] But Bolingbroke's central claim was that St. Paul's confusions and contradictions had given rise to the mysterious and unintelligible doctrines of Christianity. He believed that although Locke had given the best defense of St. Paul's coherence, he too had failed. He declared:

> Let any man read the epistles we have of this apostle's writing, after he has read the gospels; let him read the former, as he would read any other books of philosophy or theology; let him call in Mr. Locke to his assistance, who has succeeded better, perhaps, than any other

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[100] Laurence Jackson, *A Reply to Dr. Middleton's Examination of the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of London's Discourses on the Use and Intent of Prophecy*, 2nd ed. (London, 1751), 76–80, 76. It testifies to the ubiquity of Locke's *Paraphrase* that a later critic of Sherlock also utilised the work: John Towne, *A Free and Candid Examination of the Principles Advanced in the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of London's Very Elegant Sermons* (London, 1756), 34, 38, 41, 165, 362, 368.

[101] Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, *The Philosophical Works of the Late Right Honorable Henry St. John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke*, ed. David Mallet, 5 vols. (London, 1754), 2:272, 249, 341–8, 348.

[102] Bolingbroke, *Works*, 2: 341–49.

> expositor, by happier conjectures, and no greater licence of paraphrase, in giving an air of coherence, consistency and rationality to these epistles, and in making them intelligible: such a man will not be able, after all his pains, to shew any one mystery that is left unfolded in the concise language of the gospel taught by Christ and his Apostles, that has been rendered less mysterious by the prolixity of St. Paul.[103]

Whereas Locke had inferred that St. Paul's copious style reflected his divine inspiration and the fact that the Holy Spirit only guided, rather than overpowered, Christians, Bolingbroke wondered how God could have led a man to such a neglect of order.[104] Bolingbroke thus targeted Locke's *Paraphrase* as the most rational effort to defend what he regarded as a Pauline vision of Christianity as distinct from natural religion.

Unsurprisingly, therefore, Bolingbroke received several Anglican responses that appealed to Locke's *Paraphrase*. John Brett, the Rector of Moynalty in Meath, published a series of *Letters* (1755) in defense of St. Paul's character against Bolingbroke, which frequently referred to Locke's *Paraphrase*. In one extended passage, he defended Locke's reading of St. Paul's distinctive purpose, arguing that the pervasive influence of Jewish customs ensured that his mission was necessary to reiterate that Christ had come to the aid of both Jew and Gentile.[105] Similarly, Nathaniel Ball, the Vicar of Great Tey in Essex, in his *Deist Confuted Upon His Own Principles* (1755), added an appendix to challenge Bolingbroke's views on Scripture. In addition to defending Locke's specific Scriptural interpretations, he used Locke's *Paraphrase* to refute Bolingbroke's view that St. Paul's teaching of predestination demonstrated his poor judgement. For Locke had in his account of the epistle to the Romans related God's decrees to His punishment of sinful nations, rather than to individuals.[106]

Likewise, Arthur Ashley Sykes, the prominent controversialist and Vicar of Rayleigh in Essex, in the introduction to his *Paraphrase and Notes upon the Epistle to the Hebrews* (1755), wondered that Bolingbroke could have arrived at such an "*absurd*" interpretation of St. Paul as propounding Calvinist ideas of predestination and election when he had Locke's explanation of these notions in "a rational, clear, sensible, and consistent, Light."[107] Thomas Church, the Vicar of Battersea, in his *Analysis* (1755)

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[103] Bolingbroke, *Works*, 2:349.

[104] Bolingbroke, *Works*, 2:349, 350–51.

[105] John Brett, *Letters to His Grace the Lord Primate of All Ireland* (Dublin, 1755), 35–37, 83–4, 90, 109, 110.

[106] Nathaniel Ball, *The Deist Confuted Upon his Own Principles: or, A Rational Defence of Revelation, From its Own Intrinsic Usefulness and Excellence* (London, 1755), 44, 46–7.

[107] Arthur Ashley Sykes, *A Paraphrase and Notes Upon the Epistle to the Hebrews* (London, 1755), liii.

argued against Bolingbroke that "Mr. Locke and others had done justice to St. Paul" in demonstrating that the statements in his epistles that had been used to prove such unreasonable Calvinist doctrines as predestination and unconditional reprobation only pertained to "the privileges of nations in this world, not rewards of particular persons in the next."[108] The use of Locke's *Paraphrase* against Bolingbroke continued later in the eighteenth century. When Caleb Jeacocke, a London-based baker who had acquired a reputation for oratorical skills, published *An Appendix to the Vindication of the Moral Character of the Apostle Paul* (1770), he appealed to the authority of Locke's *Paraphrase* to prove the coherence of St. Paul's apologetic purposes.[109] Locke's *Paraphrase* continued to be used to challenge Deist claims for the remainder of the century.[110]

