THREE and a half years have passed since it pleased the Lord of life and death to take from us our dearly beloved friend and teacher Thomas Walter Manson. But the lapse of time has not effaced the impression this servant of the Lord made upon us who heard him as an inspiring teacher and masterly preacher, who listened to him as a wise counsellor and excellent speaker, who profited from his thought-provoking words in print and from the intercourse with such a fine colleague and trusty friend.

In preparing this memorial lecture I came across the prayer:

O teach me, Lord, that I may teach
The precious things Thou dost impart
And wing my words, that they may reach
The hidden depths of many a heart.

O give Thine own sweet rest to me,
That I may speak with soothing power
A word in season, as from Thee,
To weary ones in needful hour.

O fill me with Thy fulness, Lord,
Until my very heart o'erflow
In kindling thought and glowing word
Thy love to tell, Thy praise to show.

These words are, so it seemed to me, most appropriate to express the attitude in which Dr. Manson did his work. His brilliant mind was dominated by a humble heart. The study of

1 The first Manson Memorial Lecture, delivered in the University of Manchester on 28 November 1961. The Semitic background of the linguistic evidence of the expression is discussed in my paper: "De Semitische Achtergrond van ΠΑΡΡΗΣΙΑ In Het Nieuwe Testament" in Mededelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen afd. Letterkunde Nieuwe Reeks, deel 25 (Amsterdam, 1962).
the Bible can never be an end in itself: what is discovered by the tools of scholarship and by careful thought is received as a gift, the discovery of God's majesty and love; as a gift which is enriched by handing it on. So taught himself, Dr. Manson was a teacher "by the grace of God" in the classroom for his pupils, in the pulpit for his congregation, as a church-leader and as a guide to young scholars. He loved solitude—and that not only for trout-fishing!—and he was at ease in a meeting. He looked relaxed and was at the same time alert, ready to listen and prepared to speak. His words were winged by the precious talents of sparkling humour and sincere earnestness.

In the last book he issued himself he wrote: "It is still true that the best propaganda for genuine Christianity is genuine Christians; and the New Testament is full of declarations of the convincing power, not of the spoken word, but of the lived life. Indeed, I think it is fair to say that the lives of the Christians will have to be the parables of the Kingdom for the twentieth century." These words reflect in my opinion the ideal he set for himself. And as such an example he worked on many who had the privilege of meeting him. One of them is the present lecturer. During my professorial life it has been my good fortune, nay a grace of God, to come into contact with and to receive the friendship of many scholars at home and abroad who have enriched me for ever. In the first line of those ranks Tom Manson. Therefore I was deeply grateful—more than my words can express—to the trustees of this lectureship and the Faculty of Theology at this University for the honour they bestowed upon me by their invitation, an honour which is more highly appreciated since it is conferred upon one who has to enter this country by the door "For aliens."

Dr. Manson's words quoted before show a definite preference for the lived life over the spoken word. True though that be, it must be said that in him there was a harmony between the two, since he was a "minister of the Word". His work in church and university was service to the Lord whose word was made incarnate in Jesus Christ. His scholarly work, his teaching and

speaking always aimed at making the Word of God audible in this generation. A Presbyterian by birth and conviction, he fulfilled his ministry in the Church Universal, the divisions of which he helped to overcome. Because he loved the *Word* with a capital "\(W\)", he respected the *words* with a small letter. In a time which brought devaluation, not only of money, but also of words, he maintained the right standard. Many people in this audience will recall the careful phrases he chose in presenting honorary graduands to this university. Though he had an easy mastery over his language, he wrote his influential contributions to *The Times* and *The Guardian* with the same painstaking care as his books and articles for learned periodicals. His studies of philosophy at Glasgow and of Semitic languages at Cambridge had trained his mind in respectful handling of words as the repositories of thought. As a "minister of the Word" in both senses Manson also devoted his labours to the preparation of the "New English Bible" and he used his bus-rides to and from the university to ponder over the exact English equivalent for a New Testament expression amidst the people for whom the translation was to be prepared. He wished to set forth the truth of God in plain—not vulgar—terms, because the mystery of God is through Jesus Christ an "open secret".

This expression "an open secret" is Manson’s paraphrase of Mark viii. 32,¹ "παρρησία τὸν λόγον ἐλάλει", which is rendered in the NEB by "He (Jesus) spoke about it plainly". This Greek substantive "παρρησία" which literally means: "to say everything", was used for the freedom of speech which was the right of the free citizen. Later it is found as a characteristic of the relations between true friends in opposition to the feigned compliments of flatterers. In the New Testament this "παρρησία"—"outspokenness"—is found several times with special emphasis to express a particular element in the Christian attitude. By this very typical Greek word some features which were outstanding in Manson’s activity as a minister of the Word are underlined. Hence it readily offered itself as a theme excellently suited to this occasion. In reflecting a characteristic side

of him who gave his name to these memorial lectures it gives us at the same time the chance to avoid the danger of eulogizing and to make a small contribution to New Testament study which would be, I think, in accordance with Manson's own wish.

