PAUL'S ECCLESIOLOGICAL APPLICATION OF SOMA CHRISTOU

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ABSTRACT

PAUL'S ECCLESIOLOGICAL APPLICATION

OF SŌMA CHRISTOU

by

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ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Thesis

Andrews University

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Title: PAUL'S ECCLESIOLOGICAL APPLICATION OF SŌMA CHRISTOU

Name of researcher: David B. Foster

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Problem

Σῶμα Χριστοῦ is a central Pauline designation for the Church. Three questions are addressed in this thesis. First, to what extent is Paul using a metaphor? Secondly, in what way is Paul's use of σῶμα Χριστοῦ in Colossians and Ephesians dependent upon his earlier application in Romans and 1 Corinthians? Thirdly, what is Paul saying to the contemporary reader concerning the nature of the Church and its relationship with Christ?

Method

Time and space preclude an exhaustive treatment of the σῶμα Χριστοῦ concept. Attention is focused upon the origin of the terminology, the extent to which metaphor is present, and the

developments of the σῶμα Χριστοῦ concept in the captivity epistles. In this research the historical-analytical hermeneutic is applied.

Procedure

This thesis contains four major sections. Initially, a literature survey of relevant scholarly material in English is advanced. There is then a discussion of the possible origin of the Pauline term. A brief exegetical examination of 1 Cor 12:12-27, Rom 12:3-5; Col 1:18,24; 2:10,17-19; 3:15; and Eph 1:22,23; 4:4,12, 15-16; 5:22-25 is conducted. Finally two concise statements are made. One is related to the function of metaphorical language. The other is an outline of certain general observations regarding the Pauline doctrine of the Church.

Where necessary, introductory matters are discussed in some detail. This material is submitted because it assists in defining more accurately Paul's understanding of σῶμα Χριστοῦ.

Results

Research advanced in this thesis suggests that contemporary scholarship views σῶμα Χριστοῦ variously as a corporeal, existential, or metaphorical concept. Paul's source for the terminology was most probably Hellenistic Judaism. The major epistles apply σῶμα Χριστοῦ as a statement regarding the unity of the Church in spite of functional diversity. The emphasis is on the local church. Colossians, and particularly Ephesians, also advances and develops the unity theme, but not directly in functional terms. Proximity between Christ and the Church is underscored. The

Church universal is in focus. Christ is presented as rightful Lord of the universe because he is the "head" and "fullness" of the Church on earth.

Conclusions

Paul seems to be applying σῶμα Χριστοῦ as a metaphor in all passages exegeted. Yet, σῶμα Χριστοῦ is no mere metaphor. The terminology stands for a spiritual reality. Christ is the origin and continual life-source for the Church. The Church is more than a social and religious fellowship. As a visible spiritual community the Church transcends the earthly realm and defies complete human comprehension.

Andrews University

School of Graduate Studies

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A Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Religion

by

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October 1, 1984
Date approved

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my parents who, by their love and constant care, introduced me to the Seventh-day Adventist denomination.

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PREFACE

During the past four decades the Church has experienced significant change. In the 1950s, the Church was basically accepted as central to Christianity and important to the general stability of society. Apparent liberalism, in many guises, swept across western society in the 1960s and came knocking at the ecclesiastical door. Then the early 70s produced a certain ambivalence towards the Church. Within, and without Christianity, the claim was voiced that the Church was a relic of past narrow-minded generations. The last ten years, however, have witnessed a new direction. Thanks to secular society's popularization of the concepts of social interaction and the small group dynamic, the Church has imbibed a similar philosophy from a biblical perspective. The current idea of the Church as a religious evangelical fellowship has brought new life to an ailing institution.

This metamorphosis experienced by the Church, during my own lifetime, has motivated the selection of this thesis topic. In my personal and professional life there has been a growing desire to study the biblical nature of the Church and its relevance for the contemporary Christian.

Preparation of this thesis could not take place without considerable assistance from many within my denomination. My appreciation is extended to the Australasian Division of the

Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Central Pacific Union Mission, and in particular, the North New South Wales Conference. These administrative organisations have made available the necessary time and finance for my completion of this thesis and M.A. in Religion.

A major proportion of the research has been prepared during a period of denominational mission service. A word of genuine thanks is offered to the faculty and students of Fulton College who have patiently accepted any noticeable absence from numerous college activities.

Academic guidance has been ably provided by Dr. Norman Young, Mr. Laurence Turner, and Dr. Alwyn Salom. Dr. Young's familiarity with Pauline literature and his attention to the details of biblical exegesis have been a great boon. Mr. Turner's impartial reading of the manuscript has encouraged a clarity of presentation which would otherwise be missing. Dr. Salom's editorial exactitude must not go unmentioned. I admire his precision and thoroughness in such matters. His comments on style and technical presentation have been influential. While each of these men has generously applied his scholarly expertise, I willingly acknowledge my responsibility for any aspect of the thesis which is less than acceptable to the reader.

My typist, Mrs. Gaylene Heise, has worked under less than ideal conditions. It has been necessary for her to work with hand-written material mailed to her from half-way across the Pacific. I thank Mrs. Heise for her efficient and professional contribution.

As I have pursued graduate studies I have also attempted to be husband, father, and friend to my family. This task has at times been frustrating to all concerned. Sacred family hours have been sacrificed for the sake of knowledge. Words cannot express my gratitude to my wife, Heather. She has, more than successfully, maintained a happy home and a secure family atmosphere for our three sons while I have been preoccupied in my own little world of books, articles, and ideas.

I believe it is fitting that while one name may appear on the title page of this thesis about the Church, it is not entirely the work of one person, but of many in co-operation and community.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The history of ecclesiastical studies is resplendent with the literature of men and women who have desired to understand the Pauline doctrine of the Church. The necessity for yet another contribution--albeit a minor one--requires clarification.

Central to the Church's existence is the idea of self-understanding. Within the Church all religious denominations are tempted to pay scant attention to ecclesiological self-awareness. This hesitancy is humanly understandable. Each apparent reformation within the Church leading to another religious denomination is often initiated by what is perceived as some form of ecclesiastical abuse by one group upon another group in the Church. Thus the inauguration of a religious movement is frequently accompanied by the platitude--"we will never become an ecclesiastical body."

History repeatedly demonstrates that--once the furore which motivated the inception of a new religious movement has run its course--ecclesiastical concerns do come to the fore. Due to this inevitability it is paramount that all religious denominations within the Church respond to ecclesiastical concerns from a biblical premise. The essential biblical and

theological nature of the Church should be the foundation for all denominational functioning. Pragmatism and expediency, however well intended, are less than completely appropriate ecclesiastical motivations.

Almost two millennia ago, Paul recognized the virtue of ecclesiological self-understanding. It is important to note that on the Damascus Road, Paul the Pharisee was not only confronted by Christ but by the claims of the Church. Pauline ecclesiology, as it drew life and power from Christology, influenced the Apostle's approach to the doctrinal and ethical propositions of Christianity.

Many contemporary scholarly discussions on the nature of the Church invariably major on the Pauline contribution. The present research is no exception. Close attention is given to Paul's literary term, σῶμα Χριστοῦ as far as it stands as a designation for the Church. In this brief, potent concept Paul's position on the nature of the Church and the resultant functioning of the Church is summarized. The unpacking of all that the Apostle means by this term is not without risk. Wide scholarly disagreement persists over the degree to which σῶμα Χριστοῦ is a metaphor or more than a metaphor.

Perhaps the value of this present work is fourfold. First, the researcher has been permitted the opportunity to become somewhat familiar with those portions of Paul's literature which emphasize σῶμα Χριστοῦ. Secondly, a reasonable cross-section of secondary material which provides a wealth of stimulating concepts has also been scrutinized. Thirdly, and more

importantly, this research attempts to set forth a workable doctrine of the Church based largely upon Paul's use of σῶμα Χριστοῦ. It is readily acknowledged that the construction of a doctrine of the Church in this narrow way would be modified if Paul's other designations for the Church were considered in conjunction with σῶμα Χριστοῦ. The limits of time and space preclude such a major undertaking. Fourthly, as a minor extension to the above, the phrase acts as a bridge providing access to the life and thought of the theologian and Apostle behind the terminology.

Σῶμα Χριστοῦ stands at both the centre and circumference of each chapter of the thesis. Chapter 2 introduces a selection of scholarly material in English which has moulded contemporary interpretations of σῶμα Χριστοῦ. The origin of Paul's use of the phrase is contentious; chapter 3, therefore, sets forth and discusses the various possibilities. Insights into Paul's religious and cultural heritage are also provided.

Though by no means exhaustive, the subsequent chapters, 4 and 5, are predominantly exegetical. The hermeneutic employed is the widely accepted discipline of historical-analysis. All Pauline passages which include σῶμα Χριστοῦ as a major ecclesiological expression are considered. In particular, the applications in Rom 12 and 1 Cor 12 are compared with the ecclesiological material of Colossians and Ephesians. Paul's use of σῶμα Χριστοῦ is, at times, invoked in response to the circumstances which necessitated the production of an entire letter. Therefore, introductory material providing essential background is very briefly submitted.

Upon the basis of the preceding material, the concluding chapter succinctly raises two questions. First, in what way does metaphorical language function and bring meaning to abstract or conceptual realities? Secondly, what general ecclesiological propositions concerning the nature of the Church can be expressed by reference to σῶμα Χριστοῦ?

The ideas elaborated in this thesis are neither novel nor infallible. To grasp thoroughly the rich complexity of Paul's understanding of the nature of the Church is the work of more than a single lifetime.

CHAPTER II

SŌMA CHRISTOŪ--A LITERATURE SURVEY

Introduction

The New Testament expression σῶμα Χριστοῦ is considered by numerous scholars to be one of the most vivid and expressive descriptions for the Christian Church.[1] Though the specific term σῶμα is used variously through the New Testament, its significance as an ecclesiological term is most apparent in the Pauline corpus.[2] Certain scholars view the terminology as the 'pole' around which Paul's theology revolves, while others see σῶμα Χριστοῦ as one of a number of descriptions for the Church.[3]

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[1]Herman Ridderbos, Paul: An Outline of His Theology (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1975), p. 362; Donald Guthrie, New Testament Theology (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1981), p. 744; David M. Stanley, "Reflections on the Church in the New Testament," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 25(1963): 395; Joseph T. Culliton, "Lucien Cerfaux's Contribution Concerning 'The Body of Christ.'" Catholic Biblical Quarterly 29(1967): 41. Extensive bibliographical material for σῶμα Χριστοῦ is provided by Hans Küng, The Church (London: Search Press, 1968), pp. 29, 225; Robert H. Gundry Sōma in Biblical Theology: With Emphasis on Pauline Anthropology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 245-52; Markus Barth, Ephesians, Anchor Bible (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1974), pp. 414-17.

[2]For a discussion of the variety of ways the term functions in the New Testament see E. Schweizer and F. Baumgärtel, "σῶμα," "σωματικός," "σύσσωμος," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1971), 7:1057-80 (hereafter cited as TDNT).

[3]See Brian Daines, "Paul's Use of the Analogy of the Body of Christ--With Special Reference to 1 Corinthians 12," Evangelical Quarterly 59(1987): 71.

The History of Sōma Christou in Biblical Research

Research into the theological significance of σῶμα as a term in its own right did not fully take place until a few decades ago. However, the study of σῶμα Χριστοῦ as an ecclesiological description has been continually and vigorously pursued by both Roman Catholic and Protestant theologians.

The Roman Catholic development

Augustine, Aquinas, and Bellarmine have each in their own way contributed extensively to the developing Roman Catholic ecclesiological understanding of σῶμα and σῶμα Χριστοῦ. Prior to the encyclical presented by Pope Pius XII in 1943, titled Mystici Corporis, which identified the Church as the mystical Body of Christ, the specific understanding of σῶμα was that of a Collegium Christianorum.[1] Since that year the debate has flourished. The German scholar, A. Wikenhauser, illustrates those theologians who continued to accept the basically Augustinian view of the Church. T. Soiron in answer to Wikenhauser took the compromise view that this term for the Church is a "figurative-realistic" one.[2] F. Mussner and J. Reuss in the 1950s and, more recently, R. Schnackenburg represent those Catholic theologians

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[1]Richard P. McBrien, The Church in the Thought of Bishop John Robinson (London: SCM Press, 1966), p. 23; Avery Dulles, Models of the Church (Dublin: Gill & Macmillian, 1974), pp. 46-48.

[2]Robert Jewett, Paul's Anthropological Terms: A Study of Their Use in Conflict Settings (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1971), p. 204.

who have moved to a more historical-critical exegesis.[1] The ongoing dialogue was influential in the formation of Articles 8 and 9 of the Lumen Gentium at Vatican II.[2]

The Protestant development

Until the 1880s a fair degree of consensus prevailed regarding the nature of the Church and the importance of σῶμα.[3] Towards the very end of the nineteenth century several issues relating to charisma and office, the role of the Holy Spirit, and the influence of Hellenistic religions upon primitive Christianity dominated discussions on ecclesiology.[4] Through these years σῶμα as an isolated term was generally considered to be the "Kategorie der Form" and σάρξ as the substance that filled that form.[5]

A re-orientation took place in the 1920s. The emergence of form criticism and contemporary theological studies, as well as the rise of the ecumenical movement, served to stimulate a new direction.[6] It was at this time that σῶμα isolated from Χριστοῦ began to be considered as theologically significant.

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[1] Ibid., p. 205.

[2] Dulles, p. 48. The Lumen Gentium (DV II, p. 20) speaks of union "in a hidden and real way." See G. C. Berkouwer, The Church, Studies in Dogmatics (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1976), p. 86.

[3] Markus Barth, "A Chapter on the Church--The Body of Christ," Interpretation 12(1958): 134.

[4] Ibid. [5] Jewett, p. 206.

[6] Barth, "A Chapter on the Church," p. 135. See also Ernst Käsemann, Perspectives on Paul (London: SCM Press, 1971), p. 102.

T. Schmid's Der Leib Christi, published in 1919, is considered to be the commencement point of the modern Protestant debate. Schmid understood σῶμα to denote in Paul's ecclesiological usage the Church's "identity with the historical Jesus and denoting Christ's observable presence in the church."[1]

These early Roman Catholic and Protestant ecclesiological discussions have provided the basis for the contemporary dialogue.

Because of continued attempts to determine the nature of Paul's identification between Christ and the Church, contemporary interpretations are manifold. To facilitate identification in this study, the major discussions by scholars are categorized according to the following interpretative positions:

1. The existential construction
2. The corporeal construction
3. The metaphorical construction

Contemporary Interpretative Constructions

The existential construction

Those writers who view the ecclesiological term σῶμα existentially are primarily indebted to Rudolf Bultmann. Bultmann is credited with making the break from the long accepted

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[1]Jewett, p. 208.

[2]These categories have been drawn from Jewett, pp. 209-27. The literature survey undertaken is not exhaustive. In assigning the scholars to various categories it must be remembered that in certain instances there may be some overlapping into another category other than to which the scholar has been assigned.

notion that σῶμα was related to form.[1] Commencing from an anthropological premise, Bultmann constructed his understanding of Pauline theology. "Therefore, Paul's theology can best be treated as his doctrine of man; . . . , for in this way the anthropological and soteriological orientation of Paul's theology is brought out."[2]

He affirms that σῶμα transcends the physical and is "the most comprehensive term which Paul uses to characterize man's existence."[3] This results in Bultmann concluding that "Man, his person as a whole, can be denoted by sōma."[4] Bultmann's existentalist perspectives depreciate the importance of 'salvation-history'. Thus the Church "is the eschatological Congregation, and hence its existing belongs to the eschatological-occurrence. As it was called into existence by the proclaimed Word, its existence in turn is the foundation of preaching."[5]

The above general considerations indicate that Bultmann's anthropological emphasis may have influenced his ecclesiological understanding of σῶμα Χριστοῦ. He does recognize the communal aspects of the Church as the Body of Christ, but not in a

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[1]Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, 2 vols. (London: SCM Press, 1952), 1:191.

[2]Ibid. [3]Ibid., 1:192.

[4]Ibid., 1:195, 203. Unless otherwise stated, all italics in quotations are from the original sources. Hans Conzelmann states that Bultmann's rule of thumb is not, "'I have a σῶμα', but, 'I am σῶμα, or, am in the body.'" An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament (London: SCM Press, 1969), p. 176. Cf. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "Corinthian Slogans in 1 Cor 6:12-20," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 40(1978): 393.

[5]Bultmann, 1:308.

primary way. Χριστοῦ indicates the origin of the Church.

> His main thought is, rather that the members are equal because they belong to Christ, ... It is not the members who constitute the body but Christ. . . Thus, the body of Christ is, to speak Gnostically, a cosmic thing.[1]

Bultmann views σῶμα Χριστοῦ as a pre-existent, supramundane and transcendental entity because "Christ is there, not through and in the members, but before they are there and above them."[2]

E. Fuchs in his Christus und der Geist bei Paulus, Eine biblisch-theologische Untersuchung follows Bultmann's direction in his understanding of σῶμα Χριστοῦ. So also W. Gutbrod, who though organizing his treatment of σῶμα differently in his Die paulinsche Anthropologie, accepts Bultmann's existential definitions.[3]

The corporeal construction

Within this category there are several interpretations. The first may be termed the "mystical interpretation."

A. Schweitzer's ecclesiological perceptions develop from his belief that eschatology is Paul's theological organizing principle. "That this mystical doctrine is actually derived from the eschatological concept of the Community of God in which the elect are closely bound up with one another and with the Messiah is quite clearly evident."[4]

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[1]Ibid., 1:310.

[2]Ibid. In expressing his view, Bultmann, according to Gundry (p. 225), does not seem to emphasize unduly his somatic anthropology.

[3]Jewett, pp. 211-13.

[4]A. Schweitzer, The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, 2d ed. (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1953), p. 116.

Schweitzer advocates a mystical definition of σῶμα because of the participation of the elect with the resurrected Christ. "There grew up in Paul's resurrection mysticism the conception of the common possession of a corporeity . . . , that of the body of Christ."[1]

For Schweitzer then, σῶμα is a realistic ecclesiological term denoting the mystical relationship between Christ and His Church. "The Mystical Body of Christ is thus for Paul not a pictorial expression, nor a conception which has arisen out of symbolic and ethical reflections, but an actual entity."[2]

While Schweitzer's proposal has been influential, it has not gained wide acceptance, since his understanding is considered by many to be too realistic. In spite of a certain "strangeness" in his thesis, Schweitzer's contribution is, in Jewett's words, "a beaconlight of historical exegesis."[3]

L. S. Thornton, who is not motivated by the same eschatological concerns as Schweitzer, nevertheless does find the mystical interpretation of σῶμα appealing. Thornton's motivation for qualifying Body with the adjective mystical lies in his conviction that unity, in spite of distinctiveness, is the basis for Paul's ecclesiological use of the terminology.