Nevertheless, the increasing status of Locke's *Paraphrase* within the Church of England did lead some readers to imbibe its more radical theological ideas. For Locke's more heterodox interpretations still had the capacity to support a wide-ranging rethinking of orthodox pieties. In one example of this process, the *Paraphrase* became embroiled in a controversy that had bedeviled the eighteenth-century Church of England: the debates around the necessity of subscribing to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England—a condition of matriculating at Oxford, receiving a degree at Cambridge, and holding clerical office in the Church of England. These controversies culminated in the 1772 Feathers Tavern petition to Parliament, which sought to remove this obligatory doctrinal subscription.[111] Several of the leading Anglican opponents of subscription were Cambridge Lockeans. In fact, much of the debate centered around Locke's political and religious thought. Both opponents and defenders of subscription sought to demonstrate that their theological positions were compatible with Locke's writings on toleration.[112]

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[108] Thomas Church, *An Analysis of the Philosophical Works of the Late Lord Viscount Bolingbroke* (London, 1755), 150.

[109] Caleb Jeacocke, *An Appendix to the Vindication of the Moral Character of the Apostle Paul* (London, 1770), 23.

[110] For other uses of Locke's *Paraphrase* in anti-Deist writings see: A young Gentleman of Cambridge [pseud.], *A Letter to the Author of Christianity not Founded on Argument* (London, 1742), 24; Thomas Randolph, *The Christian's Faith A Rational Assent* (London, 1744), 243; Layman [pseud.], *Christianity and Deism Stated* (London, 1753), 45; [Anon], *Remarks on the Religious Sentiments of Learned and Eminent Laymen* (London, 1790), 157, 42–3.

[111] For further discussion see: Grayson Ditchfield, "The Subscription Issue in British Parliamentary Politics, 1772–79," *Parliamentary History* 7, no. 1 (1988): 45–80, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1750-0206.1988.tb00541.x.

[112] See, for instance, Francis Blackburne, *The Confessional, or, A Full and Free Enquiry into the Right, Utility, Edification and Success of Establishing Systematical Confessions of Faith and Doctrine in Protestant Churches* (London, 1766), xli–xlii; Thomas Rutherforth, *A Defence of a Charge Concerning*

The *Paraphrase* played a significant role within these discussions of the legitimacy of subscription. Two clergymen—John Jebb and Edmund Law—who had promoted Locke's *Paraphrase* in their other writings used that work in their critiques of subscription. Law's *Considerations on the Propriety of Requiring a Subscription* (1774) echoed Locke's *Paraphrase* in proposing a narrative in which the plain meaning of Scripture had been corrupted by pagan philosophy and averring that every Christian had a duty to discover its truths for themselves. Indeed, he specifically referenced Locke's gloss on Galatians 1:7–9 to argue that St. Paul had warned against following those unnecessary human ideas of Christian doctrine instead of the plain words of the Gospel itself.[113] Jebb did not specifically reference Locke's *Paraphrase* in his attacks on subscription, but he relied constantly on the Lockean principles that he had lauded in his account of his theological lectures: the necessity of the individual interpreting the plain meaning of Scripture for themselves. His *Letters on the Subject of Subscription* (1772) averred that: "Every Englishman maintains the authority and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures in all points necessary to salvation."[114] When Jebb resigned his livings in September 1775, he reiterated that importance of the individual interpretation of the Bible. He also referred to his doubts about Christ's divinity—a recurrent theme in the writings of the opponents of subscription.[115]

That Locke's *Paraphrase* was probably an influence on Jebb's anti-Trinitarianism is evidenced by the writings of Theophilus Lindsey. Educated at St. John's College, Cambridge in the 1740s, he had imbibed many of the same philosophical and religious notions as his older Cambridge contemporaries. He had helped to organize the Feathers Tavern petition and after the failure of this proposal, he resigned his living of Catterick in Yorkshire. In his *Farewel Address to the Parishioners of Catterick* (1773), he decried the imposition of human formularies upon the individual reading of Scripture.[116] In the following years, he gradually elaborated on the reasons for his opposition to the Trinity. Locke's *Paraphrase* featured centrally in these declarations. In *A Sequel to The Apology on Resigning the Vicarage of Catterick* (1776), for instance, Lindsey appealed regularly to Locke's *Paraphrase*, using this work to argue that St. Paul's description of Christ's ascension into Heaven in Ephesians

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Subscriptions, in a Letter to the Author of The Confessional (Cambridge, 1767), 22. For discussion see: Young, *Religion and Enlightenment*, 45–80.