I must confess that it took me a long time before I formulated the somewhat mysterious title of this lecture. For this theme lacks the desired plainness. This, however, is not entirely my fault, but due to the fact that the English language has not one word to render the various shades of meaning covered by the single Greek noun παρρησία and the verb παρρησιάζεομαι. This deficiency is shared by the English speech with all modern and even ancient languages. It is such a particular Greek word that it always puzzles the translator who wants to be faithful to the original and exact in bringing to light its meaning. If we consult the New English Bible, we find a great variety of renderings: plainly, boldness or bold, publicly, openly, confidence. Of course, from every language one can take examples to show that the same word gets a different meaning from its context: you make the difference between "funny" meaning "peculiar" and "funny" meaning "amusing" and know that "going Dutch" is not identical with a "Dutch walk". This fact makes the study of semantics so fascinating but also sets the task to the interpreter of displaying the full array of associations evoked by the original in order to see whether there is loss or gain. But after due consideration of various possibilities I choose this word "freedom of speech", because so the connection with speaking, so closely marked in the N.T., is kept and in the adjective "Christian" we try to formulate the special character the word gets in the N.T.

The first scholar who devoted his massive learning to elucidate the history of this word, was the German Erik Peterson, who gave a marvellous sketch of the stages through which the word went.¹ But it was only an outline and the larger monograph he promised was never published. The data from the

N.T. were dealt with in a rather perfunctory manner. Far more thorough in this respect was the treatment in Schlier’s contribution to Kittel’s famous *Wörterbuch*. In this case, however, the sequence of the subdivisions (viz. John, Acts, Paul, Hebrews) calls for some criticism, because this order tends to obscure the possible development of the word within the Christian community. Moreover, Schlier leaves aside the question whether there was a special reason for certain N.T. authors to use *this* word. Two more studies in French on παρρησία appeared in 1957 and 1958. In the former Jaeger dealt with it as the background of the specific usage of “fiducia” in Christian Latin; he stressed the juridical aspect, given in the covenant—relation with God; in the latter a Belgian scholar D. Smolders focused his attention on the texts in Acts and St. Paul; according to him the word must have been current in the primitive community, especially in relation with persecutions; it expresses the apostolic “audacity” before men and the assurance before God. My own observations lead me into a somewhat different direction and this fact makes it worthwhile to discuss the word afresh.

It will have struck you that so far no English contribution has been mentioned. This unpleasant fact is true. Except for some casual remarks in commentaries no attention has been given to this noun either in an article or monograph; one can only refer to the articles on “Boldness” in Hastings’ *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* and his *Dictionary of the Apostolic Church*, which have now reached the venerable age of fifty years and are somewhat one-sided; Scott leaves out the testimony of Acts. So it is not


complete boldness to take this topic for this lecture and though I dare not promise to fill the gap, I hope at least to give some insight into the typical character of this word in the N.T.

Was this idea neglected just by an oversight, or because it was not sufficiently important? It must have been an oversight, because παρρησία has played an important part both in the pagan Greek world and among the Christians. It is fairly frequent in the N.T. and of prime importance in the vocabulary of the spiritual life among the Church fathers; it was taken over by the Syrians in transliteration and is a favourite idea in a mystic like Isaac of Nineveh.¹

The word is first met in the Greek political sphere;² it describes the right of the free citizen to express his opinion in the assembly of the city. Schlier points out that it had three aspects: the right to say everything; the plain truth; the courage to declare one's conviction. In the private sphere it denoted that free intercourse between friends who speak the truth and do not flatter one another. In the N.T. period this attitude was still highly valued though it had lost much of its political connotations, since the city-state had lost its importance; "freedom of speech" tended to get an unfavourable meaning, because it was one of the highest ideals of the Cynic philosophers who with great insolence hurled their invectives against everybody.

In Jewish-Hellenistic writers like Philo and Josephus this word is taken over but here it is striking to see that παρρησία is also used in relation with God; the friend of God like Moses, the example of wisdom, possesses it. A good conscience, bound by the will of God as expressed in His law, is the ground for this freedom.

In this connection we may remark that this παρρησία, though found in the Septuagint, does not belong to the same class as words like ἐκκλησία, ἁγιός, διαθήκη, διασπορά, which went over into the N.T. vocabulary stamped by a specific "Hebrew" imprint. It is only found a few times in the Greek Old Testament, only once in the Pentateuch, mostly in later Wisdom-books.

¹ Cf. A. J. Wensinck, Mystic treatises by Isaac of Nineveh (Amsterdam, 1923), index s.v.
² The material for this paragraph is taken from Schlier, loc. cit. pp. 869 ff.
But one cannot say that it is a central idea in the religious terminology of the O.T. either in the Law or Prophets and Psalms. Even in the sapiential literature it turns up very rarely, and an author like Sirach does not give special instructions on this topic as he does in other instances. Viewed in the whole context of the Septuagint it is a marginal feature. There is no indication whatsoever that it directly influenced the N.T. usage, not even texts like Wisdom v. 1 and 4 Macc. iv. 10.