> The unity of the body of Christ, thus sustained by the Spirit, has two aspects. It is a unity of the parts in the whole, ... It is also a unity of members with the

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[1]Ibid., p. 117.

[2]Ibid., p. 127.

[3]Jewett, p. 216. For a discussion of the term 'mystical' see Berkouwer, pp. 84-86.

> Head; . . . . Its significance lies in its emphasis upon the complete oneness of the life which results from the mystical identification.[1]

Thornton advocates that the main concept in the Pauline idea of σῶμα Χριστοῦ is, namely, "that Christ and his people share one single life together after a manner which can be fitly symbolized by the idea of a single human organism."[2]

Lucien Cerfaux's approach is similar to that of J. A. T. Robinson. He, like Robinson, emphasizes the physical nature of σῶμα Χριστοῦ and the union of the believer to that Body by means of the sacraments.[3] Cerfaux, however, sees a certain mysticism at work. He believes that, while Christians do not form a mystical Christ, they are part of "the real organism of his risen person."[4]

> It goes without saying that we admit that Paul's mysticism was christological. But we maintain that Paul's formula is not: "Christians form one mystical Christ:, but: "Christians have a mystical identity with Christ as a person."[5]

As an exponent of realism, Cerfaux views σῶμα as a "unity, a whole, but never a collectivity."[6] He also denies that σῶμα refers to the social body.[7]

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[1] L. S. Thornton, The Common Life in the Body of Christ, 4th ed. (London: Dacre Press, 1963), p. 441.

[2] Ibid., p. 48. See also p. 314.

[3] L. Cerfaux, The Church in the Theology of St. Paul (New York: Herder & Herder, 1959), p. 270. Cerfaux differs from Robinson in that Robinson stresses the wholeness of Christians and Cerfaux the individuality of Christ to which Christians are united.

[4] Barnabas Mary Ahern, "The Christian's Union With the Body of Christ in Cor, Gal, and Rom," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 23(1961): 200. Cerfaux departs here from F. Prat and E. B. Allo. See Culliton, p. 50.

[5] Cerfaux, p. 269. See also p. 278.

[6] Ibid., p. 273. [7] Ibid.

Cerfaux attempts to understand the way in which the physical body of the individual believer is united with Christ. His solution is that "there is no doubt that the union with Christ, which is thought of as real, is a mystical union, yet it produces a real effect because it spiritualizes us in contact with Christ."[1]

The second category of the corporeal construction may be termed the "gnostic interpretation." E. Käsemann's interpretation of σῶμα Χριστοῦ is influenced by his belief "that Paul conceived the unity between the individual and Christ in terms of the material unity between the body of the giant 'Ur-Anthropos' and the individual light-spirit fragments in gnostic mythology."[2]

Here the idea is that Paul may well have been indirectly, if not directly, influenced by the gnostic concept of the souls of all men participating in one cosmic pneumatic body known as Primal-man.[3] Thus, Käsemann's early work in particular emphasized that Paul's conception of participation in the Body of Christ was a reality with cosmic aspects of Christ's lordship over the visible Body.[4] These points were subsequently developed with

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[1]Ibid., pp. 280-81.

[2]Jewett, p. 217. These views [in Leib und Leib Christi] have been modified somewhat by Käsemann in later works; see Käsemann, p. 103. See also J. P. Sampley, 'And the Two Shall Become One Flesh': A Study of Traditions in Ephesians 5:21-33 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 63-64; A. J. M. Wedderburn, "The Body of Christ and Related Concepts in 1 Corinthians," Scottish Journal of Theology 24(1971): 83-86.

[3]Käsemann, p. 112. See also Ridderbos, pp. 383-84.

[4]E. P. Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison

Käsemann's inclusion of apocalyptic as a major Pauline motif.[1]

The result from this was that Käsemann placed less stress upon anthropology as the centre of Pauline theology. He states in his New Testament Qeustions of Today, "The individual righteousness of God does not, in Paul's understanding, refer primarily to the individual and is not to be understood exclusively in the context of the doctrine of man."[2]

Käsemann attempts to maintain the importance of righteousness by faith by stressing that faith is an individual decision. At the same time, however, he denies the extreme individualism of his former teacher, Bultmann. Thus Käsemann was unable to round-out Bultmann's interpretation. He endeavoured to "develop the concept of 'being with others'."[3] Käsemann asserts that

> it is generally assumed as a matter of course that 'body' is primarily a term describing the human 'self' as person. I would urge against this that what is meant is man as a non-isolable existence, . . . , this earthly existence of ours is always characterized by membership and participation. That forms the existential presupposition for the fact that we as believers can be incorporated into the kingdom of Christ.[4]

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of Patterns of Religion (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), p. 435.

[1]See E. Käsemann, New Testament Questions of Today (London: SCM Press, 1969), pp. 82-137.

[2]Ibid., p. 180.

[3]Gundry, p. 197. See also Nils A. Dahl, "Interpreting Ephesians Then and Now," Currents in Theology and Mission 5(1978): 135.

[4]Käsemann, Perspectives, p. 114.

The result of this is "that Käsemann emphasizes the reference of sōma to man as the object of action from the outside and de-emphasises the reference of sōma to man as the object of his own action."[1] For Käsemann σῶμα Χριστοῦ is then ecclesiologically the environment in which faith lives and man gives God the lordship. It is that expression which he considers "far surpasses the other conceptions of the people of God and the family of God."[2]

Σῶμα Χριστοῦ is therefore in Käsemann's understanding no mere metaphor. He believes that it is important to break away from the Protestant notion that "in describing the church as the body of Christ, Paul, who inclined to bold statements, was using a beautiful metaphor."[3]

Käsemann's contribution is probably in his stress upon the physical reality of the term, which provides for the possibility of man to communicate outside himself with concrete realities.

The third category of the corporeal construction may be termed the "solidarity interpretation." J. A. T. Robinson's conviction that σῶμα should be ecclesiologically interpreted in terms of solidarity has been very influential in the past three decades. The concept stems from the premise outlined in his "Introduction" to The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology, where he writes,

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[1]Gundry, p. 197. [2]Käsemann, Questions, p. 243.

[3]Käsemann, Perspectives, p. 103.

> The redemption of man to-day means his release to become, ... a person, who may find rather than lose himself in the interdependence of the community. . . . The alternative to the 'They' is not the 'I' but the 'We'.[1]

Because Robinson asserts that human existence revolves around the divinely instituted structure of solidarity, he contends that "one could say without exaggeration that the concept of the body forms the keystone of Paul's theology."[2]

Robinson accepts the notion that Paul's understanding of σῶμα was influenced by Old Testament Hebrew anthropological concepts. He conceives of the idea of σῶμα as standing for "the whole body, or, better, the whole person, considered from the point of view of his external, physical existence."[3]

While he agrees that σάρξ and σῶμα have much in common, the latter term "does not mean simply something external to man himself, as something he has. It is what he is. Indeed, σῶμα is the nearest equivalent to our word 'personality'."[4] The conclusion is that "σῶμα stands for man, in the solidarity of creation, as made for God."[5]

Robinson's ecclesiological interpretation of σῶμα Χριστοῦ is a realistic one.[6] Accordingly, the idea of corporateness was alien to Paul and his contemporaries. Thus Paul's ecclesiological usage of the term expresses "something not corporate but corporal."[7]

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[1] J. A. T. Robinson, The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology, Studies in Biblical Theology 5 (London: SCM Press, 1952), p. 8.

[2] Ibid., p. 9. [3] Ibid., pp. 17-18. [4] Ibid., p. 28.

[5] Ibid., p. 31.

[6] Robinson favourably refers to A. Schweitzer, e.g., pp. 47, 43; and L. S. Thornton, e.g., pp. 32, 48, 52, 62, and 70.

[7] Robinson, p. 50.

Consequently, this Pauline terminology is no simple metaphor.

> Paul uses the analogy of the human body to elucidate his teaching that Christians form Christ's body. But the analogy holds because they are in literal fact the risen organism of Christ's person in all its concrete reality.[1]

Robinson suggests that Paul's realistic identification emanated from the Damascus Road encounter where "the appearance on which Paul's whole faith and apostleship was founded was the revelation of the resurrection body of Christ, not as an individual, but as the Christian Community."[2]

Reaction to Robinson's interpretation has been mixed. The Body may well represent his most 'Catholic' work.

Lesslie Newbigin admits his dependence upon Robinson and Cerfaux for his understanding of σῶμα Χριστοῦ.[3] Newbigin summarizes Paul's teaching by positing the following:

> . . . the Christian life is life in the body of Christ, a life which involves the identification of ourselves with His death and resurrection, in faith, baptism, and the Lord's Supper. . . . It is a spiritual body, the body of Christ--the last Adam.[4]

Likewise, T. F. Torrance is indebted to Robinson for much of his interpretation.[5] He suggests that in its ecclesiological setting, σῶμα denotes four truths. First, he believes that "when we speak of the church as Christ's Body we are certainly

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[1]Ibid., p. 51. [2]Ibid., p. 58.

[3]Lesslie Newbigin, The Household of God: Lectures on the Nature of the Church (London: SCM Press, 1953), p. 63.

[4]Ibid., p. 71.

[5]T. F. Torrance, Royal Priesthood, Scottish Journal of Theology Occasional Papers No. 3 (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1955), p. 23.

using analogical language, but we are speaking nevertheless of an ontological fact, that is, of a relation of being."[1] Secondly, Torrance continues by pointing out that the Church as σῶμα Χριστοῦ is distinguished from Christ. He says, "In being the Body of Christ, the Church meets her Lord; she does not prolong Him, but she expresses Him here and now."[2]

Thirdly, he notes the conformity between the ecclesiological Body and Christ the Head. "As the Body of which He is Head the Church participates in His ministry by serving Him in history."[3]

Finally, Torrance states in another work:

> This Church does not exist by itself as a special creation of the Spirit nor does it have an independent life of its own. It is the kingdom and Body of Christ and exists solely because of its organic relation to Him.[4]

The fourth category of the corporeal construction may be termed the "'people of God' interpretation." R. Schnackenburg attempts to understand σῶμα Χριστοῦ on the basis of biblical motifs rather than traditional dogmatic motifs. As a Catholic exegete, Schnackenburg advances the idea that the kingdom of God came with Jesus, but that the fulfillment of that kingdom is yet future. His thrust is in the direction of an eschatology of salvation history. These directives influence Schnackenburg to see the ecclesiological σῶμα as a Pauline derivative of the Old Testament "people of God" motif.[5] He suggests that the

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[1]Ibid., p. 29. [2]Ibid., p. 31. [3]Ibid., p. 35.

[4]Idem, "The Foundation of the Church," Scottish Journal of Theology 16(1963): 127.

[5]According to Schnackenburg, "very probably Paul, trained

Apostle saw the ecclesiological Body of Christ as the legitimate heir of the "people of God" who had historically existed under God's rule. The imagery denotes no individual Christianity, but the Church which serves as the realm of Christ's rule.

> For him [Paul] it is not merely the association of those who believe in Christ, ... His clear and realistic conception of the Holy Spirit who fills every individual believer (1 Cor 6:19) as well as the whole edifice of the Church (cf. Eph 2:22) gave the old idea new richness and depth.[1]

Σῶμα Χριστοῦ, in Schnackenburg's perception, relates to the physical risen body of Christ into which the believer is mystically and really incorporated by means of baptism and the eucharist.

Hans Küng, like Schnackenburg, sees the Body of Christ as the "people of God" placed in history.[3] Küng suggests that the concept of σῶμα Χριστοῦ is related to both the local community and the whole Church. With Schlier, Küng sees that "the Church as the body of Christ represents an imperative which is founded on an indicative."[4] In describing the local community as the Body of Christ it is not viewed by Küng as

> the result of the efforts of individual members of the community, who have formed themselves together into one body and thereby, through their love and desire for unity, constitute the body of Christ. The body of Christ has been constituted by Christ and in this sense pre-exists.[5]

Küng clearly outlines his understanding by stating that "the connection between Christ and the Church as his body is not

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in Jewish theology as he was, had reflected on the 'people of God'." The Church in the New Testament (London: Burns & Oates, 1965), p. 78.

[1]Ibid., p. 83. [2]Ibid., p. 81. [3]Küng, p. 225.

[4]Ibid., p. 229. [5]Ibid.

a physical substantial one, as in Gnosticism nor a symbolic metaphorical relationship such as the Stoics would have understood, but an actual historical relationship in the Old Testament sense."[1]

Küng notes that in Colossians and Ephesians the whole Church is described as σῶμα Χριστοῦ. The indivisibility of Christ and the Church is apparent. Then also, Christ is the origin of the Church and the goal of the Church's growth. Finally, the Church is subject in obedience to Christ.[2]

Küng continues the Roman Catholic perspectives of the nature of the Body of Christ when he advances the following statements--"Christ does not exist without the Church, the Church does not exist without Christ." "Since Christ is entirely present in every congregation of worship, every congregation . . . is in the fullest sense God's ecclesia, Christ's body."[3]

In answering the question, "What then is the relationship between Christ and the Church?" Küng advocates that the Church is not Christ's Body "ontologically and statically, but historically and dynamically."[4]

H. Ridderbos initiates his discussion of the Church as σῶμα Χριστοῦ with a generalization. "The qualification of the church as the body of Christ is a denotation of the special, close relationship and communion that exists between Christ and his church."[5]

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[1]Ibid., p. 230. [2]Ibid. [3]Ibid., pp. 234-35.

[4]Ibid., pp. 237-38. [5]Ridderbos, p. 362.

Ridderbos considers that because of Paul's structure of thinking, this ecclesiological terminology denotes a deeper concept of the Church than purely a practical, metaphorical one.[1] He does, however, deny the postulation by some (Benoit, Percy, Cerfaux) that σῶμα Χριστοῦ identifies the Church as the literal, historical, and glorified Body of Christ.

For Ridderbos the imagery is to be taken as a lucid Christological definition of the "people of God". He completes his chapter on this theme in the following way: "The basic idea of the body of Christ is that all that the church is as the New Testament people of God it is in Christ, and that its historical mode of existence and manifestation in the world, too, must answer to that."[3]

Though perhaps not strictly part of the "people of God" interpretation, Anders Nygren has been categorized here because his emphasis is in a way an extension of the "people of God" theme. Using the Adam and Christ motifs, Nygren affirms that Christ stands at the head of a new humanity; but this is not to be taken in an individualistic way.[4] "The Church is nothing without Christ; but, on the other hand, Christ could not be what he is without the Church, just as Adam could not be Adam unless he were the head of the Old humanity."[5]

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[1]Ibid., p. 370. [2]Ibid., p. 374.

[3]Ibid., p. 395.

[4]A. Nygren, Christ and His Church (London: SPCK, 1957), p. 94.

[5]Ibid.

Nygren's corporeal understanding of σῶμα Χριστοῦ is clearly evident in the following:

> The body of Christ is Christ himself. . . . . The Church is Christ as he is present among and meets us upon earth after his resurrection. . . . . Where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, he will be present in a real way among them.[1]

The metaphorical construction

There are two major interpretations to be discussed within this construction. The first, represented by Ernest Best, is the "corporate personality interpretation." A metaphorical understanding of σῶμα and related expressions is the most traditional view in both Roman Catholic and Protestant circles of scholarship.

In the mid-1950s Best sought to discuss the relationship between the individual and the Church. He denied the validity of taking σῶμα in the Pauline ecclesiastical passages as anything more than a metaphor. He uses the illustration of Israel being called "scattered sheep." He makes the application as follows:

> Israel is "this" or "that"--and the references could be indefinitely extended--but no one seriously believes that in these references anything more than a metaphor is implied. . . . . So it is in the case of the description of the Church as the Body of Christ.[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 96. Börnkamm sounds similar when he writes, "Important passages, . . . speak not just metaphorically of the church: it is not something like a body, but--in a real and actual sense--it is Christ's body." Paul (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1971), p. 194.

[2] Ernest Best, One Body in Christ: A Study in the Relationship of the Church to Christ in the Epistles of the Apostle Paul (London: SPCK, 1955), p. 99.

Like Bultmann, Robinson, and others, Best is influenced by Old Testament Hebrew conceptions. For him the idea of the Hebrew corporate personality is the foundation of Paul's metaphorical use of σῶμα.[1] The "basic idea [is that] of Christians . . . . forming a corporate personality with Christ."[2] Best illustrates this by reference to the Damascus Road encounter where Christ identifies with Christians.[3]

Perhaps the most innovative feature of Best's study is his suggestion that σῶμα as an ecclesiological metaphor relates to the structure of the Church rather than its work. He states: "The relationship of the church to the world outside is never discussed. . . . Body . . . was a metaphor which looked inward and not outward."[4] In this statement Best sets himself over against those scholars who consider the Body of Christ as "the means of Christ's work in the world; it is his hands and feet, his mouth and voice."[5]

Best sees the Body of Christ as a fellowship with "Christians, rather than the church . . . the means by which Christ works in the world . . ."[6] To think otherwise is to see the Church as an extension of the incarnation.

The second interpretation within the metaphorical construction is the "practical interpretation." P. S. Minear

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[1]Ibid., p. 203. [2]Ibid., p. 99. [3]Ibid., p. 184.

[4]Ibid., p. 188.

[5]A. Richardson, Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament (London: SCM Press, 1958), p. 256.

[6]Best, p. 201.

considers σῶμα as a practical ecclesiological image which varies in its meaning according to the situation. "Here the term 'body' has one meaning; there it is quite another."[1]

Though σῶμα is used practically and variously, the relationship between σῶμα Χριστοῦ and Christ is often one of more than simple identity.[2] Minear points out that Paul is not systematic in his discussion, therefore exegetes cannot "conceptualise" and "mechanically transfer to the church whatever Paul has said about Christ's body."[3]

Σῶμα Χριστοῦ, as used by Paul, particularly in Romans and 1 Corinthians, promotes the concepts of participation, oneness, unity, and societal interdependence.

> In Paul's mind the issue resolved itself into a matter of understanding the full correlation between the oneness of the Holy Spirit, as the source of all gifts, and the oneness of the church, as the area where the gifts were apportioned individually.[4]

Minear detects a shift of emphasis by Paul in Ephesians and Colossians. In Colossians the image is used to describe "the community whose life was 'hid with Christ in God,'"[5] and the unity that existed between Jew and Gentile. "The image of the body of Christ thus served as a way of describing a social revolution."[6] Ephesians carries the largest concentration of the use of σῶμα because the dominating concern is the character of the Church. Here the Body image indicates "the completeness of the new communion."[7]

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[1] P. S. Minear, Images of the Church in the New Testament (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), pp. 173-74.

[2] Ibid., p. 177. [3] Ibid., p. 189. [4] Ibid., p. 190.
[5] Ibid., p. 210. [6] Ibid., p. 211. [7] Ibid., p. 214.