[113] Edmund Law, *Considerations on the Propriety of Requiring a Subscription to Articles of Faith*, 3rd ed. (London, 1779), 14–16.

[114] John Jebb, *Letters on the Subject of Subscription to the Liturgy and Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England* (London, 1772), 4.

[115] John Jebb, *A Short State of the Reasons for a Late Resignation* (Cambridge, 1775), 5–6, 2.

[116] Theophilus Lindsey, *A Farewel Address to the Parishioners of Catterick* (London, 1773), 4.

4:9–10 merely denoted his accession as king.[117] He continued to reference Locke's *Paraphrase* to buttress his anti-Trinitarianism and wider theological position in *The Catechist* (1781), *An Examination of Mr. Robinson of Cambridge's Plea* (1785), and *A List of the False Readings of the Scriptures* (1790).[118]

8. Conclusion

Even by the 1790s, therefore, Locke's *Paraphrase* had not been completely domesticated and still could provoke more radical Scriptural readings. Nevertheless, this moment of theological crisis should not detract from the fact that Locke's *Paraphrase* was largely transformed over the course of the eighteenth century from a dangerously heterodox text into an important authority for the study of Scripture in the Church of England. The initial controversy over Locke's apparently heterodox positions on the Trinity, the Resurrection, and the witness of the church fathers gradually subsided in the first two decades after the publication of the *Paraphrase*. A more positive appreciation for Locke's Biblical exegesis soon supplanted these initial criticisms. His *Paraphrase* outsold most comparable works and was lauded in a wide variety of texts, from Scriptural commentaries to polemical tracts. Many eighteenth-century Lockeans moved beyond their interest in his philosophy to study his Scriptural exegesis. Locke's reputation for reason and reasonableness ensured that he became what the *Paraphrase* had originally been written to contest: an authority. Writers appealed to his Biblical commentary because they believed the wider esteem in which his philosophy was held would lend weight to their own conclusions. A genuine admiration for Locke's scholarship was also pervasive. His methodological orientation and interpretations of the style and structure of St. Paul's epistles inspired numerous eighteenth-century scholars. His anti-Calvinist Scriptural readings were regularly referenced. The *Paraphrase* was often used as a repository of useful knowledge about the context of the New Testament. In this way, Locke's Scriptural readings were woven into a variety of texts on the Bible.

The writings of many of the disciples of Locke's *Paraphrase* also shed new light on particular facets of the intellectual culture of the eighteenth-century Church of England. Dodd's publication of pseudo-Lockean Biblical exegesis in his *Commentary* indicates the extraordinary popularity of his Scriptural readings. The posthumous part of Tucker's *Light of Nature*

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[117] Theophilus Lindsey, *A Sequel to The Apology on Resigning the Vicarage of Catterick, Yorkshire* (London, 1776), 270, 487.

[118] Theophilus Lindsey, *The Catechist: or, An Inquiry into the Doctrine of the Scriptures, Concerning the Only True God, and Object of Religious Worship* (London, 1781), 79, 81; Theophilus Lindsey, *An Examination of Mr. Robinson of Cambridge's Plea for the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ* (London, 1785), 16; Theophilus Lindsey, *A List of the False Readings of the Scriptures, and the Mistranslations of the English Bible, Which Contribute to Support the Great Errors Concerning Jesus Christ* (London, 1790), 20, 22, 81.

reveals the ways in which he and his contemporaries often integrated Locke's *Paraphrase* into a systematic course of Lockean education. Ibbot's Boyle Lectures indicate how a similar process took place in sermons. Blackwall's *Sacred Classics* provides a striking example of the centrality of Locke's *Paraphrase* to the fraught debates over St. Paul's style, language, and argumentative structure. The *Paraphrase* also had a significant but contested legacy in several important religious controversies, from the fierce reaction against Bolingbroke to the later debates over subscription and the Trinity.

Locke's *Paraphrase*, therefore, had an enduring significance in the intellectual culture of the eighteenth-century Church of England. Even if the *Paraphrase* was not the cutting edge of Biblical scholarship, his vision of the individual Christian diligently, impartially, and carefully searching through Scripture became an integral part of the clerical ideal of academic enquiry. The *Paraphrase* had thus emerged as one of the staples of Enlightenment churchmanship in this period. As Locke had firmly believed that the Christian ought to receive "with stedfast Belief, and ready Obedience, all those things which the Spirit of Truth hath therein revealed'' in Scripture, one imagines that he would have been delighted to discover the work's later success.[119]

[119] John Locke, *Vindications of the Reasonableness of Christianity*, ed. Victor Nuovo, 2 vols., The Clarendon Edition of the Works of John Locke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2012), 1:22. I am grateful to the two anonymous reviewers of this journal for their very helpful comments on this article.

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