But is it correct to say with Russell Scott that the application in the N.T. stands quite apart and that it is "a new ingredient put into the religious consciousness by Christianity"? The witness of Philo and Josephus makes this an unwarranted statement. It is true that this "freedom of speech" was not used by the Greeks in their relation to the Gods, but it is equally true that it was done by Philo and Josephus. And these authors do not give long explanations as though they were doing something unheard of. Within the Jewish synagogues no objection was felt to the use of this term with regard to God, strange though it might have sounded to Greek ears. A more thorough investigation of the religious thought of Philo and Josephus would be required for a real evaluation of their testimony. There is still an open question here, even after Peterson's and Schlier's observations. A common Greek word is taken over without much ado by the Jewish synagogues and applied even to the relation with God.

When we now turn to the New Testament, we notice a very remarkable increase of instances as compared with the Septuagint. 1 The N.T. outnumbers the O.T. not only relatively, but also absolutely. This fact indicates that "freedom of speech" has some predominance here. Another remarkable feature comes to light, if we look at the distribution over the various books: 1 instance in Mark; 9 in John; 12 in Acts (+ 4 not very important variants); 10 in Paul (with inclusion of Pastoral Epistles); 4 in Hebrews; 4 in 1 John. This list calls for some remarks: (a) the word does not belong to the vocabulary of a single author, but is fairly evenly distributed over at least four writers; (b) it is typical that the three Synoptics yield one instance only, while John is well-represented; (c) though it is never safe to argue from

1 Only one instance—and that in malam partem—is known so far.
silence it is strange that Luke lacks the word in the parallel-passage to the text of Mark, while on the other hand he uses the word so frequently in Acts.

(a) The first occurrence of the word in Christian literature is in one of the oldest letters of Paul, in 1 Thess. ii. 2. The apostle reminds his readers of his first appearance among them. After his bitter experience in Philippi he came to them; but these sufferings did not prevent him from starting afresh in Thessalonica. The words concerned are translated in R.S.V. like this: "we had courage in our God to declare to you the Gospel of God in the face of great opposition", and in N.E.B. by: "we declared the gospel of God to you frankly and fearlessly by the help of our God. A hard struggle it was." This example shows how difficult is the translation of the sentence

επαρρησιασάμεθα ἐν τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν λαλήσας πρὸς ὑμᾶς τῷ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ.

Both sides are contained in this "freedom of speech": he took courage (ingressive aorist) in spite of the bitter opposition, and he preached the gospel quite plainly, as appears from the sequel: without guile, flattery or greed (verses 3 ff.). Undoubtedly Paul is reacting here against all sorts of religions propagandists of his day. His preaching does not aim at pleasing men, not even himself, but pleasing God: his gospel is not "according to man" (Gal. i. 11) and therefore provokes opposition; but he has not adulterated the gospel. The word "freedom of speech" has here its place in the missionary-practice of the apostle: it comprises both the full truth of the gospel and full freedom towards the judgement of men. This freedom Paul took from God Himself, who was the author of the gospel, and not from his own valour.

In 2 Corinthians the word is used twice. In vii. 4 the translation: "I am perfectly frank with you" (N.E.B.) is preferable to the rendering: "I have great confidence in you"1. In the strained relations which existed between Paul and the Christians in Corinth and of which chapters x-xii give a moving picture,

1 παρρησία πρὸς ὑμᾶς, where πρὸς clearly indicates the direction in which the παρρησία goes, but not the foundation for the παρρησία.
Paul finds the freedom to speak to them in all frankness and urges the Corinthians not to close their hearts; they are more than friends, joined together in death and life. The deepest motive for this frankness is revealed in the famous passage iii. 12 ff. Paul had to defend his apostleship against all sorts of attack: "for we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word; but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ" (ii. 17). He is a minister of the New Covenant, which surpasses in glory the old one. Then he continues: "with such a hope as this we speak out boldly" and this statement is elucidated by a curious, not to say puzzling, passage about the veil over Moses’ face, the length of which is proof of the importance Paul attached to it. Elsewhere I have tried to demonstrate that the key to this passage lies in the fact that in Aramaic the expression "uncovering of the face" is identical with παρατρέπῳ—a expression the apostle himself uses in verse 18. For our understanding of what Paul means here by "freedom of speech" is is significant that he uses it in his relations with the Christians as a true apostle, because the veil is taken away and he sees or reflects the glory of God; he has an insight into God’s new and eternal relation with men; he is free, guided by the Spirit. Here again we see that the idea has its place in Paul’s activity as a preacher of the gospel and is based on the revelation of the gospel itself.

A typical example of this "frankness" between Christians is found in Philemon 8. Paul, who according to worldly standards is far inferior to the wealthy Philemon, and is in prison, is bold enough to give orders to Philemon to do his duty, but he refrains from that right; here again the "freedom of speech" Paul enjoys is "in Christ".