Minear posits that the images used by Paul are effective pointers or aids that identify the reality of the Church. He concludes thus:

> If we could comprehend the same reality, we should make full use of the body image, but we should supplement it with many other images, and we should perceive the whole mystery of God's purpose in Christ before using either the term "body" or the term "church".[1]

Barth makes five observations regarding the use of σῶμα in its ecclesiastical construction which indicate he holds to the metaphorical category:

1. It is not advisable to build an ecclesiology on this one term
2. Σῶμα is not a metaphor when used in conjunction with the life, death, and resurrection of the historical Jesus
3. A metaphor is involved when the Church is identified with σῶμα
4. The term denotes living Christ's rulership
5. Σῶμα Χριστοῦ concerns the local church in its visible human frailty[2]

Barth warns against using the metaphor as the basis of a 'high' ecclesiology since the term "is a Christological statement about what Christ is and does; it is not an ecclesiastical self-glorification."[3] He does qualify his position by stating

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[1]Ibid., p. 249.

[2]Barth, "A Chapter on the Church," pp. 142-49.

[3]Ibid., p. 145. Elsewhere Barth states, "This then is the basic meaning of the equation, . . . The Church is the . . . risen Christ." The Broken Wall: A Study of the Epistle to the Ephesians (Valley Forge, Pennsylvania: Judson Press, 1959), p. 116. See also William R. Nelson, "Pauline Anthropology: Its Relation to Christ and the Church," Interpretation 14(1960): 24.

that although Paul uses the term metaphorically, the Apostle is not denying "that Christ and his people do 'realistically,' 'ontically,' 'literally,' belong together."[1]

In his commentary on Ephesians, Barth shows his disregard for those who are unwilling to consider the Church's designation, Body of Christ, as a metaphor.[2] He also notes that the imagery "does not monopolize the discussion and perhaps does not even have supreme position."[3] Thus he concludes that

> the essential role ascribed in this definition to Christ, to his self-manifestation, to mission, and to the world is certainly preferable to the obscure term "mystical body." . . . . With it are excluded any reliance upon individual status, habits, or salvation and every collective egotism or imperialist presumption of the church and her members.[4]

E. Schweizer also interprets σῶμα Χριστοῦ in a functional way. The term σῶμα stands for man in his totality. He believes that in the physical individual body, the indicatives and imperatives of salvation meet in actuality. By extension, σῶμα Χριστοῦ is viewed likewise. He concludes:

> . . . the body-of-Christ concept stresses first of all the unity between Christ and his church and between the members themselves. The normal usage of the term 'body,' however, points [with] Paul to man's responsibility towards God and his fellowman.[5]

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[1]Barth, "A Chapter on the Church," p. 146. However, J. Christiaan Beker goes somewhat further. "There is a movement from metmaphor to ontological reality in the body image." Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), p. 307.

[2]Barth, Ephesians, p. 199. [3]Ibid. [4]Ibid.

[5]E. Schweizer, "The Church as the Missionary Body of Christ," New Testament Studies 8(1961): 10. He states elsewhere, "The 'body of Christ' is therefore first of all the realm of blessing in which the crucified Lord, and the realm of dominion in which the risen Lord, continues to work." Church Order in the New Testament (London: SCM Press, 1961), p. 92.

In his Theological Dictionary of the New Testament article, where he discusses σῶμα, Schweizer clarifies the nature and the basis of this unity which results in service. Christ and the Church are incorporated into salvation-history. This incorporation is determined by the activity of Christ.

One commentator assesses Schweizer in the following way: "Therefore his designation of the church as the 'body of Christ' can and must make it possible to interpret this phrase as meaning that the church is the manifestation of Christ to the world."[2]

Within this practical category of interpretation of σῶμα Χριστοῦ the Seventh-day Adventist understanding finds accommodation.

An initial indication that the Seventh-day Adventist definition is a pragmatic one is found in Article Thirteen of the "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists" which explains σῶμα Χριστοῦ in terms of unity.[3] In a discussion of this Article elsewhere, the unity theme between members is highlighted.

> The apostle Paul uses the metaphor of the body to illustrate unity. . . . . As one body with many members the church is called from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.[4]

W. R. Beach who writes on the nature of the Church defines the Body of Christ in the terms of its works.

> This universal church is Christ's body (1 Cor. 12:12-27). . . . This universal church identifies with God's mission

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[1]Idem, TDNT, 7:1069. [2]Barth, Ephesians, p. 198.

[3]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual ([Washington: Review & Herald Publishing Association], 1981), p. 37.

[4]"Unity in the Body of Christ," Adventist Review, undated issue, p. 15.

> of salvation. On earth the total church serves as the body of Christ in a worldwide ministry.[1]

R. Dederen writing on the same topic believes that the Body of Christ, "probably more than any other symbol, underscores the degree to which Christ fills His ekklēsia."[2] The functional and unifying definitions of the Church as Christ's Body are also apparent in Dederen. "He [Christ] continually distributes in His body gifts of ministries. . . . There is no room for division or schism since it is 'one body.'[3]

Such an ecclesiastical definition is understandable because in Article Eleven of the "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists" it is stated--"It [the Church] exists to serve the world."[4]

In spite of these practical directions the following two concluding statements may indicate deeper and more corporeal yearnings in certain quarters:

> Because Christ is the head of the Church, His Body, the church is given solemn authority . . . . The church speaks in the name of Christ.[5]

> . . . . for the New Testament writers the church is no more separable from Christ than Christ is separable from God.[6]

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[1] W. R. Beach, "What and Where Is the Church?" Adventist Review, 11 January 1979, p. 38.

[2] R. Dederen, "Nature of the Church," Ministry, February 1978, p. 24C.

[3] Ibid., pp. 24C-24D.

[4] "The Church," Adventist Review, undated issue, p. 13.

[5] Ibid. [6] Dederen, p. 24D.

Conclusion

The foregoing survey has initially exposed two truths. First, σῶμα Χριστοῦ, however interpreted, does describe some type of living, unique reality.[1] Secondly, the imagery cannot logically be interpreted literally, but must be seen figuratively--somewhere between the opposites of a metaphorical understanding and an ontological understanding. As Berkouwer has succinctly commented, "The question is not 'real or not real?' but is directed to the nature of the reality that is pointed out" by the imagery.[2]

While those who have made vital comment upon σῶμα and σῶμα Χριστοῦ fall into one of three broad basic interpretative positions, it is obvious that the contemporary discussions favour a coporeal understanding. The survey has shown that whichever interpretation one favours, the others also have many positive contributions which should not be neglected in the ongoing study.

The scope of this survey indicates that in this Pauline ecclesiological terminology there exists one of the most expressive descriptions of Church found anywhere in the New Testament.[3]

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[1]Geddes MacGregor, Corpus Christi: The Nature of the Church According to the Reformed Tradition (London: Macmillian 1959), p. 161.

[2]Berkouwer, p. 81. Cf. J. R. Nelson, The Realm of Redemption (London: Epworth Press, 1967), p. 101.

[3]Gundry believes that the Pauline metaphors "stand for a reality understandable but incomprehensible" (p. 241).

CHAPTER III

THE GENESIS OF SŌMA CHRISTOU

Introduction

Contemporary interpretations of σωμα Χριστου are influenced by three factors. First, the emergence of the Religionsgeschichtliche (history of religions) school has been instrumental in the progressive re-evaluation of Paul and his literature.[1] Secondly, scholarly debate regarding Paul's social, cultural, and religious heritage has affected interpretative discussions.[2] Thirdly, the present situation has been stimulated by the recognition from the 1920s onwards of the theological importance of σῶμα isolated from Χριστοῦ.[3]

These factors are of significance since together they have led to the study of the origin of the term σῶμα as used by Paul. In turn, this investigation for many scholars is the key to their interpretation of σῶμα Χριστοῦ.

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[1]Ridderbos, p. 16. See Hans Conzelmann, "Current Problems in Pauline Research," in New Testament Issues, ed. Richard Batey (London: SCM Press, 1970), pp. 132-4; Johannes Munck, "Pauline Research Since Schweitzer," in The Bible in Modern Scholarship, ed. J. Philip Hyatt (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1965), pp. 168-69.

[2]W. C. van Unnik, Tarsus or Jerusalem: The City of Paul's Youth (London: Epworth Press, 1962).

[3]Küng, p. 225. See also Sampley, p. 62.

Three major views as to the genesis of Paul's usage of σωμα have emerged. The options are Hellenism, Judaism, and Gnosticism.[2] Jewett also suggests a fourth category, namely, that the terminology is considered by some a unique Pauline creation.[3] The following material outlines each of these possibilities in detail in an attempt to further understand the Pauline usage of σῶμα Χριστοῦ.[4]

The Hellenistic Origin

Questions regarding the Hellenistic origin of σῶμα must be considered in the larger context of the overall extent to which Paul's life and literature were influenced by Hellenism. The Hellenistic approach to Paul comes as a legacy of the "history of religions" school and has been advocated by such researchers as T. Schmid, H. Schlier, A. Wikenhauser, W. L. Knox, G. D. Kilpatrick, T. W. Manson, and J. J. Meuzelaar.[5] It is basically

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[1]Jewett states that "almost every N.T. scholar in the last thirty years has found it necessary to deal with this question in one way or another" (p. 228).

[2]These categories are generally accepted by scholars. See, for example, Josef Ernst, "From the Local Community to the Great Church," Biblical Theology Bulletin 6(1976): 248-50; George Howard, "The Head/Body Metaphors of Ephesians," New Testament Studies 29(1974): 350; Richard A. Batey, "Jewish Gnosticism and the 'Hieros Gamos' of Eph. V:21-33," New Testament Studies 10 (1963-64): 121-27; Barth, "A Chapter on the Church," pp. 137-38, Küng, p. 225; Ridderbos, pp. 383-85.

[3]Jewett, p. 245.

[4]Howard underscores the importance of this task with the words, "crucial to an understanding of the metaphors as well as the theology of the Letters as a whole is the background which they reflect" (p. 350).

[5]Jewett, pp. 228-30.

contended that Paul, "apart from the few years of his stay in Jerusalem, lived constantly in a purely heathen environment and must have been accessible to its influences."[1]

There have been many lines of evidence researched by scholars to substantiate the view that Paul was primarily influenced by Hellenism. Scholars have disputed for years over the extent of Hellenization in the first century A.D. and the effect of the Hellenistic environment upon Paul. W. C. van Unnik believes it is important to determine when and where Paul came under the most persuasive influence of Hellenism. "It makes a radical difference whether he was, as it were, drenched through with Hellenism unconsciously in his early years, as (contrary to Acts 22 and 26) is most often suggested, or consciously learned to see it first with the eyes of a Jew learned in the law."[2] Van Unnik ultimately concludes that Paul relocated in Jerusalem as a young child.[3]

G. Börnkamm, H. J. Schoeps, and M. Dibelius illustrate those who not only view Tarsus as Paul's birthplace but also his home until at least late teenage years. The longer the time spent in Tarsus the more probable is the conjecture that Paul was thoroughly conversant with the atmosphere of Hellenism.[4]

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[1]H. J. Schoeps, Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), p. 15. See also W. D. Davies, Invitation to the New Testament: A Guide to Its Main Witnesses (London: Darton, Longmann and Todd, 1967), pp. 241-43.

[2]van Unnik, p. 58. [3]Ibid., p. 52.

[4]Few scholars seem to refer to the potential influence of Hellenism upon Paul during his stay in Tarsus after his conversion and before his call by Barnabas to help him at Antioch.

Börnkamm demonstrates that Tarsus was a flourishing trading city and a centre of Greek culture.[1] Dibelius is of the opinion that the civilization of Hellenism in the time of Paul offered such things as universalism, religious and cultural syncretism, one common language, and secure travel along well-used trade routes.[2] Schoeps calls the Cilician port of Tarsus the "Athens of Asia Minor" and believes that

> many traits of his [Paul's] world of ideas are more easily understandable if we may assume the associative influence of the apostle's youthful memories, which will have gained a new colouring from similar travel impressions received later.[3]

The biographical material relating to Paul as found in Acts and the Pauline literature is also used as evidence for a Hellenized Paul. Samuel Sandmel notes that scholars have detected that "material in Acts of the Apostles about Paul seems out of character with the data about him which his Epistles contain."[4] Börnkamm states that the Lukan biography of Paul "clearly reveals Luke's inclination to make Paul an out-and-out Jew."[5] E. R. Goodenough proposes that the account of Paul in Acts is basically fictional. Goodenough considers Paul far more Hellenized than Luke seems to allow--"we should suppose that Acts was interested

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[1]Börnkamm, p. 3.

[2]M. Dibelius, Paul (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953), pp. 16-17.

[3]Schoeps, pp. 17-18.

[4]Samuel Sandmel, Judaism and Christian Beginnings (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 308.

[5]Börnkamm, p. 3.

to pull Paul closer to Judaism than he actually was."[1] The necessity for such a conviction seems to stem from the presupposition that any statements promoting a significant degree of Jewishness in Paul, such as in Acts, cannot be tolerated since to do so would reduce the extent to which Paul was influenced by Hellenism. W. D. Davies concludes:

> In all this one cannot help feeling that the New Testament is being manipulated in the interest of theories. There seems to be no adequate reason for rejecting the evidence of Acts and of the Epistles.[2]

Further evidence for a Hellenized Paul has been noted in the Apostle's abilities with Greek. Even Davies admits to his writings revealing "Hellenistic influence in their terminology, form, and content and a mastery of Greek which makes them literary classics."[3]

Several scholars have attempted to use Philo of Alexandria as a witness to Paul's high level of Hellenization. A. T. Hanson

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[1]Erwin R. Goodenough and A. T. Kraabel, "Paul and the Hellenisation of Christianity," in Religions in Antiquity, ed. Jacob Neusner, (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1968), p. 29. Elsewhere Goodenough suggests that "Acts seems to be a piece of deliberate propoganda." See "The Perspective of Acts," in Studies in Luke-Acts, ed. Leander E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn (London: SPCK, 1968), p. 54. On Paul and Acts see Samuel Sandmel, The Genius of Paul: A Study in History (New York: Schocken Books, 1970), pp. 120-62.

[2]Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology (London: SPCK, 1948), p. 2. Cf. H. G. Wood "The Conversion of St. Paul: Its Nature, Antecedents and Consequences," New Testament Studies 1(1954-55): 276-82.

[3]The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine (Berkley, California: University of California Press, 1974), p. 164. See Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, quoted in Börnkamm, pp. 9-10. Victor Paul Furnish believes the fact that "Paul on occasion finds it necessary to emphasize and document his Jewishness perhaps suggests that at least some of his readers would

notes "the tendency of some scholars to portray Paul as a sort of Christian version of Philo."[1] It is understandable for scholars seeking a Hellenized Paul to turn to Philo since, not only was he a Jew of the Diaspora, but literary evidence also exists to show that Philo was influenced to a considerable extent by Greek attitudes. With regard to Philo's eschatology, T. F. Glasson says "there is no need to say much about Philo and his teaching, as his debt to Greek thought is beyond question."[2] Sandmel states more generally that his "own viewpoint can be stated in the following way: I believe that those who regard Philo as thoroughly Hellenized are right."[3]

The logic of the argument put forward by certain scholars is that if Philo was himself Hellenized and parallels between the thought of Philo and Paul can be demonstrated, then Paul may be Hellenized in the same way as Philo.[4]

By advancing the above lines of evidence in an attempt to demonstrate Paul's dependancy upon Hellenism, certain scholars

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not think of him first of all against this background." Theology and Ethics in Paul (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968), p. 44.

[1]A. T. Hanson, Studies in Paul's Technique and Theology (London: SPCK, 1974), p. 205.

[2]T. F. Glasson, Greek Influence in Jewish Eschatology (London: SPCK, 1961), p. 48.

[3]Samuel Sandmel, Philo of Alexandria: An Introduction (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 147.

[4]Idem, A Jewish Understanding of the New Testament (New York: University Publishers, 1960), p. 48. For a discussion of the differences between Paul and Philo see Sandmel, The First Christian Century in Judaism and Christianity: Certainties and Uncertainties (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 129-30.

have taken a further step. They believe, since Paul was Hellenized, that he not only knew of the references to σῶμα in the classical writings but he was indebted to the Stoics for his particular usage of the term σῶμα Χριστοῦ.[1]

There are those scholars such as Käsemann, Schweizer, and Barth who, while recognizing a certain Stoic influence, believe that this explanation is not wholly satisfactory.[2] F. C. Grant does not believe Paul directly or knowingly borrowed from the Stoics: "The theory has steadily crumbled under the stress of modern research. True, he used a few Stoic terms, but so did everyone else."[3]

In spite of the criticisms it cannot be denied that a remarkable similarity between the classical and Pauline usage of the term is apparent.[4] The following quotations from various classical writers demonstrate the similarity.

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[1]Examples of the scholars who see Paul influenced in his use of σῶμα by the Stoics include: Schmid, Schlier, Wikenhauser, Kilpatrick, Manson, Meuzelaar as outlined by Jewett, pp. 229-30. See also W. L. Knox, St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939), p. 111; Conzelmann, An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament, p. 261; Beker, p. 307; Cerfaux, p. 262; Sampley, pp. 65-66; George S. Worgul, "People of God, Body of Christ: Pauline Ecclesiological Contrasts," Biblical Theological Bulletin 12(1982): 26.

[2]See "The Church as the Missionary Body of Christ," p. 5; "A Chapter on the Church," p. 135; Perspectives, p. 103.

[3]F. C. Grant, "The Historical Paul," in Early Christian Origins, ed. Allen Wilgren (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961), p. 52.

[4]For an extensive collection of classical references to σῶμα, see A. Wikenhauser, Die Kirch als der mystische Leib Christi nach dem Apostel Paulus, 2d ed. (Munster, Westphalia: Aschendorff, 1940); Schweizer, TDNT, 7:1025-41; Gundry, pp. 9-15.

Aesop's famous fable of the body and its members was appropriated by Menius Agrippa and is recorded in antiquity by Plutarch and others. The first sentence of the fable reads:

> It once happened, . . . , that all the other members of a man mutinied against the stomach, which they accused as the only idle uncontributing part in the whole body, while the rest were put to hardships and the expense of much labour to supply and minister to its appetites.[1]

Plato, in his discussions with Glaucon and Socrates regarding the greatest good to the State writes--"as in the body, when but a finger of one of us is hurt, the whole frame . . . feels the hurt and sympathizes all together with the part affected."[2]

Aristotle in outlining the pre-eminence of the state over the individual invokes the 'body' terminology. "Further, the state is by nature clearly prior to the family and to the individual, since the whole is of necessity prior to the part; for example, if the whole body be destroyed, there will be no foot or hand."[3]

Tacitus the historian reflects the thoughts of one Gallus in the following way:

> Then Gallus again . . . said that the question had not been asked with the intention of dividing what could not be separated, but to convince him [Caesar] by his own admission that the body of the State was one, and must be directed by a single mind.[4]

Though not a Greek, the work of the philosopher and politician Seneca, who held prominence for a period in Rome, is

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[1]Plutarch Coriolanus 6; see also Livy II. 32. 8-12.

