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978-0-521-39069-9 - The Anthropological Character of Theology: Conditioning
Theological Understanding

David A. Pailin

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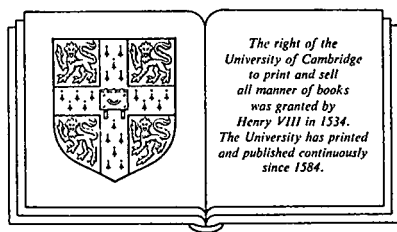
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Preface

During the long period of incubation which this study has undergone, I have come to realize that theology should be written in 'all-inclusive' language. Accordingly, whereas in earlier drafts I thoughtlessly used 'mankind' for 'humanity', normally spoke of a person as 'he' and referred to God as 'he', I have tried in this text to remove all such sexist implications. If at any point I have failed, I apologize. Although most of the non-sexist usages should not be obvious, I dislike such neologisms as 's/he'. Consequently, where a singular personal pronoun is needed to refer to the God of theistic belief (for 'it' is objectionably impersonal), I have, for want of anything better, resorted to using phrases like 'the divine' and 'the holy' as equivalents to a personal pronoun for God.

This study has benefited from the attention of various people to whom thanks are due. Susan Smalley commented on the earliest draft, Raymond Plant and John Harrod patiently and attentively worked through later ones. Maurice Wiles has throughout shown supportive interest, insight and friendship. Many of my students at Manchester have, for several years, considered these issues and several of them have provided me with genuine academic collegiality in the quest for theological understanding. Jacqueline Berry, Arnold Anderson and John Robertson have been perceptive critics of my ideas. My failures to take advantage of their advice should not be blamed on them. To them all I am very grateful.