This "freedom of speech" is directed towards the proclamation of the Gospel. It is not a quality of Paul himself. In the dangers of his imprisonment he asks for the intercessions of his brethren that it may be given to him. The wonderful secret of God’s work must be set forth in complete openness. See

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1 The article "'With uncovered face', the exegesis of 2Corinthians iii12-18" will appear in the next issue of Novum Testamentum, to which I may refer the readers for a detailed exegesis.
Ephesians vi. 19-20: "pray also for me, that utterance may be given me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak." Here παραρτέριαζομαι is more than courage; it is directly bound up with the proclamation of the mystery, as appears from the parallel in Colossians iv. 4: "that I may make the mystery of Christ clear (φανέρωσι), as I ought to speak."

In the same vein we must, I think, interpret Ephesians iii. 12: "Christ Jesus, in whom we have παραρτέρια and the access with confidence through our faith in Him." This is often taken in the sense of our "freedom of speech" in approaching God, under the influence of ii. 18, "access to the Father". But the whole preceding passage speaks of something different. In glowing terms the prisoner Paul praises the great office which was entrusted to him: to proclaim the mystery which is now revealed, that the Gentiles become full members of God's own people. Even in his chains and sufferings he is able to tell forth that wonderful message. In Christ Jesus that mystery has been revealed and therefore in Him Paul can make it clear, the whole church can proclaim it and enter into that reality of the people of God. Here again, the ground for this "freedom of speech" is in Jesus Christ.

A very curious use of the term is found in Philippians i. 20. Paul is in prison for the sake of the gospel; the outcome of his trial is uncertain, but nevertheless he is of good cheer, for by the prayers of the faithful and the help of the Spirit "this will turn out for (his) deliverance" and then he continues: "as it is my eager expectation and hope that I shall not be at all ashamed, but that in all openness now as always Christ will be honoured in my body." The opposite to παραρτέρια clearly is "to be ashamed", of course in the tribulations and even danger of death. But Paul suddenly makes a very striking change in the sentence. One would have expected: "but that in all openness I shall honour

1 Is that a translation of ? Cf. p. 482.
2 Therefore he adds verse 13: "So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you which is your glory", which brings the whole passage iii. 1 ff. to a close.
Christ, viz. in the clear witness he gives; but all of a sudden Christ becomes the subject and Paul is nothing but the instrument in which the greatness of Christ shines out. In the weakness of his body is revealed the power of Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Cor. xii. 10, Phil. iv. 13). In him Christ lives (Gal. ii. 20), and Jesus Christ will clearly show His glory either in the life or in the death of His servant. Therefore I have translated παρησία here by “openness”, because not the courage of the martyr, but Christ Himself will be revealed in all plainness. But as will be seen from the context in this chapter the notion of “freedom of speech” and sincerity in the proclamation of the gospel is not absent (cf. verse 14: “most of the brethren have been made confident in the Lord because of my imprisonment, and are much more bold to speak the word of God without fear”;

1 verse 18 “in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed.” By the sudden turn of subject Paul brings out what is the real power of “freedom of speech”, the fact that not only the gospel is simply proclaimed, but that the Lord of the gospel is revealed.

In Colossians ii.15 Paul says that God has disarmed the principalities and powers and made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in Christ. The same verb διειγματίζω is used in Matthew i. 19 of an adulteress who is disgraced by exposure. This happens εν παρησίᾳ so that the poor nature of these powers who had enslaved mankind is revealed before all eyes!

The last text in the Pauline letters, 1 Timothy iii.13, is very obscure. Of the deacons it is said that they who serve well “gain a good standing for themselves and also much freedom of speech in the faith which is in Christ Jesus ”. The most probable interpretation in my opinion is that the good service confirms by

1 περισσοτέρως τολμᾶν ἀφόβος τῶν λόγων τοῦ θεοῦ λαλεῖν.
2 See verses 15-18: “Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the Gospel; the former proclaim Christ out of partisanship, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment”.
3 The imagery of this verse is far from clear as may be seen from the commentaries ad loc.
4 See the discussion in C. Spicq, Les Épitres Pastorales (Paris, 1947), ad loc.
its deeds the word of the gospel. He may openly profess the
faith because his conduct is his recommendation.

In surveying these Pauline texts we see that “freedom of
speech” is never mentioned in connection with virtues, not even
among the gifts of the Spirit in Galatians v. There is no con­
nection with friendship. It is very closely linked with the
preaching of the Gospel, with the open proclamation of the divine
Mystery, or the divine triumph. Adverse powers are not able
to stop this proclamation, but on the contrary they stimulate it.
This evangelical freedom of speech shows the message crystal­
clear, without admixture; it gives an open character to the relation
of the apostle with his fellow-Christians. So παρρησία is a
characteristic element of his ministry.

(b) “Freedom of speech” has a prominent place in Acts.
Everyone perusing its pages will see that the noun and the verb
often recur in all parts of the book, so that it may be styled one
of the “key-words”.

It is the last word that resounds in our
ears when we close the book: Paul in Rome was preaching the
Kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus quite
openly (μετὰ πάσης παρρησίας), unhindered”. It is closely
connected with the proclamation of the gospel; it denotes the
freedom with which it is proclaimed by him who himself is there
on trial. It is, however, not the profession in the law-court, but
the missionary activity that is carried out with all clearness and
without outward hindrance.