[2]Plato Republic V. 462. [3]Aristotle Politics I. 1253[a].

[4]Tacitus The Annals I. 12.

noteworthy. J. N. Sevenster accepts that "a suitable starting point for a comparison between Seneca and Paul in this respect is the metaphor of the body used by both of them."[1] Seneca pens the following words:

> I can lay down for mankind a rule, in short compass, for our duties and human relationships: all that you behold, that which comprises both god and man, is one--we are parts of one great body.[2]

The Judaistic Origin

The above discussion, regarding Paul as one who is thoroughly Hellenized and who uses Stoic terminology, must be assessed in the light of the scholarly discussion which favours Paul as a Jew whose use of σῶμα orignates in some way within Judaism. Any remarks concerning Judaism as the source of Paul's terminology must initially address the question of the nature of Paul's Judaism. Davies suggests that scholars have assessed Paul in the light of Hellenistic Judaism, Apocalyptic and Rabbinic Judaism, that is, Palestinian Judaism, and more recently the Essene community.[3]

Included among those who consider Paul a Hellenized Jew are E. P. Sanders, S. Sandmel, H. J. Schoeps, G. Bornkamm, F. C. Grant, V. P. Furnish, J. Klausner, and C. J. G. Montefiore. This

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[1] J. N. Sevenster, Paul and Seneca (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1961), p. 170.

[2] Seneca Epistulae Morales 95. 51-52.

[3] W. D. Davies, Invitation to the New Testament, pp. 241-53. E. A. Judge ("St. Paul and Classical Society") rightly states: "The trouble with Paul has always been to put him in his place," quoted in Colin Hickling, "On Putting Paul in His Place," in What About the New Testament: Essays in Honour of Christopher

position regarding Paul is, in many ways, a modification of the purely Hellenistic approach to Paul. Thus scholars such as those mentioned here, while recognizing the importance of the Hellenistic environment upon Paul, also accept that certain Jewish influences must have been at work as well. Sandmel in a representative statement says "It seems more reasonable to conclude that his [Paul's] own personal background was not Judean Pharisaism, but a Jewish Diaspora milieu into which Hellenistic ideas had deeply penetrated."[1]

Paul is considered to be a Hellenistic Jew by many of these scholars and others because not only was he born at Tarsus in the Diaspora, but he grew up in an environment of Judaism which is claimed to be considerably different to the Judaism of Palestine. Börnkamm outlines some of the apparent differences.

> To all intents and purposes, the temple had been superseded by the synagogue; sacrifice by the exposition of the Torah, and the priests by scribes and lawyers . . . , Hellenistic Judaism developed a way of thinking in terms of the whole world and mankind, in which even the language and ideas of Hellenistic pagan wisdom-teaching were accorded a place.[2]

It is suggested by Börnkamm that Paul, though a member of the Jewish faith, because of his ancestry, education, and

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Evans, ed. Morna Hooker and Colin Hickling (London: SCM Press, 1975), p. 76. This issue carries over into the relationship between so-called Judaistic and Hellenistic Christianity. See Raymond E. Brown, "Not Jewish Christianity and Gentile Christianity but Types of Jewish/Gentile Christianity," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 45(1983): 74-79.

[1]Sandmel, Judaism and Christian Beginnings, p. 336.

[2]Börnkamm, p. 8.

gifts, reflected certain Hellenistic characteristics. Paul uses Stoic concepts, e.g., freedom, reason, duty, virtue. He displays a mastery of the diatribe discourse used by itinerant philosophers and preachers in the synagogue. As well, Paul evidences a missionary zeal and a liberalism to certain demands of the Torah which according to Börnkamm have their roots in Hellenistic Judaism.[1]

A. van Roon accepts Meuzelaar's belief that at least in Ephesians, Paul's use of σῶμα has its origins in Hellenistic Judaism.[2] He supports his case by reference to Philo's statement--"The activity of the high priest is so directed that people of all ages and from all parts of the nation, as if belonging to a single body, are gathered together."[3]

Van Roon advances the thought that this use of σῶμα was gradually accepted by Rabbinic Judaism since in the second century A. D. Rabbi Simon ben Jochai is said to have compared Israel to a body.[4]

By way of comparison numerous scholars have a tendency to view Paul more as a Palestinian Jew, in spite of recognizable Hellenistic influences. For them Paul's terminology grows out of a traditional Jewish matrix. A. Richardson, R. P. Martin, A. T. Hanson, J. C. Beker M. Barth, E. E. Ellis, H. Ridderbos, W. D.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 9-10.

[2] A. van Roon, The Authenticity of Ephesians (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1974), p. 303.

[3] De specialibus 131, quoted in van Roon, p. 303 n.2.

[4] Ibid.

Davies, R. H. Gundry, J. A. T. Robinson, and A. Schweitzer, all conclude that Paul is predominantly influenced in this way.[1]

Evidence attempting to support the argument for a Palestinian Paul is considerable. Paul's apparent use of rabbinic methods of exegesis was recently noted by Rabbi Cohn-Sherbok.

> In proclaiming his Christian message, he employed standard techniques of Scriptural exegesis, occasionally even using some of the rules of rabbinic hermeneutics. In this sense Paul's teaching and preaching are rooted in Pharisaic Judaism.[2]

In countering Montefiore's position, Davies advances the idea that, while care must be taken in reconstructing first century Palestinian Judaism from rabbinic literature of the second and third century A.D., Paul's use of apocalypticism and mysticism have their origins in Palestinian Rabbinic Judaism.[3]

Davies further contends that to deny the full import of such scriptural evidence as found in Gal 1:13-14, Phil 3:5-6 and even the material of Acts 9:1,21-40; 23:6 is to deny significant biographical material which

> points to the fact that Paul was not only a Jew but a Pharisaic Jew, ... He was no inferior product of the Diaspora but one bred and nourished in Israel. The

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[1]See Patrick Henry, New Directions in New Testament Study (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979), pp. 159-61; R. P. Martin, "An Epistle in Search of a Life-Setting," Expository Times 79(1965): 296-302.

[2]Rabbi Dan Cohn-Sherbok, "Paul and Rabbinic Exegesis," Scottish Journal of Theology 35(1982): 132. See also James A. Fischer, "Pauline Literary Forms and Thought Patterns," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 39(1977): 216-17.

[3]Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, pp. 8-15. Cf. E. P. Sanders, "Patterns of Religion in Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: A Holistic Method of Comparison," Harvard Theological Review 66(1973): 476.

picture of Paul as a Hellenistic Jew has to be abandoned.[1]

Ridderbos sees Paul appealing "again and again to the Old Testament and to his Jewish origin" for his preaching and doctrine.[2] Ridderbos and the majority of others who view Paul as a Palestinian Jew would in essence agree with Birger Pearson's conclusion that Paul's "own theology is critical of Hellenistic-Jewish wisdom speculation. Paul's theology reflects the influence of an apocalyptically-oriented Pharisaism."[3]

There are also a few scholars such as L. Goppelt who view Paul as being more eclectic. Goppelt states: "Thus Paul's background combined in an unusual way the elements of the Hellenistic world, the Jewish Diaspora and the Pharisaic rabbinism."[4]

Scholars who view Paul as a Jew, particularly a Palestinian one, recognize that the Hebraic concept of the corporate personality and rabbinic speculation about the body of Adam in late Jewish literature may provide the immediate source of Paul's σῶμα terminology. Richardson writes, "It is this Hebraic

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[1]Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 249. Cf. Sandmel, The First Christian Century, p. 127. Davies does qualify his position by stating that one "shall not seek to deny all Hellenistic influence upon him." Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 1. Patrick Henry queries, "Is there symbolic value in the fact that Paul's birthplace, Tarsus, lies between Athens and Jerusalem, but is closer to Jerusalem?" (p. 161). Here Henry reveals his personal preference.

[2]Ridderbos, p. 36.

[3]"Hellenistic Jewish Speculation and Paul," in Aspects of Wisdom in Judaism and Early Christianity, ed. Robert L. Wilgren (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1975), p. 59.

[4]Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1970), p. 72.

conception of the one and the many, the Hebraic view of what we call 'personality' which lies behind the conception."[1] M. Barth, F. W. Dillistone, C. H. Dodd, E. Best, P. Benoit, and O. Cullmann, among others, are in basic accord with Richardson's thought.[2]

Robinson points out that a Hebrew equivalent for σῶμα is not present in the Old Testament[3] because the Hebrew mind did not contrast bodily form and bodily matter. They did not differentiate between the one and the many, that is, the whole and the parts; neither did they distinguish, as such, between the body and the soul. As well as this, Hebrew thought placed little emphasis upon the definition of the boundary of a human body which separates a person from another person or object.[4] He is also of the opinion that Paul's anthropology is definitely rooted in the Old Testament.[5] Thus it is accepted by many that Paul's understanding of Jewish anthropology provides him with his characteristic usage of σῶμα.

Schweizer and Davies represent those who extend the corporate personality idea further and see the Adam motif as

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[1]Richardson, p. 254; Beker notes the incorporation aspects of the motif (p. 309).

[2]Jewett, p. 237.

[3]Robinson suggests that the closest Hebrew equivalent is basar which is essentially taken as 'flesh' and usually translated σάρξ in the LXX (p. 12).

[4]Ibid., pp. 13-15.

[5]Ibid., p. 11.

foundational to Paul's use of σῶμα. In late Jewish literature, up to the third century A.D., evidence is presented that rabbinic speculation of a much earlier time conceived of Adam as a gigantic mass (gōlem) having included in his mass a predetermined number of souls.[1] Paul, it is believed, knew of this speculation and drew upon it for his own purposes.

Schweizer sees Paul's use of σῶμα Χριστοῦ rooted partly in the "idea of the patriarch [Adam] determining the destiny of the tribe" and partly in the Stoic use of the term as well as in the theological concept of living 'in Christ.'[2] Along somewhat similar lines, Schweizer advances that the Jewish concept of many-in-one is influential.[3]

Davies emphasizes the Adam speculation influence upon Paul. "Was it not natural then, that Paul when he thought of the new humanity being incorporated 'in Christ' should have conceived of it as the 'body' of the Second Adam.[4]

H. J. Schoeps, H. Küng, R. Jewett and D. M. Stanley are among those scholars who subscribe in some degree to the Adam motif as being influential upon Paul.

> The Jewish body of Adam idea does not provide us with an exact parallel to Paul's σῶμα Χριστοῦ concept. But

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[1]Jewett, pp. 241-44.

[2]Schweizer, "The Church as the Missionary Body of Christ," p. 5. See also S. F. B. Bedale, "The Theology of the Church," in Studies in Ephesians, ed. F. L. Cross (London: A. R. Mowbray, 1956), p. 72.

[3]Ridderbos, p. 386. See also Bedale, pp. 68-70.

[4]Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 57.

> it is a definite analogy to Pauline usage, . . . , it is appropriate to conclude that it probably influenced Paul.[1]

Apart from Palestinian Judaism, it is suggested by such researchers as D. Flusser, that the theology of the Qumran community has exerted influence upon John the Evangelist, the author of Hebrews, and Paul.[2]

Flusser concludes his discussion of the parallels between New Testament and Qumran literature with the assertion that "all this means practically that the whole body of ideas described above could have come into Christianity only from the Qumran sect."[3] He does qualify this connection with the thought that the body of ideas may have passed through several groups before being assimilated into the New Testament writings.[4]

William Sanford La Sor takes note of the scholars who have detected a "striking similarity" between Qumran and Pauline theology.[5] Justification by faith (Paul: Gal 3 cf. Qumran: 1 Qp

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[1]Jewett, pp. 241, 245; D. M. Stanley, "Reflections on the Church in the New Testament," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 25(1963): 396.

[2]David Flusser, "The Dead Sea Sect and Pre-Pauline Christianity," in Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls, ed. Chain Rabin and Yigael Yadin, 2d ed. (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1965), p. 216.

[3]Ibid., p. 265. Matthew Black advances the idea that if one does not define Essenism too narrowly, i.e., exclusively as the Dead Sea community, then the Christian Church may be a "child of Essenism." Matthew Black, ed., The Scrolls and Christianity (London: SPCK, 1969), pp. 98-99. See also M. Wilcox, "Dualism, Gnosticism, and other Elements in the Pre-Pauline Tradition," in The Scrolls and Christianity, ed. Matthew Black (London: SPCK, 1969), pp. 83-96.

[4]Flusser, p. 265. Sanders questions Flusser's methodology and conclusion (Paul and Palestinian Judaism, pp. 15-16).

[5]William Sanford La Sor, The Dead Sea Scrolls and the

Hab 8:1-3), the terms "flesh" and "spirit" (Paul: Col 2: 11-23 cf. Qumran: 1Qp Hab 9:2; 1 Qs 3:13-4:26), and the use of "mystery" (Paul: 2 Thess 2:7 cf. Qumran: 1QH 5:36) are illustrative of the many suggested parallels.[1]

According to La Sor, M. Dupont-Sommer accepts the Qumran psalmist's word "fabric" (1QH 7:9) to be taken as "my body." Dupont-Sommer believes it is "easy to slip from one idea to the other, from that of the body to that of the Church" as discussed by Paul in Ephesians.[2] He does, however, accept that in 1QH 7:4 mabniti clearly is used as a figure of the body.[3]

K. G. Kuhn, however, insists that the "head-body" concept as evident in Eph 5:22-6:9 is undetectable in any Qumran literature.[4] F. Mussner in discussing the idea of "unitedness" (yhd) in Qumran material at 1 QH 3:21 and 1 QH 11:7 writes:

> This term inevitably reminds one of the 'one body' in Eph. . . . It is hardly necessary to point out that the comparison between yhd and 'one body' does no more than draw our attention to a material parallel.[5]

New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1972), p. 168. Considerable research has been undertaken to endeavour to show the affinity between the Qumran and Ephesian literature. See Barth, Ephesians, pp. 18-21; Karl George Kuhn, "The Epistle to the Ephesians in the Light of the Qumran Texts," and Franz Mussner, "Contributions Made by Qumran to the Understanding of the Epistle to the Ephesians," in Paul and Qumran: Studies in New Testament Exegesis, ed. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1968), pp. 115-31 and 159-78 respectively.

[1]La Sor, pp. 169, 173, 177. See also Walter Grundmann, "The Teacher of Righteousness of Qumran and the Question of Justification by Faith in the Theology of the Apostle Paul," in Murphy-O'Connor, pp. 85-114; W. D. Davies, "Paul and the Dead Sea Scrolls: Flesh and Spirit"; and Joseph Coppens, "'Mystery' in the Theology of Saint Paul and Its Parallels at Qumran," in The Scrolls and the New Testament, ed. Krister Stendahl (New York: Harper, 1967), pp. 132-82.

[2]Dupont-Sommer quoted by La Sor, p. 178. [3]Ibid.

[4]Kuhn, p. 131. [5]Mussner, p. 178.

Jewett goes further in stating that the Qumran materials "do not reveal anything like the Pauline σῶμα category."[1]

After an extensive discussion of the issue La Sor summarizes his position in the following way:

> There seems to be no reason to suppose that Paul was directly influenced by Qumran thought. It is possible that he was influenced by a stream of Judaism that also touched Qumran.[2]

The Gnostic Origin

The third alternative source for Paul's term σῶμα Χριστοῦ to be considered is Gnosticism. The Gnostic redeemed-redeemer myth, which in certain aspects does not sound unlike the rabbinic speculation regarding the Adam motif, revolves around the divine "Aeaon-Urmensch" which possesses a gigantic body.[3]

Bultmann's influence in establishing the redeemed-redeemer myth thesis has been considerable. In his Theology of the New Testament he introduces the section headed "Gnostic Motifs" with the words:

> In the Hellenistic world it was a historical necessity that the gospel should be translated into a terminology with which that world was familiar . . . , Gnosticism and its myth offered a stock of terms that were intelligible to great numbers of people.[4]

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[1]Jewett, p. 246. See also W. D. Davies, Christian Origins and Judaism (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1962), p. 107.

[2]La Sor, p. 179. Ridderbos sees in Paul secondary motifs with "striking analogies" in Qumran (p. 37).

[3]For a summary of the Gnostic myth, see Jewett, p. 230.

[4]Bultmann, 1:164. See Edwin M. Yamauchi, "Some Alleged Evidences for Pre-Christian Gnosticism," in New Dimensions in New Testament Study, ed. Richard N. Longnecker and Merrill C. Tenny (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1974), pp. 47-48.

In specific relation to the term σῶμα, Bultmann states that "Paul explains the inner unity of believers with each other and with the Redeemer by using the gnostic term 'body' . . . and in so doing very materially determines the development of the church-concept."[1]

Reference to Käsemann further illustrates scholarly regard for Gnosticism as a background to σῶμα in the Pauline literature.[2]

> Almost the whole of Paul's interpretation . . bears the mark of the fact that he has adopted and adapted the gnostic myth. . . . Only on this basis can we explain historically Paul's distinctive combination of the Sacrament and the Church as the Body of Christ.[3]

The legitimacy of applying Gnostic mythology not only to Paul in a general way but specifically as the source of his use of σῶμα is strongly argued by many scholars.[4] Central to

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[1]Bultmann, 1:178. Though Bultmann denies Pauline authorship of Ephesians and Colossians he believes that Pauline influence and Gnostic traditions encouraged the authors of these letters to develop the σῶμα concept further.

[2]For a brief comparison between Schlier and Käsemann in their application of Gnostic themes to Ephesians, see Dahl, pp. 133-35. A summary discussion of Gnosticism in relation to Ephesians is set forth by Barth, Ephesians, pp. 12-18.

[3]E. Kasemann, Essays on the New Testament Themes (London: SCM Press, 1964), p. 109. Kasemann's earlier positions are here modified by the research of C. Colpe into Gnosticism. Elsewhere at a later date Käsemann states that perhaps the Stoic notion of the organ, the Jewish idea of the corporate personality and the Anthropos myth combined syncretistically "even if decisive importance is assigned to the last named" (Perspectives, p. 103). See Yamauchi, Pre-Christian Gnosticism: A Survey of Proposed Evidences (London: Tyndale Press, 1973), p. 26.