It is necessary to see the various contexts in which this
“freedom of speech” is applied. In chap. iv Peter and John
are tried before the Jewish council because they have healed a
man in the name of Jesus, as they had explained to the crowd.
Before the Sanhedrin Peter is mocking at the fact that they are
tried because of a healing and gives a plain witness about Jesus,
whom the Jews had rejected but who is the exclusive Saviour.

“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and

1 It is striking, as Professor Dr. J. N. Sevenster pointed out some time ago,
that Paul who had friends does not speak about friendship.

2 Of course 1 Tim. iii 13 is slightly different (is it Pauline?).


Novum Testamentum IV (1960), pp. 35 ff.
perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they wondere." This freedom of speech was conspicuous, the more so since the apostles are uneducated. Is it only said because these common people are not impressed by the authority of the Sanhedrin? Is it insolence? No, this freedom manifests itself in fearless speaking, but also and mainly in the clear witness about Jesus, who had been rejected by this very same council and yet was the exclusive Saviour. This freedom gives the explanation of the miracle that had taken place.

In the same line lies Acts iv. 29, 31. This is not simply a prayer for courage, though the disciples ask for strength against the threats that are imminent. Why are they in danger? Because they speak about Jesus the Messiah. Here again the connection with the wonder-working power of God is mentioned. The Christians are in need of the gift of "freedom of speech"; that means, of speaking the word of God quite plainly, not frightened by the opposition of the forces against God and His Anointed. This prayer is granted by the Holy Spirit with which they are filled.¹

Very striking is also the description in Acts ix. 27, 29. Barnabas tells the disciples in Jerusalem about the conversion of Paul "and how at Damascus he had preached with freedom of speech in the name of Jesus". This refers to verse 22: Paul filled with the Holy Spirit (verse 17), proclaimed in the synagogues Jesus as the Son of God or the Christ (cf. also verse 22), confounding the Jews. This same work Paul continues to do in Jerusalem: "preaching with freedom of speech in the name of the Lord. And he spoke and disputed against the Hellenists." In both cases this preaching enrages the Jews who want to kill Paul. The great dispute here is about the Messiahship of Jesus, the stumbling-block for the Jews because of Jesus' earthly appearance and crucifixion, but the very heart of the Christian faith. This witness does not begin in the dangerous situation; it precedes, it creates dangers because of unbelief on the part of the Jews.

In Acts it is typical that this παρρησία is always mentioned in connection with preaching in the synagogues and to the Jews.

¹ N.B. the imperfect ἔλαλου τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ (verse 31).
For example in xiii. 46, after the long sermon on God's way with Israel's history and the mission of Jesus, the Jews "contradicted what was spoken by Paul" and blasphemed. Then "Paul and Barnabas said with freedom of speech: 'It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles.'" These verses must be seen in contrast with the end of the preceding sermon, which closes with an appeal to conversion and a warning given in a word from the prophet Habakkuk. Now the hearers have made their decision; the prophetic word is no longer an oracle for the future, but a reality in the present. The apostles make clear what the way of God is, His plan of salvation for the world.

In other instances, too, "freedom of speech" is mentioned in the context of preaching in the synagogues. Even where Greeks are mentioned, as in xiv. 1, they are not pure pagans, but Gentiles living in a rather close relation to the synagogue, the so-called "God-fearers". Highly interesting in this respect is Acts xxvi. 26, occurring in the defence of Paul before Festus and Agrippa. The apology tells the story of Paul's conversion and ends up with the testimony from Moses and the prophets "that the Christ must suffer, and that by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to the people and to the

1 παρρησία in connection with a scripture-text also in Acts ii. 29. After quoting Ps. 16: 8 ff, Peter says: "Brethren, I may say to you with freedom of speech of the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and this tomb is with us to this day"; here it means: openly, without hiding the truth.

2 Acts xiv. 1: "Now at Iconium they entered together into the Jewish synagogue, and so spoke that a great company believed, both of Jews and of Greeks. (2) But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren. (3) So they remained for a long time, speaking with freedom of speech for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands": Here again miracles are connected with the παρρησία. Acts xix. 8: "And (Paul) entered the synagogue (of Ephesus) and for three months spoke with freedom of speech, arguing and pleading about the kingdom of God", a passage which must be read in the light of Acts xvii. 2-3: "And Paul went in (into the synagogue), as was his custom, and for three weeks he argued with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying: 'This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ.'" Acts xviii. 26: Apollos, fervent in spirit, "began to speak with freedom of speech in the synagogue".
Gentiles.” The heathen Festus calls this sheer madness, but the apostle appeals to the king as an expert on Jewish matters: “For the king knows about these things, and to him I speak freely. . . . King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets?” Here again we find the connection with the O.T. scriptures, and the testimony about Jesus Christ; the “freedom of speech” is directed to somebody who is considered a Jew.

In the light of later usage of the word in the “Acts of the Martyrs”, it is remarkable that “freedom of speech” is never mentioned in Acts in the context of Paul’s preaching to the Gentiles or in the long story of his trial (chap. xxii ff.; except xxvi. 26 discussed before). The texts do not permit to speak about this παρρησία in the context of persecution (so Smolders). It is not so much the opposition which provokes the “freedom of speech” on the side of the Christians, but their παρρησία which provokes opposition and danger. This “freedom of speech” is always connected with “speaking the word of God”, the testimony about the Messiah, Crucified and Risen, with a plain explanation of the prophesies and God’s way of salvation. By God’s Spirit and His miracles the apostles are specially equipped for this task. It is remarkable that this “freedom of speech” always appears in the contacts of the apostles with the Jews (even in chap. xxviii the relation of Paul with the Jews is the main theme). Is there a link here with Paul’s exposition in 2 Corinthians iii. 12 ff.? It is not possible to give a clear-cut positive answer, but I for one would not exclude the possibility of such a connection.

Another question to be raised here is: why did Luke not use this word in his gospel, whereas he so frequently employed it in Acts? In other cases, e.g. that of the verb “to save”, he has the word in both works and he even introduced it various times into his former book where the tradition in the other Synoptists lacks it. And this fact is even more striking since Mark had it! After the first announcement of the sufferings of the Son of Man, following Peter’s famous confession, Mark viii. 32 reads: καὶ παρρησία τὸν λόγον ἔλαλε, “and openly he spoke the word”.

1 Cf. Schlier, loc. cit. p. 883 f.
2 See my article, mentioned on p. 474, n. 1.
Mark’s terminology recalls that of the early church, as in Acts παρρησία is linked up with speaking (λαλεῖν). Unfortunately Luke did not account for his treatment of older traditions—or is it a happy circumstance, because it keeps a part of New Testament scholarship alive? Did he not find this word in his tradition about Caesarea Philippi? Or did he leave it out on purpose, because this “freedom of speech” could only properly be used after Jesus’ cross and resurrection? See Luke xxiv.26f., 44 ff. Then it may be an indication that Luke considered the word about the suffering of the Son of Man as enigmatic, only revealed in the events of Jesus’ life. On the other hand, it is clear that in Mark παρρησία does not mean “in public”, because it is only for the intimate group of his disciples; it is Jesus’ open declaration of the rejection of the “Son of Man” and is an indication of His coming fate.

When we consider the use of “freedom of speech” in the later “Acts of the Martyrs” it is noteworthy that the evangelists do not use it in connection with passages on confession such as Matthew x. 17 ff.: “they will deliver you up to councils, and flog you in their synagogues; and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear testimony before them and the Gentiles. When they deliver you up, do not be anxious how you are to speak... for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you” (and parallels). One would have expected it here. Is this a sign that the word did not belong to the vocabulary of Jesus which was carefully transmitted? Or had the word undergone a change and was it mainly connected with the “revelation” of the gospel-message?

The editions of Nestle and Kilpatrick offer four variant readings in Acts where παρρησία is introduced:

1 Acts vi. 10: “the Jews could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which (Stephen) spoke”, which becomes in some Mss. “the Holy Spirit because they were refuted by him with all freedom of speech.”
2 Acts ix. 20: after “he proclaimed” some witnesses add “with all freedom of speech”, cf. verse 27.

2 Luke has not the scene about Peter rebuking Jesus for uttering this word.
3 Is it important that Matt. xvi. 21 has δεικνύειν instead of διδάσκειν in Mark viii. 31? Does this express some kind of revealing?
(3) Acts xiv. 19: instead of "persuaded the people" some manuscripts read "and when the apostles argued with freedom of speech, they persuaded"; cf. xvii. 2, etc..

(4) Acts xvi. 4 first words in some texts read: "As they went on their way through the cities they proclaimed with all freedom of speech the Lord Jesus Christ."

These variants have very slight attestation and cannot claim to be original. They are in complete accordance with the contents of παρρησία we found elsewhere in Acts. They stress the importance of this idea even more than in the ordinary text.

(c) Let us now turn to the Fourth Gospel. In contrast with the Synoptics John uses the word παρρησία quite frequently, practically always in connection with something Jesus said or did. The texts are not in the first-six chapters but occur after vii. 4, which may be significant, since all have to do with Judea and Jesus' revelation in the heart of Judaism.

In vii. 3 f. Jesus' brethren want Him to go up to Judea to show His works there, for, so they say, "no man works in secret, if he seeks to be known openly (ἐν παρρησίᾳ εἶναι). If you do these things (namely His works as a revelation of the Father and testimony to Himself as the Christ), show yourself to the world ". The "world" has in John a very interesting meaning; in several places it is identical with the Jewish world (xv. 18-xvi. 2; xviii. 20). Here the παρρησία is contrasted with something hidden, but it is more "to be known openly", not only as an object of talk, but as a person who is not incognito, on the contrary, whose true nature is open before all. Therefore the brethren say: "show yourself" (φανερώσον)—an interesting transition with behind it perhaps the Hebrew (Aramaic) ἀναλάμβανε to uncover, to reveal. Jesus' person forms the subject of discussion among the Jews (vii. 12 f.) ; they whisper about him, because no one dared to speak about Him openly "for fear of the Jews" 2, which amounts here to "openly confess Him" (cf. ix 22). Later on in this chapter they are astonished over Jesus' teaching, not so much over its contents as about the fact that He speaks with freedom of speech, although He is not trained as a rabbi 3 and is threatened

1 In vii.4 the contrast is ἐν κρυπτῷ — ἐν παρρησίᾳ ; in vii. 10 ὡς φανερῶς, ἀλλὰ ὡς ἐν κρυπτῷ which seems very closely parallel.