[4]H. Koester believes two equally absurd extreme positions may be seen in W. Schmithals who sees Paul influenced exclusively by Gnosticism and R. M. Grant who contends that Paul was not influenced by Gnostic thought at all. See H. Koester, "Paul and

the debate is the problem of finding conclusive evidence to confirm the presence of Gnosticism, at least pre- or proto-Gnosticism, in the first century. Scholars contend that the presence or absence of Gnostic concepts during the first century depends on how broadly one defines the term Gnosticism.[1]

Robert McL. Wilson advocates the following:

> The problem is complicated by the fact that we have but one adjective, "gnostic," to do duty both for the traditional Gnosticism and for the phenomena ascribed to pre-Christian Gnosis, which makes it all too easy to read back conceptions of a later period and assume that what was Gnostic in the second century is already Gnostic in Paul.[2]

Wilson does not doubt that certain ideas found in Gnosticism were extant prior to the Christian era, having their roots in Egyptian, Persian, Babylonian, Greek, or even Semitic philosophy. However, he does question two lines of reasoning. First, "If such concepts are employed by Paul or John, are they

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Hellenism," in The Bible in Modern Scholarship, ed. J. Philip Hyatt (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1965), p. 190; W. Schmithals, Paul and the Gnostics (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1972); R. M. Grant, Gnosticism and Early Christianity (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

[1]Yamauchi, Pre-Christian Gnosticism, pp. 13-14.

[2]Robert McL. Wilson, "Response to G. Quispel's 'Gnosticism and the New Testament,'" in The Bible in Modern Scholarship, p. 275. Wilson specifically refers to Bultmann's synthetic reconstructions of the second and third centuries which he uses to interpret the ideas of the first century (p. 274). Yamauchi agrees that there must be a distinction between pre-Gnosticism and fully developed Gnosticism (Pre-Christian Gnosticism, p. 19). R. P. Casey believes the New Testament "offers no ground for using documents of the second and third centuries A.D. to explain it." "Gnosis, Gnosticism and the New Testament," in The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology, ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), pp. 79-80.

already Gnostic, or necessarily due to Gnostic influence?"[1] Secondly, is there conclusive evidence to suggest that these ideas formed a "coherent system before the rise of Christianity?"[2]

Evidence for Gnostic thought within the first century is sought in such quarters as the Qumran community, Philo, and Judaism itself. Those taking a broad definition of Gnosticism, such as Bultmann, consider Philo an appropriate witness of pre-Christian Gnosticism. R. A. Horsley is of the opinion that "well before the genuine Christian Gnostics and mystical Neo-platonists, Hellenistic Jews such as Philo were enjoying a mystical gnosis with a clearly other-worldly orientation."[3]

M. Wilcox questions whether Gnosticism is evident in the Dead Sea Scrolls. He cites supposedly Gnostic terms such as "knowledge," "insight," "understanding," and "perfection," as found in the Scrolls, and concludes: "If we restrict the meaning of 'gnostic' to 'having to do with secret knowledge of the mind and will of God,' perhaps Qumran was a Gnostic sect."[4]

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[1]Wilson, "Response to G. Quispel's Gnosticism," p. 276.

[2]Idem, The Gnostic Problem: A Study of the Relations Between the Hellenistic Judaism and the Gnostic Heresy (London: A. R. Mowbray, 1958), p. 67.

[3]R. A. Horsley, "Gnosis in Corinth: 1 Corinthians 8:1-6," New Testament Studies 27(1981): 34. Wilson sees Philo as possessing Gnostic ideas but not Gnostic in the fully developed sense of the word. See The Gnostic Problem, pp. 68, 71. Colpe's counter is that "even Philo's speculations do not constitute evidence" for the Gnostic Redeemer myth in pre-Christian times. See "New Testament and Gnostic Christology," in Religions in Antiquity, ed. Jacob Neusner, (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1968), p. 245.

[4]M. Wilcox, "Dualism, Gnosticism, and other Elements in the Pre-Pauline Tradition," in The Scrolls and Christianity, ed.

Davies sees the Dead Sea Scrolls as indirectly significant to Gnosticism for they "confirmed the awareness . . . that pre-Christian Judaism although it did not reveal a fully developed Gnosticism, did emphasize da^{c}ath and exhibit incipient tendencies towards later Gnosticism."[1]

It may be submitted regarding Judaism that since conclusive evidence for Gnosticism in the first century is difficult to find, Judaism is considered by some scholars as a major factor proving the presence of Gnostic thought in the New Testament period.[2] If such a position is tenable it becomes much simpler to accept the presence of Gnostic thought in Paul. In discussing the "Hieros Gamos" of Eph 5:21-33 Batey theorises

> that some of the currents of Jewish and Christian thought which encountered the more speculative Greek mythological systems [in the first century] tended often to flow in the same direction--that is, in the direction of the Gnosticism found in the second century.[3]

G. Quispel is of the opinion that the later Gnostics were influenced by the "esoteric traditions of Palestinian

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Matthew Black (London: SPCK, 1969), p. 92. Barth accepts that the Qumran literature evidences traces of proto-Gnostic thought. See Ephesians, p. 13. Cf. James M. Robinson, "Gnosticism and the New Testament," in Gnosis: Feschrift fur Hans Jonas, ed. Barbara Alland (Gottengen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978), p. 127.

[1]W. D. Davies, "Paul and Judaism," in The Bible in Modern Scholarship, ed. J. Philip Hyatt (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1965), pp. 180-81.

[2]See Yamauchi, "Some Evidences for Pre-Christian Gnosticism," pp. 66-68.

[3]Batey, "Jewish Gnosticism and the 'Hieros Gamos' of Eph. V: 21-33," p. 127. See also Richard A. Batey, "The ΜΙΑ ΣΑΡΞ Union of Christ and the Church," New Testament Studies 13(1966-67): 270-81.

Pharisees."[1] Hans Jonas agrees that aspects of Gnosticism are located in a Jewish milieu. "Judaism was a powerful fact in the formation, perhaps even the nativity of Gnosticism."[2] Jonas still, however, discounts any thought of Judaism being the primary progenator of Gnostic thought since "a Gnosis without divine tragedy will not meet the specifications."[3]

A Unique Pauline Creation

Jewett surveys those scholars who view σῶμα Χριστοῦ as a unique Pauline creation.[4] Some, such as J. A. T. Robinson, E. Mersch, and F. Mussner, identify the Damascus Road experience as the creative basis for Paul's use of σῶμα Χριστοῦ.

A. Oepke, R. Schnackenburg, and H. Küng contend that σῶμα Χριστοῦ is a Pauline alternative for the Old Testament "people of God." Paul builds the terminology from a number of elements including Adam's gigantic body and Old Testament references to the unity of the tribe.

A. E. D. Rawlinson, O. Michel, J. Reuss, and L. Cerfaux, have accepted a sacramental hypothesis regarding the origin of

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[1]G. Quispel, "Gnosticism and the New Testament," in The Bible in Modern Scholarship, ed. J. Philip Hyatt (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1965), pp. 269-79. Yamauchi accepts that Judaism provided Gnosticism with its cosmological myth but this development came in the second century; see "Jewish Gnosticism: The Prologue of John, Mandaean Parallels, and the Triumphoric Protennoia," in Studies in Gnosticism and Hellenistic Religions, ed. R. van Den Broek and M. J. Vermaseren (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1981), p. 496.

[2]Wilson, "Response to G. Quispel's Gnosticism," p. 292.

[3]Ibid., p. 293.

[4]Most of the material in this section is drawn from Jewett, pp. 245-48.

σῶμα Χριστοῦ. It is advanced that Paul (e.g., 1 Cor 11:29) associates the eucharistic bread and the rite of baptism with Christ's body. The believer enters into union with Christ through these sacraments.

Within this fourth category the argument of A. E. Hill may be noted.[1] Hill remarks that in Acts 18:11 it is recorded that Paul spent eighteen months in Corinth. According to Hill, the Temple of Asclepius dedicated to Apollo and the Greek god of healing could be the source of Paul's σῶμα, at least in 1 Cor 12:12-26.[2] Archaeological evidence suggests that grateful worshippers often left terra-cotta images of individual parts of the body at the temple. The argument concludes:

> It may be the particular institution of the Ascelpium [sic] provided the catalyst responsible for the formulation of this specific body illustration from knowledge already possessed by Paul regarding the use of the human body as an illustration in Greek philosophical writings and the idea of "corporate solidarity" in the OT.[3]

Concluding Assessment

In assessing the various sources for Paul's σῶμα Χριστοῦ terminology it seems evident that certain options are more plausible than others. Those who acknowledge σῶμα Χριστοῦ as

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[1]A. E. Hill, "The Temple of Asclepius: An Alternative Source for Paul's Body Theology?" Journal of Biblical Literature 89(1980): 437-39.

[2]Hill accepts 1 Cor 12 as probably Paul's first recorded use of the σῶμα terminology. He notes the specific reference to the bodily parts "being analogues to the composition of Christ's body as the church is limited to the 1 Corinthians 12 passage" (p. 438).

[3]Ibid., p. 439.

a unique Pauline creation accept theories which ultimately have little supporting evidence. Important as the Damascus Road experience was, there is no intimation in the New Testament that it contributed directly to Paul's creation of σῶμα Χριστοῦ. Likewise, the "people of God," the sacramental theory, and the Temple of Asclepius idea are all suggestions which at the present time fail to demonstrate any direct link with Paul's terminology. Therefore the theories of this category must, by and large, be set aside until further positive evidence is forthcoming.

Regarding Gnosticism as the source of σῶμα Χριστοῦ, it may be stated that in spite of the attempts to detect pre-Christian Gnosticim, conservative scholarship is in the main unconvinced by this proposal. Appropriately, Yamauchi claims that it is certainly not proven. He is critical of the methodology used to establish the thesis.[1] Richardson, who admittedly tends to define Gnosticism more narrowly, stands strongly against the position.[2]

Schweizer is prepared to acknowledge "C. K. Barrett's statement that Gnosticism is indeed 'an atmosphere' which forms the background of the New Testament."[3] Schweizer is even prepared to accept a certain Jewish influence. He concludes, however,

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[1]See Yamauchi, "Jewish Gnosticism," p. 497; "Some Alleged Evidences for Pre-Christian Gnosticism," pp. 68-70; Pre-Christian Gnosticism, p. 18.

[2]Richardson, p. 42.

[3]E. Schweizer, "Paul's Christology and Gnosticism," in Paul and Paulinism: Essays in Honour of C. K. Barrett, ed. M. D. Hooker and S. G. Wilson (London: SPCK, 1982), p. 122.

that this "cross-fertilization started by and large only after the New Testament and that the New Testament has scarcely been influenced by it."[1]

R. P. Casey shows that there is another way to view the relationship between Gnosticism and the New Testament.

> The New Testament and Gnosticism occupy narrow strips of common ground but this is partly to be explained by this joint heritage of Greek philosophical ideas, partly by the indebtedness of the Gnostic theologians to the New Testament.[2]

In the light of the above conclusions it is apparent that researchers such as R. Jewett and H. Ridderbos conclude correctly when each in his own words states, "as far as one is now able to form any conception of Gnosticism in its old form, also on the basis of newly made discoveries, every trace of the idea of the church as body of Christ is lacking in it."[3]

Then too, while cognizance is taken of Jerome Murphy-O'Connor's comment ("traces of Essene influence in the Pauline corpus is now generally admitted,"[4]), the evidence does not strongly support the case for Paul's specific indebtedness to

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[1]Ibid. W. F. Albright believes that while evidence for proximity between the Essenes and Paul is apparent, there is "less evidence than ever to support the claims of Gnostic influence on Paul." "Discoveries in Palestine and the Gospel of John," in The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology, ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), p. 170.

[2]R. P. Casey, "Gnosis, Gnosticism and the New Testament," p. 80.

[3]Ridderbos, p. 384.

[4]Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "Truth: Paul and Qumran," in Paul and Qumran, ed. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1968), p. 179.

Qumran for his use of σῶμα Χριστοῦ. There can be little doubt that the Qumran literature is of great benefit to the scholar since it throws "a much stronger light on Judaism in the first century."[1] Essenism illustrates the truth that Judaism of Paul's era was more "creative and fluid" and it contained a vigorous sectarianism.[2]

Benoit's caution is worthy of note. He outlines as his first reaction on method a "warning against an imprudent tendency to accept as immediate contacts arising from direct influence what in fact may be no more than independent manifestations of a common trend of the time."[3]

The argument in favour of a thoroughly Hellenized Paul is attractive. Initially, the evidence seems particularly convincing. Nevertheless, Paul cannot be completely disassociated from his Jewish heritage. The source of Paul's use of σῶμα Χριστοῦ lies most probably in an alternative which accounts for both Paul's Jewish heritage and his Hellenistic environment.

It is advanced that Hellenistic Judaism provides the necessary alternative. In seeing Hellenistic Judaism as the likeliest source, it must be remembered that since Schweitzer's era there has been a determined effort to show the ineffectiveness

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[1]Davies, Christian Origins and Judaism, p. 107.

[2]Black, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and Christian Origins," p. 97; Krister Stendahl, "The Scrolls and the New Testament: An Introduction and a Perspective," in The Scrolls and the New Testament, ed. Krister Stendahl (New York: Harper, 1957), p. 5.

[3]P. Benoit, "Qumran and the New Testament," in Paul and Qumran, ed. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1968), p. 1.

of segregating Palestinian and Diaspora Judaism. Davies writes, "Palestinian Judaism is not to be viewed as a watertight compartment closed against all Hellenistic influences."[1] Barrett goes further by stating that "the differences between Hellenistic and Palestinian Judaism are less substantial than is sometimes supposed."[2]

In spite of Arnaldo Mamigliano's criticisms,[3] M. Hengel has shown strong evidence for Hellenistic influence upon Palestine from the third century B.C. onwards to at least Antiochus IV.[4] He concludes:

> Now Hellenistic civilization was by no means exclusively or even predominantly military, civic and socio-economic phenomenon . . . ; rather, it was the expression of a force which embraced every sphere of life. . . . . Consequently, it also had effects on . . . , literature philosophy and religion.

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[1]Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 8.

[2]R. K. Barrett, From First Adam to Last: A Study in Pauline Theology (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1962), p. 2.

[3]Martin Hengel, review of Judentum und Hellenismus, by Arnaldo Mamigliano, in Journal of Theological Studies 21(1970): 149-53; Arnaldo Mamigliano, Alien Wisdom: The Limits of Hellenization (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975). This book title suggests Mamigliano's perspective. His main criticism of Hengel is that he establishes the degree of Hellenization in Palestine without definitely knowing anything about Judaism.

[4]M. Hengel, Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine During the Early Hellenistic Period, 2 vols. (London: SCM Press, 1974) and Jews, Greeks and Barbarians: Aspects of the Hellenization of Judaism in the pre-Christian Period (London: SCM Press, 1980). In fairness to Hengel it should be noted that he states that Judaism in Palestine was not "completely permeated by the Hellenistic Spirit" (Judaism and Hellenism, 1:310). For comment on the importance of Hengel's work, see Henry, p. 86.

[5]Hengel, Judaism and Hellenism, 1:57.

In a later work, Hengel suggests that in the pre-Christian period the presence of Greek names, mixed marriages, the establishment of a gymnasium in Jerusalem for a period, and the gradual acceptance of Greek literary education in Palestine evidence strongly Hellenistic infiltration.[1] He believes the powerful presence of Hellenism in Palestine can be detected in the reaction against it by such groups as the Essenes.[2]

Upon these lines of evidence Hengel explains his definition of Judaism.

> Thus the adoption of Hellenistic civilization, its language, its literature and its thought, by ancient Judaism and the conflict which resulted is a complex development in Palestine differed only partially from that in the Diaspora; . . . . Thus by and large we may term Judaism of the Hellenistic Roman Period, both in the home country and the Diaspora, 'Hellenistic Judaism'.[3]

Highlighting the proximity of Diaspora and Palestinian Judaism is of consequence because it not only affects one's overall appreciation of Paul but as I. H. Marshall advances:

> Once the idea of a rigid distinction has been shown to be questionable, then it is no longer possible to use the mere presence or absence of Hellenistic ideas as a criterion for establishing the area of origin of the literature or concepts in question.[4]

In conclusion, it may be advanced that normative Judaism of Paul's era was determined to a considerable extent by three centuries of Greek influence. Therefore, there is difficulty in endeavouring to isolate those elements in first-century Judaism

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[1]Idem, Jews, Greeks and Barbarians, pp. 113-23.

[2]Ibid., p. 123. [3]Ibid., pp. 125-26.

[4]I. H. Marshall, "Palestinian and Hellenistic Christianity: Some Critical Comments," New Testament Studies 19(1972-73): 274.

which were Hellenistic in origin and those which were Jewish. However, it can be affirmed with a reasonable degree of confidence that Paul probably had contact with the Jewish ideas of the "corporate personality," and the idea of the "head" as representative of the tribe or family. He may have even known of speculation regarding the body of Adam. At the same time he was probably exposed to certain Hellenistic religious and philosophical concepts. Consequently, it seems apparent that Hellenistic Judaism (whether in Palestine or the Diaspora or both) provided the milieu in which these concepts co-existed and out of this setting Paul's σῶμα Χριστοῦ language originated.

CHAPTER IV

SŌMA CHRISTOU IN THE EARLY EPISTLES

Introduction

Paul's unique application of σῶμα Χριστοῦ as an expression associated with the Christian Church has long been recognized.[1] The Apostle also employs such terms and concepts as "people of God" (Rom 9:25-26; 2 Cor 6:16); "bride of Christ" (2 Cor 11:2); "the building" (1 Cor 3:16-17; 2 Cor 6:16-18);[2] and "the household of faith" (Gal 6:10) in his various ad hoc discussions on the nature of the Church.

While an adequate understanding of the Pauline concept of the Church cannot be fully developed using σῶμα Χριστοῦ in isolation from other terminology, the frequency of his use of σῶμα Χριστοῦ in an ecclesiological setting places this particular expression close to the centre of his understanding.[3] Thus,

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[1]For example see John F. Balchin, I Want to Know What the Bible Says about the Church (Eastbourne: Kingsway Publications, 1979), p. 29; Emile Mersch, The Whole Christ (London: Dennis Dobson, 1956), p. 112; Ronald Y. K. Fung, "Some Pauline Pictures of the Church," Evangelical Quarterly 53(1981): 92; Minear, p. 173.

[2]Edmund P. Clowney, The Doctrine of the Church, Biblical and Theological Studies (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishers, 1976), pp. 11-40; Mersch, pp. 111-12; Fung, pp. 89-105.

[3]Clowney, p. 10. For a discussion of the inter-relationship of the images see Fung, pp. 105-107; Minear, pp. 221-49; Dulles, pp. 7-11.

σῶμα Χριστοῦ stands as Paul's "most vivid and expressive" terminology.[1] P. D. Hanson rightly asserts that the Body of Christ terminology "draws together the inner dynamic of the biblical trajectory and the paradigms of faith into one powerful image."[2]

In determining the significance of σῶμα Χριστοῦ, one of the primary issues to be faced is the degree to which Paul considers the expression a metaphor.[3] In directing attention to this point, it must be remembered that whether a metaphor or more than a metaphor is intended, the reality must be greater than the terminology used to describe that reality.[4]

The Occasion and Purpose of Romans and 1 Corinthians

Pauline authorship for both Romans and Corinthians is not contested.[5] Barrett states that the authorship of Romans is a

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[1]Guthrie, p. 744.

[2]P. D. Hanson, The Diversity of Scripture (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), p. 122.

[3]Newbigin, p. 69. F. W. Dillistone, "How Is the Church Christ's Body? A New Testament Study," Theology Today 2(1945): 56-68. Dillistone calls this the realm of "Beyond-Metaphor" (p. 59).

[4]Ibid. See also David M. Park's discussion of "The Interpretative Value of Paul's Metaphors," South East Asia Journal of Theology 18(1977): 37-40. Park believes that the "interpretation of the ideas expressed through his images is more difficult to derive than the concepts he set forth in literal language or symbols" (p. 37).

[5]On introductory issues see Donald Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, 2d ed. (London: Tyndale Press, 1963), pp. 11-20; John Murray, The Epistle to the Romans, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1968), pp. xiii-xv; John W. Drane, "Why Did Paul Write Romans?" in Pauline Studies, ed. Donald A. Hagner and Murray J.

"proposition which is unnecessary to discuss."[1] Regarding 1 Corinthians, Conzelmann simply writes that the "authenticity of the epistle is universally recognised."[2]

While there has been considerable debate regarding the occasion and purpose of Romans, it seems appropriate to suggest that at the time of Paul's writing, a certain fragmentation may have existed in the church at Rome. The Apostle possibly knew of the difficulties to some degree and wrote--albeit in a somewhat impersonal style--a letter seeking to promote experiential unity. The purpose and occasion of 1 Corinthians is clearly discernible. Paul addresses specific ethical and practical concerns which inevitably have undermined the unity of the Corinthian congregation.

1 Corinthians and Romans reveal Paul's preoccupation with unity in these two church communities. While Romans highlights the issue in principle, 1 Corinthians deals with it at the immediate and experiential level. It is within this setting that Paul needs

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Harris (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1980), pp. 208-27; C. K. Barrett, A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1971), p. 11; Harry Gamble, "The Redaction of the Pauline Letters and the Formation of the Pauline Corpus," Journal of Biblical Literatures 94(1975): 403-404.

[1]C. K. Barrett, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1957), p. 1.

[2]H. Conzelmann, 1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), p. 2. Both Conzelmann, First Corinthians, pp. 2-5, and Barret, First Corinthians, pp. 12-17, indicate that while authorship is not questioned the integrity of the letter is another matter. The present edition may not, according to these scholars, be the original. See also Leon Morris, The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary (London: Tyndale Press, 1958), pp. 26-28.

a powerful argument to promote Christ-based unity among the members of these congregations. Paul appropriately utilises the term σῶμα Χριστοῦ.

Sōma Christou in 1 Corinthians

The direction of Paul's argument in 1 Cor 12, where σῶμα Χριστοῦ is clearly applied, is anticipated by his references in the early section of the letter, to such thoughts as, "Has Christ been divided?" (1 Cor 1:13); "For we are fellow-workers of God" (1 Cor 3:9); "Know you not that your bodies are members of Christ?" (1 Cor 6:15); "Because we being many are one bread, and one body" (1 Cor 10:17).[1] Thus when Paul addresses himself to the question of spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12:1) he gathers together and elaborates upon concepts which he has already introduced.

As in chap. 10:1-4 Paul stresses the "all" inclusiveness of the experience of ancient Israel, so in chap. 12:4-6 he emphasizes the "all" inclusiveness of the Spirit of God working upon the members of spiritual Israel, the Church.[2] In his attempt to point out to his readers the spiritual gifts in the Christian community Paul invokes the term σῶμα. The theme of vss. 12-27 is that, just as the human body is one even though it has a variety of different functioning parts, so the Church is one though it also has a variety of different spiritual gifts.

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[1]Balchin, p. 33; Jewett, p. 271.

[2]Robert Banks, Paul's Idea of Community (n.p.: Anzea Books, 1979), p. 73, and Minear, p. 185, both rightly assert that σῶμα and ἐκκλησία do not overlap in every way. The former term generally has a wider ecclesiological reference than the latter. See also D. E. H. Whiteley, The Theology of St. Paul (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1964), p. 191.

It must be recognised that this passage does not clearly and explicitly use the phrase σῶμα Χριστοῦ as a designation for the Church. This lack does not lessen the fact that the context, and the line of argumentation, infers that Paul does consider the Church as the Body of Christ. Such a conclusion is warranted by the curious phrase of vs. 12b--οὕτως καὶ ὁ Χριστός, and the precise declaration of vs. 27a--ὑμεῖς δέ ἐστε σῶμα Χριστοῦ. "So also Christ" at vs. 12b cannot be conceived of as a statement referring to the constitution of Christ's physical body.[1] Hence, this initial use of a Greek idiomatic expression ought to be viewed as an implicit reference to the ecclesiological Body of Christ which becomes explicit in vs. 27.[2] F. W. Grosheide suggests a plausible reason for Paul's omission of the phrase "the body of Christ" at vs. 12b. "The apparent reason why Paul does not write 'the body of Christ' is that . . . the word 'body' would then occur in both the figure and in the reality portrayed by the figure."[3]

The plural ὑμεῖς at the commencement of vs. 27 is an emphatic association between the members of the Corinthian church and Christ's Body. Identification of the Corinthian community as

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[1]Cerfaux takes the view that these words refer to the "human and physical body of Christ" (p. 276).

[2]Küng, p. 230; Minear, p. 192.

[3]F. W. Grosheide, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1953), p. 292. For further comment see L. S. Thornton, "The Body of Christ," in The Apostolic Ministry, ed. Kenneth E. Kirk (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1957), pp. 255-56; Barrett, First Corinthians, pp. 287-88; Morris, pp. 173-74; Küng, p. 230.

part of Christ's Body is clarified further when in vs. 28, at the commencement of the application of the discussion in vss. 13-27, the word ἐκκλησία appears for the first time in this chapter. The thematic vs. 12 and the concluding vs. 27 provide the envelope within which Paul pursues his discussion of the multi-functional existence of the individual physical body. It seems acceptable, therefore, to deduce that Paul is applying the term σῶμα Χριστοῦ as a designation for the local church.

Chap. 12:1 clearly suggests that Paul is about to embark upon a discussion of spiritual gifts. In vss. 2-11, Paul wants his readers to understand the nature of the gifts. First, while there is a variety of spiritual gifts, there is the same "Spirit" and the same "Lord." Secondly, though there is diversity there is still unity and wholeness.[1] Since at vs. 12 Paul calls up the idea of the single human body with its several parts, introducing it by means of the comparative expression καθάπερ γάρ, it seems evident that in this passage a metaphor is being applied for explanatory purposes. Such a position militates against a realistic interpretation at vs. 27a.

That metaphor[3] as involved here does not weaken the idea that Paul is applying an image to teach intricate truths about a spiritual reality, namely the unity of the Church in spite of diversity.[4] He is not specifically equating the Church with a

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[1]Fung, p. 92. [2]Gundry, p. 237. [3]Schnackenburg, p. 170.

[4]Käsemann in Perspectives rightly urges against viewing σῶμα Χριστοῦ as only a 'beautiful metaphor'. The term is intended to highlight deeper spiritual realities (pp. 103-4).

social or political organisation where unity of purpose and goal overcome the diversity of individualism.[1] The Apostle attempts in this passage to suggest that unity and diversity can exist in the Church because the members are joined together by Christ (vs. 27). Individual unity to Christ in salvation brings corporate unity even in the atmosphere of functional diversity.[2] Thornton succinctly states that "we are the Church because we are in the Christ. He gives unity to his members. The members are the Church because in him they are one; but not otherwise.[3]

This suggested conclusion is reinforced by the word Χριστοῦ at vs. 27a which qualifies σῶμα. Χριστοῦ has been variously taken as a genitive of either possession or origin. Could the genitive be used with both meanings? That is, the Body which originates with Christ is therefore His possession.[4]

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[1]Ahern, p. 206.

[2]That this is so is intimated as early as chap. 1:13 where Paul questions whether Christ, the unifying principle, can be subject to division. Berkouwer states on this theme that "in the 'separateness' there is no place for separation'" (p. 53).

[3]Thornton, The Common Life, p. 255. See also Newbigin, p. 69; Best, p. 100; Mersch, p. 116; Berkouwer, p. 80; Daines, p. 76; Nelson, p. 23; Cerfaux, p. 276; Nygren, pp. 94, 99-100; Robinson, p. 57, for the various alternative views of σῶμα Χριστοῦ in 1 Cor 12. The Protestant Reformation reacted against the apparent misuse of the corporate nature of the Church. While the Reformation could be applauded for this, perhaps the descendants of the Reformation have at times over-stressed the individuality of salvation. It is true that salvation is an individual response but the visible outworkings of that response are performed in community with others.

[3]Barrett, First Corinthians (p. 292), and Ridderbos (p. 370) disagree with each other on this point.

Ridderbos correctly asserts "that at the root of this metaphorical language applied to mutual relationships in the church there is a deeper concept of the church as body of Christ."[1] This "deeper concept" appearing in 1 Cor 12 has its origins in Paul's use of σῶμα in certain earlier passages where the concept of participation in Christ is the motivating theme.[2] These earlier usages are worthy of consideration.

The use of σῶμα in a participation setting is utilized initially at 1 Cor 6:15-17 in connection with sexual morality.[3] According to Paul, the individual who is a member of Christ has every reason to avoid illicit sexual activity since such activity symbolizes participation and union to another, namely a prostitute. Vs. 15 involves an explicit reference to the physical bodies of Christians, and an implicit reference by the use of μέλη Χριστοῦ to Christ's ecclesiological Body. The physical nature of this brief passage almost seems to emphasize a real physical relationship of the believer with the individual, resurrected, bodily Christ.[4] Such a position is not warranted in the light of vs. 17 where the emphasis falls upon a complete oneness and participation with the Lord. The concept of the individual

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[1]Ridderbos, p. 370. [2]Best, p. 93.

[3]Thornton suggests that this passage "contains in principle the whole doctrine of the Body" (Common Life, p. 254). Dillistone suggests that "the main purpose is to insist upon the close interconnection between spirit and body in man" (p. 62). See also Best, p. 94; Schnackenburg, p. 168.

[4]Schnackenburg is correct in seeing in the phrase "members of Christ" a veiled reference to the Church. He errs in his inference that the Church is "the body of the individual exalted Lord" in a realistic, literal sense" (p. 168). See also Stanley, p. 395.

literal σῶμα in vs. 15 is replaced in vs. 17 by the idea of ἓν πνεῦμά.[1]

A development is present in the passage from the literal union with a prostitute to the spiritual union with the Lord.[2] Paul's citation from Gen 2:24 at vs. 16b and his Hebraic concept of σῶμα representing man in his totality of existence combine to implicitly underscore the depth of the participation between Christ and the Christian in the Church.

The second Corinthian passage which lies behind the discussion of chap. 12:12-27 is the eucharistic pericope of chap. 10:16-17. These verses again suggest the participation motif. Κοινωνία of vs. 16, as well as εἷς ἄρτος and ἓν σῶμα οἱ πολλοί ἐσμεν of vs. 17, assist in the establishment of the Pauline thought that the Church is a Body.[3] Certain scholars accept that "the origin of the expression 'body of Christ' probably lies here, in the eucharistic tradition."[4]

The double stress of κοινωνία in vs. 16 requires mention. Paul advances the thought of participation with the use of this word. The κοινός group of words are used both in secular Greek and New Testament Greek basically to denote a sharing of something with some other individual.[5] It is a relational word. As it is

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[1]Minear, p. 180.

[2]Schweizer, TDNT, 7:1070; Ridderbos, p. 373.

[3]Jewett, p. 272.

[4]Conzelmann, Theology, p. 262. Wedderburn believes that "the words of the Eucharist provided the verbal origin of this phrase, while its basis goes back beyond the Eucharist, . . . to the very person of Christ himself" (p. 78).

[5]Friedrick Hauck, "κοινός," TDNT, 3:804-809.

used in the present passage it expresses the spiritual fellowship and unity between the believer and Christ. The cup and in particular the bread stand as representations of the brokenness of Christ upon the cross.[1] The union and fellowship between Christ and the believer are possible only upon the basis of sacrifice. This fellowship is not experienced fully in isolation but in community with other believers.[2] Vertical union between Christ and the believer provides the platform for horizontal unity between believers.

The expression τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ at vs. 16a stands parallel to τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ at vs. 16b. This indicates that possibly the latter expression is a reference to the real bodily Christ and is not an ecclesiological usage. The connection between the eucharistic ἄρτος and the "body of Christ" seems also to confirm this conclusion. Vs. 16 is a statement using sacrificial terminology connected with the institution of the Lord's Supper to express unity.[3]

Vs. 17 is difficult in its construction. Nevertheless, it is apparent that there is an ecclesiological development. The emphasis on the "bread" in vs. 16 allows for the Apostle

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[1]Grosheide, p. 232. Because of the emphasis he wishes to make, Paul shifts the order of the cup and bread (Matt 26:26-27 cf. 1 Cor 10:16-17). See Käsemann, Essays, pp. 110-112.

[2]Schweizer, TDNT 7:1070; John C. Haughey, "Eucharist at Corinth: You Are the Christ," in Above Every Name: The Lordship of Christ and Social Systems, ed. Thomas E. Clarke (n.p.: Paulist Press, 1980), p. 114.

[3]A. T. Hanson, The Meaning of Unity: A Study of a Biblical Theme (London: The Highway Press, 1954), p. 29.

to continue his thought in vs. 17. Two causal clauses are present. The first commencing with ὅτι indicates, upon the argument of vs. 16, that the many individual members of the Corinthian church are one in unity by means of the bodily sacrifice of Christ. Paul calls them εἷς ἄρτος to signify this unity. Just as the eucharistic bread when broken into many parts remains one bread in the sense of its wholeness so the same is true of the believers.

While the σῶμα of vs. 16b refers to the real bodily Christ, the usage of vs. 17 is another matter. To accept that the use of σῶμα at vs. 16 and vs. 17 infers the same meaning is to take what Robinson calls, an unwarranted "leap."[1] To see here a direct reference to the Church as the Body, either metaphorically or ontically, is to read into these verses thoughts which have not yet been introduced. This application of σῶμα with the use of ἄρτος is an attempt to doubly stress the unity of the members. Vs. 17b combines the second causal clause which explicitly declares the Apostle's rationale for using "bread" and "body" in connection with the Christian believers.[2] They are "one bread" and "one body" because of their involvement with Christ. Thus vs. 17 is designed to state the basis and nature of the existent unity in the Christian community. It is a statement of participation.

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[1]Robinson referred to by Ridderbos (p. 373). Cerfaux obviously defines σῶμα in vss. 16-17 in the same way (pp. 278-79). See also Schnackenburg (pp. 169-70).

[2]See Schnackenburg, p. 169; Grosheide, pp. 233-34.

Chap. 11:22-30 is a passage of exhortation regarding the practice of the eucharist among the believers at Corinth. This passage stands as a companion to chap. 10:16-17. Again participation stands central to the argumentation. The context of this passage is Paul's chastening of the Corinthian church for their self-indulgence, and lack of consideration for others in the Church. Abuse of the Lord's Supper at Corinth illustrates the lack of unity in both the vertical and the horizontal dimensions. Furthermore, because of this abuse it was impossible for an adequate appreciation of the unity of the Church to be developed and maintained. The intimate relationship between the Church and the eucharist is inferred by the words τῆς ἐκκλησίας τοῦ θεοῦ καταφρονεῖτε of vs. 22. Here the eucharist is a statement about the attitude of unity between the believers and Christ, and between each other.

Vss. 23-24 provide a description of the institution of the Lord's Supper. Since Paul does not wish to make his point regarding unity in exactly the same way as he did in chap. 10, he here reverses the order of the emblems in accord with the accepted tradition. A detailed review of the institution of the eucharist commences with the point that Christ has established this spiritual meal.

Though the construction and word order of the Greek is complex, it is apparent that vss. 24-25 are a parallel to 1 Cor 10:16. In chap. 11, the words τὸ σῶμα of vs. 24 are a reference to the physical body of Christ sacrificed on the cross as symbolized by the broken bread and the cup of

wine.[1] Words and phrases such as ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, τοῦτο ποιεῖτε, and ὁσάκις ἐὰν πίνητε are statements of participation and union. Ἀναμνησις, which concludes both verses, infers that the Lord's Supper is to be a memorial meal. Involved in this meal is a celebration of the sacrifice of Christ.

But this meal is to do more than this. Just as Israel was physically redeemed at a point in history by God's salvific intervention, so with the Church. The continued existence, unity, and fellowship of the Church are dependent upon the members remembering the ground of their salvation.

Vs. 27 commencing with Ὥστε indicates a judgmental conclusion on the basis of the preceding verses. Those who take part in the Lord's Supper outside the guidelines laid down in vss. 24-26 do so unworthily. The word ἀναξίως in vs. 27 might well be a specific reference to the lack of unity in the partaking of the meal as inferred by vss. 18-20 and vs. 33.[2] Unworthy involvement results in ἔνοχος. To eat unworthily of the Lord's Supper evidences a failure to participate in and with Christ.

Paul warns that some of the Corinthians stand under the danger of condemnation because of their treatment of their fellow-members in regard to the Lord's Supper and the apparent relational divisions in the Church. By rejecting fellow-members some were

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[1]Schweizer, TDNT, 7:1068.

[2]Käsemann, Essays, p. 122.

in fact showing evidence of their rejection of Christ. The implied argument is similar to that of 1 Cor 8:12 where Paul in a discussion concerning meat offered to idols, states, "But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ."

The import of the development of Paul's thought in vss. 29-30 should also be noticed. In vs. 27 the one who participates unworthily is found guilty; then Paul in vs. 29 goes further by stating that κρίμα comes upon such an individual.[1] Here guilt and judgment are linked, as are the cross and the Second Advent in vs. 26. The reference to judgment has eschatological connotations. However, the present tense of the verbs in vs. 27 reveal that the parting of the ways in the future judgment is already present to some degree in the communion service. This judgment occurs because the members particpate unworthily due to their lack of unity with Christ and each other. They are μὴ διακρίνων τὸ σῶμα. This participial clause, as with the phrase σώματος καὶ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ κυρίου of vs. 27b, refers to the sacrificed body of Christ.

With Paul's anthropological notion of the totality of man he is able to state explicitly the nature of the judgment that has come upon those who are condemned. By means of the διὰ τοῦτο introducing vs. 30, Paul seems to advocate that the judgment upon the Corinthians is a physiological weakness and illness even to the point of death. The individual members who act

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[1] Kasemann rightly notes the judicial terminology utilized throughout 1 Cor 11:17-34 (Essays, p. 119).

without unity in regard to Christ or the Church affect the many. Such an influence is reminiscent of the Old Testament communal concept of reward and punishment.[1] Haughey advances the thought:

> Not to be truly incorporated into the new creation and into this primary instance of a new social system, the eucharistic community, made one prey to all the evils that affected the human condition outside of Christ and before his saving act.[2]

While this passage in 1 Cor 11 does not specifically call the Church σῶμα Χριστοῦ, there is a basic connection between the motivating ideas of this section and the detailed comments of chap. 12:12-27. Both passages deal with unity, fellowship, and communion with Christ and fellow believers. It is because of Paul's developing argument in chap. 11 and the earlier passages discussed that Paul can eventually come to chap. 12 and make his bold ecclesiological assertions regarding σῶμα Χριστοῦ.