2 An often-recurring theme in John, see also ix. 22, xii. 42, xix. 38, xx. 6.

with death; they conclude that He is not the Christ. But this again leads to a declaration on the part of Jesus about His person, about the One Who sent Him and His authority. John often uses words with a double meaning; here we meet such a case, for παρησία is to be understood as "in public" and "revealing". In x. 24 the Jews urge Jesus to give a clear declaration about His Messiahship; Jesus refers to what He has said and done, which has met with unbelief. Here the word παρησία means an unequivocal answer to the question whether Jesus is the Christ, which Jesus had not given in plain words.

When asked in the trial before Annas about His disciples and teaching Jesus answered: "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come altogether; I have nothing said secretly. . . . Ask those who have heard me, what I said to them." Here again the contrast exists between "openly" and "in secret". This is the summary of His activity. Even if sometimes He spoke to His disciples in riddles, He always made His meaning clear. He has declared Himself the Son of God, the One sent by the Father who works with the authority of His Father. He taught openly though for a while He did hide Himself before the last revelation, His entrance into Jerusalem as the king who died for His people. Then His hour had come (vii. 6).

Some years ago I argued that the Fourth Gospel was a missionary writing, addressed to the Jews to bring them to believe that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. Within the scope of

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2 See John xi. 14: after the word about Lazarus' sleep (verse 11). He told them plainly: "Lazarus is dead", xvi. 25: "I have said this to you in figures; the hour is coming when I shall no longer speak to you in figures, but tell you plainly of the Father . . . 29 His disciples said: 'Ah, now you are speaking plainly, not in any figure.'" The difficulties in these verses in chap. xvi—see the commentaries ad. loc.—are not of importance for our discussion.

3 See John xi. 54: "Jesus therefore no longer went about openly among the Jews, but went from there to the country near the wilderness" after the decision of the Jewish council to kill Him (xi. 47 ff.) and before the decisive days described in chap. xii-xx.

this purpose the idea of παρηγορία has its place; its centre is Jesus Himself. His words are not cryptic, but reveal His unity with the Father, the nature of His person. But this "openness" must be accepted in faith. It is typical that on several occasions the unbelievers ask for it and Jesus' answer refers to His works which are His testimony. This freedom may be hindered through fear of the unbelieving Jews; even Jesus Himself retired sometimes for this reason; though this was so that he would be ready for the great manifestation, when the hour had come.

This freedom of speech and action as manifested in the earthly life of Jesus is not a quality of man, but is concerned with the revelation of God. It makes plain that Jesus is in this way the Christ, the Son who must be believed so that men may have life eternal.

(d) In the Epistle to the Hebrews we have quite a different situation. This admonition is addressed to Christians who are in danger of apostasy, because their faith is flagging and the outward oppression heavy. The author tries to keep them back by reminding them of the fearful majesty of God and the unique and final way He has given to be in communion with Him. This epistle is a warning, the negative side of which is outshone by the positive one, the incomparable gift of God's grace in His Son Jesus Christ. In Him the way foreshadowed in the O.T. revelation was opened once for all.

In this context the author mentions the idea of παρηγορία four times, and it is a significant element, as may be seen from the fact that it appears twice in the passage which deals with the concrete situation (x. 19, 35). Sometimes the word is taken here as "courage", "confidence". That makes perfectly good sense in iv. 16: "Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace", and x. 35: "do not throw away your confidence." But it is something more than a human virtue.

In x. 19 the author is drawing the conclusion from a long argument in which he has pointed out that the sacrifices of the O.T. were insufficient to establish the right relation with God and to take sin away definitely, but that Jesus accomplished it with His own sacrifice and established the New Covenant, promised by the prophets. The παρηγορία is here in contrast with
the symbols and shadows of the O.T. and the liberty created by the removal of sins. Because by the open declaration of God in His promises and in Jesus' sacrifice there is no hindrance, the Christians have the free right to enter; they can do so with a good conscience, not because they are not aware of misdeeds, but because they have been cleansed. The author urges them to use this right and to profess their Christian hope amidst the surrounding dangers. Then they are the house of God by holding fast this right and open confession, firm to the end (iii. 6). Because the Christians have a sympathizing High Priest they can go with freedom to the throne of grace to receive help in their distress (iv. 16). The difficulties which the readers are now encountering are not a new experience; in the first ardour of their faith they had taken their sufferings with joy (x. 32 ff.). They could bear them because they knew of the reality of God's promises. Therefore they must not throw away their παρρησία which has so great a reward in the future, eternal communion with God (x. 35). Here it is, so to say, the content of the Christian attitude in the world, the security of God's salvation and the open confession amidst of opposition. This last instance is an interesting illustration of the rule that the same words have not always the same meaning. In the Greek rhetor Dio Chrysostom we find, as Moffatt pointed out, the very same expression; but here it is the free right of citizens in a political sense.¹

In Hebrews the "freedom of speech" has two sides: the free right to approach God, given in the sacrifice of Christ, which is the essence of the Christian faith, and the open confession of this faith, which is an unshakable hope. These two sides are an inseparable unity. In the situation in which the Christians live they need it as a gift and a task.