Sōma Christou in Romans

Much of what has been said for 1 Cor 12:12-27 can also be said of the σῶμα Χριστοῦ concept in Rom 12:4-5. Though the passage is somewhat abbreviated by comparison to the section in 1 Corinthians, the difference in wording provides a significant clarification of the participation motif which lies behind the expression σῶμα Χριστοῦ. Paul desires in Romans to demonstrate the dynamic involvement of union with Christ.[3]

The οὖν of Rom 12:1 indicates that in this chapter Paul intends to gather together all that he has said in the earlier

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[1]See, for example, the Old Testament story of Achan, Josh 7:1-26.

[2]Haughey, p. 116.

[3]Anders Nygren, Commentary on Romans (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1949), p. 420.

doctrinal segment of the letter.[1] The indicative is now to be followed by the imperative.[2] In chap. 12 Paul utilizes the terms and concepts "mercies," "gifts," "call," and "disobedient" found in the climax of his discussion in Rom 11:28-36 on Israel's role. These ideas form the foundation of chap. 12:1-6a.

At the outset of the chapter, two principles are laid down. First, the members of spiritual Israel are to yield themselves as "living sacrifices" which is their reasonable or spiritual worship.[3] Unlike 1 Cor 12:12-27, which emphasizes the Holy Spirit in connection with the Body of Christ and charismatic gifts, Rom 12:3-8 commences with the idea of "living sacrifices" and how that is worked out practically.[4] Secondly, the thought of vs. 1 is extended in vs. 2 by the idea of non-conformity to this world but renewal of the mind which leads to an ethical demonstration of the will of God. Paul urges these principles upon the Roman believer on the basis of the "compassions" of God.

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[1]Murray, Romans, pp. 109-10; Ernest Best, The Letter of Paul to the Romans (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 88; C. E. B. Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of Romans, The International Critical Commentary, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979), 2:595.

[2]K. Barth, The Epistle to the Romans (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 426-27; A. M. Hunter, The Epistle to the Romans (London: SCM Press, 1955), pp. 106-7; Schweizer, TDNT, 7:1069. The "therefore" shows that ethics are theologically motivated. Chaps. 12-13 provide direction in ethics rather than directives. Paul's ethic is a gospel ethic and a corporate ethic.

[3]Jewett notes that the sacrifice is to be living rather than dead (p. 302).

[4]Banks, p. 75; Thornton, Common Life, p. 288.

The usage of this word is an intensified and strengthened understanding of the word ἠλεήθητε located earlier in chap. 11:30.

At vs. 1, Paul "beseeches" on the basis of the doctrine of salvation. This beseeching is introduced by διά. Vs. 3, the basis upon which the Apostle is able to speak, is likewise introduced by the same preposition. Both uses of διά are to be taken instrumentally. The first introduces the "compassions of God," and the second, the "grace" of ministry given to Paul. The initial words of chap. 12 denote a transition from the doctrinal to the experiential.

Διὰ τῆς χάριτος has for the Apostle a double emphasis. It refers to the unmerited favour whereby Paul has come into right-standing with God. In this salvific sense "grace" may be similar to the word "compassions" of vs. 1.[1] This prepositional phrase might also be specifically seen in a functional perspective. As a result of God's "grace," the grace of apostleship becomes Paul's privilege and responsibility.[2] Related is the verb δίδωμι. Paul uses this word generally in association with the gifts of God. Thus it is appropriate for this term to be found here because while Paul serves with one of the leading charismatic gifts, he is ever mindful that his apostleship is given to him. He has no real reason to think highly of himself. That which

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[1]R. Haldane, The Epistle to the Romans (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958), p. 558.

[2]F. Godet, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1956), p. 429; F. F. Bruce, The Epistle of Paul to the Romans: An Introduction and Commentary, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1963), p. 227.

Paul claims for himself is, as he will demonstrate in vss. 6-8, the situation of all who have received the grace of God.[1]

Using the negative μή, Paul introduces in vs. 3 his first practical exhortation. He begins with that which is forbidden, namely, highmindedness. In speaking to everyone, Paul infers that all are potentially susceptible to think of themselves beyond their limit. Highmindedness may be defined as presumptuous wisdom, self-fantasy, or over-estimation of oneself.[2] The conjunction ἀλλά introduces the permissible segment of the verse, that is, one is to think sobermindedly. The replacement of highmindedness with sobermindedness is the functional result of the process of the renewing of the mind.[3]

The verse concludes with a statement that elaborates upon sobermindedness and introduces the theme of diversity in vss. 6-8. The ἑκάστῳ is to be associated with ἐμέρισεν rather than apposition to παντί. The idea conveyed is primarily that of diversity, though in a secondary sense it seems that the verb may also have the idea of "to share in," or "have part in."[4] Μέτρον πίστεως cannot be simply defined. A tentative solution may be that this "measure of faith" is to act as the criterion

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[1]K. Barth, p. 439.

[2]C. H. Dodd, The Epistle of Paul to the Romans (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1932), p. 194; Cranfield, p. 612.

[3]In this section on thoughts and thinking, note the play on words--ὑπερφρονεῖν; φρονεῖν; σωφρονεῖν. See Ernst Käsemann Commentary on Romans (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1980), p. 332.

[4]J. Schneider, "μέρος," TDNT, 4:596-7.

in which the soberminded person is to make an assessment of himself as he functions within the community. "Measure of faith" in no way seems to be implying the division of faith in quantitative terms. The term takes that which is common to all in the community and reflects upon the different ways faith may be exercised.[1] The phrase denotes the standard of Christian faith by which the Christian measures himself. Since the centre of Christian faith is Christ, He then is the ultimate μέτρον πίστεως.[2] Taking this approach

> the clause directs attention to that which is common to all Christians. Though some may have more faith or stronger faith than others, all, if they are Christians at all, have faith in the same object.[3]

Just as γάρ introducing vs. 3 warned of a new development, the same is true of γάρ which heads vs. 4. On the basis of the sentiments of vs. 3, Paul's thought can be expanded. He plans to outline what life is like in the Christian community for those who are "living sacrifices." The commencement of the verse introduces a summary of the σῶμα terminology set forth more explicitly in 1 Cor 12:12-27. Chap. 12:1 of Romans referred to σῶμα in terms of the physical body. Vs. 4 presents the physical body as a foil against which the terminology can be developed.[4] A metaphorical use of σῶμα seems to be indicated by Paul's use of καθάπερ γάρ at vs. 4 and the comparative ουτως at vs. 5.[5] The

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[1]Murray, p. 118; Bruce, Romans, pp. 227-38.

[2]C. E. B. Cranfield, "ΜΕΤΡΟΝ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ in Romans XII.3," New Testament Studies 8(1961-62): 351; Murray, p. 118.

[3]Cranfield, Romans, p. 615, n. 3. [4]Gundry, p. 36.

[5]Manuscripts D, E, F, and G have ὥσπερ and not καθάπερ at vs. 4. For textual comment see Godet, pp. 428-30. A metaphorical usage of σῶμα in Romans is seen by Barret, Romans, p. 236; Best,

introduction of σῶμα at vs. 4 has been anticipated by Paul's alternative uses of the term in the earlier chapters--such as the human body, chap. 4:19; the carnal man, chap. 6:7; the body subject to death, chap. 6:12; and the physical body of Christ, chap. 7:4.[1] These initial uses of σῶμα are gathered into a new development in chap. 12:4-5.

Vs. 4a simply states that each physical body has many members, that is, physical limbs, organs, and parts. The inference being that the body would not exist without a multiplicity of members.[2] The ἑνὶ σώματι adds a second stress. Though the physical body consists of a variety of members, the physical body is nevertheless one. It is a united whole. The latter half of vs. 4b fills out Paul's reason for making reference to the Body. Vss. 4a and 4b are linked by the repetition of μέλη. Not only are there many members of the body, but each has different functions. A complete discussion of the Body image is possible with the inclusion of the other half of the comparison in vs. 5. In this verse Paul applies the language of metaphor laid down in vs. 4 to a relationship of unity and participation that the believer ought to have first of all with Christ, and secondly, with other believers.

Romans, p. 105; and Berkouwer, p. 80. Ahern illustrates those who believe that more than metaphor is involved (pp. 207-8).

[1]For a discussion of these earlier alternative uses of σῶμα, see Ahern, pp. 202-3; Best, Romans, pp. 68, 88; Gundry, pp. 239-40; and particularly Jewett, pp. 290-301.

[2]J. Horst, "μέλος," TDNT, 4:563. See also Käsemann, Romans, p. 338.

While in vs. 4a, πολλά qualifies μέλη, in vs. 5a οἱ πολλοί is used substantively. For this transition to be effective, μέλη is dropped and does not reappear until the end of vs. 5b. The importance of these changes lies in the fact that vs. 5a emphasizes the all-inclusiveness and participation in the one Body in Christ, while vs. 5b emphasizes the participation of Christians in each other. By contrast to πολλά and πολλοί, Paul makes reference to ἑνί and ἕν in vss. 4-5. Since the organic unity of a physical body involves many members, so the organic unity of the spiritual Body created by Christ, in which the many are incorporated, is constituted in the same way.

A progression in Paul's discussion of the individual is alluded to by the use of μέλη and ἀλλήλων. Μέλη at vs. 4 in association with πολλά denotes diversity, but in vs. 5b in association with ἀλλήλων it expresses participation and intimacy in a way which transcends social organisation. Ἀλλήλων of vs. 5c conveys the idea of one individual in relation to one other individual.[1] The Apostle calls for those who are incorporated in Christ to be experientially what they are spiritually and redemptively.

All the thoughts expressed in chap. 12, including the outlining of the various gifts in vss. 6b-8, grow out of the metaphorical use of σῶμα.[2] The actual terminology of σῶμα

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[1]See H. Büchsel, "ἄλλος," TDNT, 1:264.

[2]Küng has an appropriate summary of the relationship between the ecclesiological Body of Christ and the charismatic gifts (p. 227).

Χριστοῦ does not appear in vss. 4 and 5 (neither does the term ἐκκλησία). This lack does not seem to preclude the assumption that Paul has the idea of Church in mind here and that he developed his idea along the lines of the Body in Christ.[1]

There is in this passage a development in the understanding of σῶμα Χριστοῦ.[2] By means of this new wording Paul seeks to underscore the idea that the union of the believers with each other, in spite of functional diversity, arises out of participation in Christ.[3] There is oneness because Christ is the source of the unity.[4] Because of the relationship of the Christian to the community, it is discussed in Rom 12:4-5 "in more intimate terms than in 1 Corinthians."[5] While Käsemann may suggest too much, he does say something of considerable value when he asserts that ἐν Χριστῷ and σῶμα Χριστοῦ "belong together in that they mutually interpret one another."[6]

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[1]Cranfield, Romans, p. 617, and Jewett, p. 303, tend to oppose such an assertion. Käsemann, Romans, p. 336; Best, Romans, p. 106; Murray, p. 120; Daines, p. 74; Brunner, p. 104; accept that Paul refers here, at least implicitly, to the Church as σῶμα Χριστοῦ.

[2]Barrett, Romans, p. 231 and Minear, p. 94, suggest that the expression ἐν Χριστῷ is "a stage on the way to the 'body of Christ'."

[3]Best, Romans, p. 141; Fung, p. 93.

[4]Nygren, Romans, p. 422; Hanson, Unity, p. 30; Banks, p. 76; Schnackenburg, p. 167.

[5]Banks, p. 76.

[6]Käsemann, Perspectives, p. 106. Nygren, Christ and His Church, links the two ideas closely (p. 93). "To be 'in Christ' is the same as to be a member of the body of Christ." See also Cerfaux, p. 277; Minear, p. 194. Ahern sees that the idea of "life in Christ is inseparably connected with and provides foundation for life with Christ" (p. 207). The usefulness of

The ἐν Χριστῷ terminology is reminiscent of Paul's solidarity theme as expressed in Rom 5 and 1 Cor 15.[1] Humanity stands under two aeons. Before the cross all die "in Adam." Adam symbolizes the old solidarity where man is subject to sin and mortality. In contrast, man is made alive "in Christ." Christ's redemptive participation with man ushers in the new solidarity. Just as Adam stood at the head of the old age so Christ stands at the head of the new age. Man was included in the destiny of Adam, so now "the community is included in the destiny and way of Christ."[2] Rom 12:5b is underscoring the truth that the basis of member participation in the ecclesiological Body rests upon Christ's participation in the act of salvation on man's behalf.[3]

Stanley says: "Through his resurrection, he created the new solidarity of grace which is the family of the new Adam, the Church."[4] Christ's death and resurrection have ushered in

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Ahern's proposition is noted by W. Grundmann, "σὺν Χριστῷ," TDNT, 7:781. Here it is advanced that σύν suggests that the phrase has in view personal fellowship in the sense of coming to and being with. Thus σύν and ἐν as they are each associated with the word Χριστοῦ are closely related.

[1]Balchin, p. 31; Nelson, pp. 21-24. In Rom 5 the solidarity is in connection with Christ's redemptive death and 1 Cor 15 solidarity is in connection with Christ's resurrection.

[2]Thornton, Common Life, pp. 274-83, "The Body of Christ," pp. 71-75; Schweitzer, Church Order, pp. 94-95; Stanley, p. 396.

[3]Cranfield, Romans, p. 618; K. Barth, p. 443.

[4]Stanley, p. 396. M. Barth states that "Paul uses the body-member terminology only in those letters in which he also bases his argument upon the idea of the first and last Adam" ("A Chapter on the Church," p. 140).

the eschatological age. When "in Christ" is utilized at Rom 12:5, Paul is inferring that the Church is an eschatological phenomenon.[1] Ridderbos rightly states that the Church is not the Body in Christ because of the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Church is the Body in Christ because it is redemptively "in Christ." Pneumatic indwelling is a result of this relationship between Christ and the Church.[2]

This brief technical discussion of Rom 12:4-5 within its context indicates that in the space of but a few verses Paul has effectively outlined the significance of the ecclesiological Body of Christ. Not only does he include his 1 Cor 12 argument in this later passage but he provides the bridge to a developed understanding in the captivity epistles of Colossians and Ephesians.

Summary and Conclusion

For Paul σῶμα Χριστοῦ is central to his understanding of the essential nature of the Church. While Paul's doctrine cannot be built solely on this concept, it does provide vital insights into his perception of: (1) the origin of the Church, (2) the Church's relation to Christ, (3) the members' relation one to another, and (4) the role and function of the Church.

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[1]Barrett, Romans, p. 236.

[2]Ridderbos, p. 372. For a contemporary comment in this field see Ronald Y. F. Fung, "Ministry, Community and Spiritual Gifts," The Evangelical Quarterly 56(1984): 3-20. Fung seems to disagree with Ridderbos who suggests that it is not "Christ⟶ the Spirit⟶ the body, but rather: Christ⟶ the body-in-Christ⟶ the Spirit" (p. 15).

Within the early Pauline epistles the issue of unity underlies the discussion of the idea of σῶμα Χριστοῦ. The phrase in question highlights the concept of unity in diversity. Though there is diversity in the role and function of each church member, there is also equality. From the indicative of salvation flow the imperatives. Σῶμα Χριστοῦ ideas in 1 Cor 12 and Rom 12 also imply that participation and unity in the Body of Christ is not fully experienced in isolation but in community. There is a certain corporateness about Christianity and the Church.

The position taken in this present chapter is that Paul utilizes σῶμα Χριστοῦ as a metaphor in 1 Cor 12 and Rom 12. While it is difficult to isolate exegesis from subjective bias, there seems to be more evidence favouring a metaphorical than a literal interpretation. To view the relevant verses realistically and literally is to place a nuance and an interpretive difficulty upon the whole context of these verses which seems unwarranted.

The desire for a real, literal interpretation of σῶμα Χριστοῦ at 1 Cor and Rom 12 is understandable. To participate as intimately and closely as possible with God has long been the natural inclination of the human heart. In this literal interpretation the position of the Church is rightly elevated above every earthly organisation. Christ and the believer are united in a way emphasizing the importance of the Christian's experience. Christ's continual presence in the life of the individual believer and the corporate community is affirmed. However, it must be underscored that these positive sentiments can be maintained without resorting to the realistic interpretation.

The fact that Paul uses σῶμα Χριστοῦ metaphorically does not militate against the fact that he is making a certain ontological statement concerning the very essence of the Church. To accept "Body of Christ" as metaphor does not necessarily mean that the term and concept have to be viewed as mere analogy or illustration devoid of any vital spiritual union between Christ and His Church. A metaphorical interpretation attempts to define a spiritual existence, rather than a substantial one, in a way which enhances the relationship between Christ and the Church, and the members one to another. Σῶμα Χριστοῦ in 1 Corinthians and Romans attempts to define a spiritual reality.

CHAPTER V

SŌMA CHRISTOU IN EPHESIANS

Introduction

Unlike many of Paul's previous letters Ephesians does not contain language reminiscent of "argument and polemic, but of adoration."[1] Praise, hymnic notes, and sustained prayer mould the theological direction of the epistle.[2]

Bruce designates this epistle as the "Quintessence of Paulinism."[3] Hunter summarizes the accolades of the scholars when he states that "John Calvin called it his favorite epistle; Coleridge pronounced it 'one of the divinist compositions of man'; Dr. John Mackay has said 'To this book I owe my life,' and Dr. C. H. Dodd has named it 'the crown of Paulinism.'"[4]

In connection with these positive statements regarding the message of Ephesians, the question of the epistle's authorship and original destination have been matters of interest to scholars

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[1]Bruce Corley, "The Theology of Ephesians," Southwestern Journal of Theology 22(1979): 24.

[2]Eph. 1:3,16; 3:21; 5:20; 6:18,23-24.

[3]F. F. Bruce, "St. Paul in Rome 4: The Epistle to the Ephesians," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library 49(1967): 303.