(e) The critical situation in 1 John is different from that in Hebrews. The pressure does not come from the outside, but from within the church itself. False teachings about Jesus Christ as the Son of God try to find adherents. The ever-recurring

¹ J. Moffatt, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Edinburgh, 1924), ad Heb. x. 35; he refers to Dio Chrysostom, Oratio xxxiv. 39, δήσοικα μη τελέως ἀποβάλλετε τὴν παρρησίαν = to lose the right of free speech as citizens of Tarsus, if they allow themselves to be maltreated by the governors.
theme is “Abide in Jesus Christ”; in Him the Father has given His perfect love so that men for whom Christ is an expiation are children of God. The test for abiding in Him is the fulfilment of His commandments.

In this relatively short letter the word παρρησία occurs four times and always indicates the assurance of man in his relation to God. Twice it appears in connection with eschatology (ii. 28, iv. 17); in the day of the Last Judgement the Christian will not be ashamed nor fear before Almighty God. This “freedom of speech” is present, because he is in Christ the Expiator, filled with perfect love which drives away fear. But for the Christian the judgement is not only future, but present; love towards the brethren is the test for abiding in the love of Christ. If we have not a bad conscience in that respect (iii. 11 ff.) because we love in deed and truth, we have “freedom of speech” towards God and may ask Him everything (iii. 21). This is again stressed in v. 14: because we have that freedom and know that He hears us, we must pray for the remission of sins of our brethren. This free intercourse with God, which His children abiding in Christ enjoy, has an immediate practical consequence. It has its foundation in Christ, is here now, and will be in the final judgement: “freedom of speech” in the children of God who are in His love and show forth love.

It is striking that this conception of παρρησία is completely different from that in the gospel. There it was always used with regard to the revelation and was a “freedom of speech” towards men; here it is directed towards God. There it was never eschatological; here it is the expression of the most intimate relation between God and man, now and for the future, even in the critical day of judgement. Here “freedom of speech” is not found in the wise who has a good conscience, but in everyone who is cleansed by Jesus Christ.

1 John stands apart in this respect and leads over to later usage in which freedom of speech is the characteristic attitude of Christian prayer.

The Christian’s freedom of speech as it appears in the N.T. has a variety of meanings. It is used for the work of Christ in
THE CHRISTIAN'S FREEDOM OF SPEECH

John, the preaching of the gospel in Acts, the activity of the apostle in Paul, the security of the faith in Hebrews, assurance before God in 1 John. It is remarkable that in John and Acts the word is applied to the relation with the Jews. "Freedom of speech" with all its variety of meanings is, however, always based on the revelation of God in Jesus Christ who restored the relation between God and man. That is the issue at stake in John; that is the message the apostles bring; that is the basis for the attitude in Hebrews and 1 John. In spite of the opposition of those who are unbelievers, of those who criticize the apostle, the Christian may speak freely because he knows Him who conquers all opposition, because he knows that wonderful communion with God which transcends everything in the world.

The Christians took over in their vocabulary a word common in Greek. But they were not proud to have this right as free citizens, these slaves and poor; not even the Roman citizen Paul used it in that connection. It was not characteristic for them as friends, but as brethren who shared in the revelation of God's love. When they used "free speech", they had not the pride of the Cynics who wanted to show their independence by reviling other people; they used it to bring to light the open mystery of God.

This "freedom of speech" makes it clear that Christianity was not a mystery-religion, revelling in hidden secrets and allegories. Its message was on the contrary one of the revelation of the mystery. God had done His deed, fulfilled His promises in Jesus Christ, in whom the way to God and to men is opened by love. The message is given in plain words.

Sometimes in N.T. scholarship it seems as though there was an unbridgeable gulf between the Hebrew and Greek elements and that in explaining the N.T. one has to choose between them. Our treatment of this word παρρησία may have shown that this is a wrong way of putting the question. Here we have a typically Greek word with very little background in Judaism; it has been taken up by the Christians and made subservient to the Gospel.

This "freedom of speech" is made possible, because God has spoken decisively in Jesus Christ; it is the joyful gift and task for the Christian to proclaim thereby the message plainly, to
converse thereby with his fellow-Christians openly, to speak thereby to his Father simply.

An example of this Christian "freedom of speech" we have met in our friend Tom Manson. It was a very high honour to be invited to deliver this lecture, the first to be devoted to his memory. I wish to thank the Trustees and the Theological Faculty for this opportunity of expressing my deep and lasting gratitude for what Manson as a scholar and a friend gave me by his example.

"The memory of the righteous is a blessing."