[4]A. M. Hunter, Introducing the New Testament, 2d ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1957), p. 120.

for generations.[1] Those who deny Pauline authorship of Ephesians have a tendency to stress that their case "rests upon the cumulative force of a number of considerations, none of which would be decisive, or even perhaps readily attract notice, by itself."[2] The defenders of authenticity conclude that "the burden of proof lies upon those who deny Pauline authorship."[3] Because much of the authorship evidence can be used to support either position it is well to remember H. J. Cadbury's now famous statement:

> Which is more likely--that an imitator of Paul in the first century composed a writing ninety or ninety-five per cent in accordance with Paul's style or that Paul himself wrote a letter diverging five or ten per cent from his usual style.[4]

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[1]See for instance the following: F. L. Cross, ed., Studies in Ephesians (London: A. R. Mowbray, 1956); A. W. Martin, "The Authorship of the Pauline Corpus," in The New Tesament in Historical and Contemporary Perspective, ed. Hugh Anderson and William Barclay (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), pp. 209-35; M. Barth, Ephesians, pp. 36-59; van Roon, The Authenticity of Ephesians; J. C. Kirby, Ephesians: Baptism and Pentecost (London: SPCK, 1968), pp. 3-55; H. J. Cadbury, "The Dilemma of Ephesians," New Testament Studies 5(1958-59): 91-102; Martin, "An Epistle in Search of a Life Setting," pp. 296-302; Fred D. Howard, "An Introduction to Ephesians," Southwestern Journal of Theology 22(1979): 7-20; Douglas J. Rowston, "Changes in Biblical Interpretation Today: The Example of Ephesians," Biblical Theology Bulletin 9(1979): 121-25; John B. Polhill, "An Introduction to Ephesians," Review and Expositor 76(1979): 465-79; John W. Drane, "Theological Diversity in the Letters of Paul," Tyndale Bulletin 27(1976): 3-25; David Alan Black, "The Peculiarities of Ephesians," Journal of Biblical Literature 82(1963): 101.

[2]D. E. Nineham, "The Case Against the Pauline Authorship," in Studies in Ephesians, p. 23.

[3]J. N. Sanders, "The Case for the Pauline Authorship," in Studies in Ephesians, p. 11.

[4]Cadbury, p. 101.

The position taken in this chapter is that in all probability Paul did write Ephesians and that the original destination was in fact to the church at Ephesus.

The Ephesian Forerunner

All the major emphases of Ephesians are located in Colossians.[1] Paul communicated to the Colossians on the issue of Christology. A heresy had arisen, the nature of which is difficult to specifically determine. It is sufficient to state that it apparently involved certain elements of Jewish legalism (Col 2:21,26) and semi-pagan Gnosticism (Col 2:8, 18).[2] The practical result was the emasculation of Christ and His sovereign position in the universe.

The initial references to the σῶμα Χριστοῦ concept are located at chap. 1:18,24. These verses must be understood in view of the main section of the chapter, namely vss. 15-20.

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[1]Brief acknowledgement of σῶμα Χριστοῦ in Colossians is attempted since many of the ecclesiological themes of this letter are developed more fully in Ephesians.

[2]For discussions on the Colossian heresy see: William Hendriksen, A Commentary on Colossians and Philemon (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1964), pp. 22-23; E. F. Scott, The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians, to Philemon and to the Ephesians (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1930), pp. 7-10; Henry Wansbrough, Theology in St. Paul, Theology Today, no. 16 (Cork, Ireland: Mercier Press, 1968), pp. 65-66; Gene Lacoste Munn, "Introduction to Colossians," Southwestern Journal of Theology 16(1973): 16-20; Eduard Lohse, "Pauline Theology in the Letter to the Colossians," New Testament Studies 15(1968-69): 211-20; Edwin Lewis, "Paul and the Perverters of Christianity," Interpretation 2(1948): 147-57; Bruce Vawter, "The Colossian Hymn and the Principle of Redaction," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 33(1971): 71-74; William L. Hendricks, "All in All: Theological Themes in Colossians," Southwestern Journal of Theology 16(1973): 23-25.

Paul introduces the letter with words of commendation (Col 1:3-8). He speaks of personally giving thanks for their faith, hope, good works, and love. He recommends that the Colossians continue to grow in knowledge, wisdom, and spiritual understanding so that they may walk worthily (Col 1:9-10). From this pleasing introduction, Paul then moves into an eloquent Christological statement.

The Apostle possibly believed that a comment on the cosmic Christ would assist in the refutation of the syncretistic error which was penetrating the Colossian congregation.[1] Paul appealed to an objective hymn as the framework within which he developed his Christology.[2] This two-stanza hymn is redemption-oriented.[3] Cosmology is ultimately subservient to soteriology.[4]

> The Christological 'hymns,' . . . in the event turn out to be soteriological tributes paid to the cosmic salvation wrought by the redeemer. His salvific work is seen as that of bringing together the two orders of existence. . . the celestial and terrestrial--and his reconciliation is described in a cosmic, transcendental setting.[5]

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[1]Alexander Ross, "The Epistle to the Colossians and Its Message for Today," Evangelical Quarterly 23(1951): 24.

[2]See Ralph P. Martin, "Some Reflections on New Testament Hymns," in Christ the Lord, ed. Harold H. Rowdon (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1982), pp. 37-49. J. M. Robinson, "A Formal Analysis of Colossians 1:15-20," Journal of Biblical Literature 76(1957): 270-87; Guthrie, Theology, pp. 343-65; Käsemann, Essays, p. 149.

[3]Ralph P. Martin, "An Early Christian Hymn: (Col.1:15-20)," Evangelical Quarterly 36(1964): 196; Wayne McCown, "The Hymnic Structure of Colossians 1:15-20," Evangelical Quarterly 51(1979): 156-62.

[4]T. E. Pollard, "Colossians 1:12-20: A Reconsideration," New Testament Studies 27(1981): 572-75; Lohse suggests that Christ crucified is taken up as the theologia crucis in Colossians (p. 214).

[5]Martin, "Some Reflections" p. 49.

Stanza one of the hymn includes Col 1:15-16c. A refrain contains the material of vss. 17-18a. Then the second stanza continues from vss. 18b-20.[1] Vs. 17, the first half of the refrain, summarizes the contents of stanza one, which is dominated by the theme Christ and creation. Vs. 18a, the latter half of the refrain, condenses in anticipation vss. 18b-20, where the emphasis is upon Christ and the Church.[2] Thus the refrain reflects the intent of the whole hymn--Christ is supreme in the heavens and on earth.[3]

Christology and ecclesiology are in proximity.[4] It is appropriate that vs. 18a should contain a reference to the Church as the Body. While σῶμα is not qualified in vs. 18 by Χριστοῦ, the pronoun αὐτός contextually identifies σῶμα as the Body of Christ.[5]

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[1]McCown suggests here a slight alteration to the usual two stanza reconstruction (pp. 159-60). See P. T. O'Brien, "Col. 1:20 and the Reconciliation of All Things," Reformed Theological Review 33(1974): 46. O'Brien recognizes a chiasm in vss. 16c and 20.

a.	τὰ πάντα	b.	καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ
b.	καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ	a.	τὰ πάντα
	vs. 16c		vs. 20

[2]Best, One Body, p. 116.

[3]Martin, "An Early Christian Hymn," pp. 197-98.

[4]Bruce M. Metzger, "The New Testament View of the Church," Theology Today 19(1962): 379; Paul L. Hammer, "A Comparison of KLERONOMIA in Paul and Ephesians," Journal of Biblical Literature 79(1960): 272; D. R. Denton, "Inheritance in Paul and Ephesians," Evangelical Quarterly 54(1982): 157-62.

[5]While eschatological hope is not entirely missing in Colossians (chaps. 2:2-3; 3:1,4; 5:23,27), the general stress on Christology and ecclesiology seems to evidence a shift in the Pauline motif of eschatology. Could Paul's emphasis on the benefits of the eschaton here and now to the Church be because the Apostle needed to stress the present status and sufficiency of Christ?

The inclusion of τῆς ἐκκλησίας at the end of vs. 18 is important. Without this "epexegetic genitive," as Käsemann calls it, "functioning as an elucidating expression in apposition to τοῦ σώματος the reader would not be able to determine which 'body' Paul was taking about."[1] This genitive also provides a clarification of vs. 16 where Christ is set forth as creator of all things in heaven and on earth. His realm of supremacy according to vs. 18a includes specifically the Church on earth.

In Colossians a new dimension to the Body of Christ concept emerges. For the first time Paul introduces the idea of Christ as the Head of the Church.[2] He is possibly stimulated to refer to Christ as the Head because of his earlier hymnic references to πρωτότοκος in Col 1:15; ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα in vs. 16; and αὐτός ἐστιν πρὸ πάντων in vs. 17, where Christ is presented as the source and origin of all things.[3]

See Richard J. Bauckham, "Colossians 1:24 Again: The Apocalyptic Motif," Evangelical Quarterly 47(1975): 168-70; Küng, p. 230; Beker, pp. 303-304.

[1]Käsemann, Essays, p. 151. Vawter believes that τῆς ἐκκλησίας is an example of a redaction with τοῦ σώματος originally representing the cosmic body of the universe as understood by a syncretism of pagan, Hellenistic, and Jewish thought (p. 75). See also Eduard Schweizer, The Letter to the Colossians (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Publishing, 1982), pp. 58-59; idem, TDNT, 7:1074-75; Käsemann, Essays, p. 151; Ernst, p. 243. It is possible that this whole section was not borrowed but formed an early Christian baptismal liturgy. On this and alternative views see T. Francis Glasson, "Colossians 1:18,15 and Sirach xxiv," Novum Testamentum 11(1969): 154-56; J. C. O'Neill, "The Source of the Christology in Colossians," New Testament Studies (1980): 87-100; Fred B. Craddock, "'All Things in Him': A Critical Note on Col. 1:15-20," New Testament Studies 12(1965): 78-80.

[2]Schweizer, Colossians, pp. 61-63.

[3]Idem, Church Order, p. 106; Minear, p. 207; Scott, p. 12; Lohse, p. 215. The symbolic nature of the Body of Christ and

The application of Christ as Head is clarified further in chap. 2:10. Here Christ is presented Head πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας (cf. chap. 1:16). This statement of Christ's redemptive supremacy is intended to encourage the Colossians against any Christological heresy. Every form of existence in creation is filled with the completeness of life because Christ is the Head. No inferior intermediaries or angelic intercession (chap. 2:18) can offer anything, for they also are under the same Head as the Colossae congregation.

In chap. 1:18 reference is made to Christ as the ἀρχή and the πρωτότοκος of the dead. The inference is, when Col 1:15-17 is remembered, that Christ is not only foremost in the universe, but Christ is specifically set forth as the founder of a new people; a new humanity, as taught by Rom 5:17-19; 8:29. By allowing ἵνα, which introduces the last clause of vs. 18b, to take its full weight of meaning as a purpose conjunction, it seems that Christ's pre-eminence in the universe "in all things" is established when it is recognized that He is the Head of the Church, which is the new "people of God."[1]

Should this approach to the text be legitimate, then the meaning seems clear. The Apostle's introduction of the Church

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Head concepts should perhaps be recognized by a problem of logic which arises if these terms are too literally applied. How can the entire Christ be the Head and at the same time the Church be Christ's Body (cf. 1 Cor 12:12-27; Rom 12:4-5; Col 1:18a)?

[1]The limited scope of the present study precludes any detailed comment on the important relationship between the concepts σῶμα Χριστοῦ and the "people of God." For appropriate discussions consult Minear, p. 228; Schnackenburg, p. 166; Ridderbos, pp. 393-95; Küng, p. 224; Worgul, p. 28.

as the Body of Christ with Christ as the Head is no mere addendum, but a central idea to his overall argumentation.[1] Because Christ is the Head of a new people on the earth, His rightful supremacy in the universe is undeniable.[2]

> Christ's achievement in making peace on the cross shows how his atonement reached even those malevolent forces and secured for them a place in God's design for the universe in which, at the last, there should be no discord (Eph. 1:10).[3]

This line of attack takes the Colossians from the known, visible reality of the Church in which they should be able to detect the theoretical and experiential pre-eminence of Christ, to the less known invisible state of the universe where Christ's pre-eminence has been questioned and requires re-confirmation. Hendricks has said it well: "The life of the body of Christ, the Church, is the primary pragmatic proof which this visible world has of God's invisible world."[4] Thus the brief introduction

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[1]R. P. Martin, "Reconciliation and Forgiveness in the Letter to the Colossians," in Reconciliation and Hope, ed. Robert Banks (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1974), p. 112. See also William L. Lane, "Creed and Theology: Reflections on Colossians," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 21 (1978): 213-20.

[2]Does Paul take this line of argument because he believes that the whole universe in some way, on the one side, requires reconciling to God, and on the other side, God requires His own vindication before the universe? Vs. 20 indicates that the "all things" transcends the earthly. See Martin, Colossians, pp. 60-61; Best, One Body, p. 115; Ross, pp. 25-26. Banks does not seem to acknowledge this point (p. 76).

[3]Martin, Colossians, pp. 60-61. It is worthy of note that Best refers to Lohmeyer's suggestion that Paul's central conception of reconciliation has as its background the teaching concerning the Day of Atonement. Lohmeyer, according to Best, "shows that the Day of Atonement has a universal reference to the cosmos, as well as a particular reference to the Jewish people" (One Body, p. 116).

[4]Hendricks, "All in All," p. 34. Lohse believes that

of Head in Colossians, appearing as a term independent from Body of Christ, is designed to denote the total supremacy of Christ.

Christ's Body is also identified with the Church in chap. 1:24.[1] The context is that of Paul's personal ministry, including his suffering. There is no hint that Paul's sufferings in any way completed the sufferings of Christ on the cross. Paul's sufferings for the Church, which he gladly bore, assisted him in his appreciation of the afflictions of Christ for redemption. Paul's sufferings, like Christ's, were vicarious. Vs. 24 makes a vital clarification on the Body of Christ theme. There exists between the risen, glorified Christ and His Church an intimate experiential relationship. Each suffers for the sake of the other.[2] The Church's suffering is, however, of a different quality and purpose to that of Christ's redemptive suffering. The Body corporate and the individual Paul suffer afflictions as an inevitable part of their response to Christ's suffering for them. The Church's suffering strengthens the bond of spiritual unity and identification with Christ.[3]

"the church is designated as the place where Christ realizes his world-wide reference to the Jewish people" (p. 215).

[1]Proudfoot, pp. 156-59. [2]Hanson, Unity, p. 37.

[3]Matt 25:35-36, Acts 9:4, and Phil 3:10 seem to verify this idea. See Paul L. Trudinger, "A Further Brief Note on Colossians 1:24," Evangelical Quarterly 45(1973): 36-38; Roy Yates, "A Note on Colossians 1:24," Evangelical Quarterly 42(1970): 88-89, outlines five basic interpretations of Col 1:24. He shows that an appreciation of this text is complicated by the meaning of such words as ἀνταναπληρῶ which stands as a hapax legomenon in the LXX and New Testament.

While Col 1:24 reveals the intimate connection between Christ and His Church, Col 2:17 deals with the origin of this Body.[1] The Church does not originate in, nor is it sustained by, the practice of Judaistic ceremonial rituals (Col 2:16). The Colossians are not to include syncretistically the shadow of things to come, that is, the Judaistic ceremonies, into their Christianity and their Church. The concluding phrase, τὸ δὲ σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, is a summary echo of what Paul has set forth in Col 1:14-22 and, particularly, in Col 2:6-7 concerning the Church as the Body being "rooted and built up" in Christ.[2]

Paul promotes a theme reminiscent of 1 Cor 12 and Rom 12 when he exhorts his readers to unite with Christ as the Head (Col 2:19) and to unite with each other because Christ is their peace (Col 3:15). In these two final Colossian passages the Apostle wishes to emphasize two things. First, in Col 2:19, he argues that those who are not motivated in their religious beliefs and practices by a dynamic spiritual connection with Christ cannot be part of the Body.[3] Just as the individual

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[1]Best, One Body, p. 121.

[2]Note must be made of Ian A. Moir, "Some Thoughts on Col. 2,17-18," Theologische Zeitschrift 35(1979): 363-65, where the author advances that since σῶμα is not used in classical Greek for "substance" or "reality," that it is difficult to determine how σκιά and σῶμα should relate. He also questions the usual method of interpreting vs. 17, partly because the τοῦ is absent from certain textual witnesses including Sin, D, and P^{46}. He concludes that if σῶμα is an antithesis for σκιά it is by implication only thanks to the inference of chap. 2: 6-7,9-10.

[3]A brief note by G. H. Whittaker, many years ago, suggested that the emphasis in Col 2:19 is possibly not on the inter-relation of the various functional ministries in the Body but "on the whole Body to its Head" ("The Building and the

physical head of a person is the origin of bodily stimulation, so it is spiritually true of Christ and the members of His Church. Without connection to Christ there is no real life or unity in the one claiming to be part of the Church. Christ as the Head is not only the supreme authority but the "source of life for the church."[1]

Secondly, Col 3:15 infers that Christ, by His peacemaking activity, did not bring many "bodies" into existence, but ἕις (cf. Rom 12:5; 1 Cor 12:12,20). Though there is diversity, the Church is one because of its unity with Christ.

The Ephesian Usage

Lying behind the Ephesian usage is the theme of "in Christ." John A. Allen suggests that for the size of the epistle, "in Christ" should appear seventeen or eighteen times. However, twice that number of occurrences have been located.[2] The Ephesian application of "in Christ" seems more instrumental than in Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, or even Colossians. The formula stands for God's activity through Christ. Ideas of the corporate personality and experiential incorporation into Christ are present in Ephesians.[3]

Body [Eph ii 21f., iv. 16; Col 1. 19]," Theology 13[1926]: 335-36.

[1]Wansbrough, p. 171.

[2]John A. Allen, "The 'In Christ' Formula in Ephesians," New Testament Studies 5(1958-59): 54-55.

[3]Allen uses this alternative approach to the use of "in Christ" to deny Pauline authorship (p. 59). Clowney emphasizes the redemptive aspects of the "in Christ" theme in Ephesians (p. 41). Cognizance is taken of Bedale's statement where he

Ephesians contains three main passages which utilize the concept of σῶμα or σῶμα Χριστοῦ as a thematic by-product of the "in Christ" emphasis of the letter. The references are as follows: Eph 1:22,23; 4:4,12,15-16; 5:22-25. Much of what has been said for the Church as the Body of Christ from the major epistles can be re-applied to Ephesians. There are certain developments which surface in Ephesians to clarify Paul's understanding of σῶμα Χριστοῦ.

First, because of the cosmic Christology in Colossians it seems apparent that there is a certain universalization of the phrase the Body of Christ as it represents the Church.[1] The universalization of the Church comes to the fore in Ephesians.[2] This is evidenced in Ephesians by the cosmic argument in Eph 1:21 and 3:10 for example.

Secondly, the major epistles seem to use σῶμα Χριστοῦ metaphorically, while Ephesians begins to shift from a metaphorical application to an ontic reality.[3] It is possible that this occurs because of the stress of the universal Church and because of the unity theme of the letter. Christ and the Church are spoken of in such relational proximity that the line between metaphor and reality is easily blurred.

The above leads to the third development. In Ephesians the unity theme undergirds Paul's message. This theme is prompted

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equates "in Christ" with being "in the body of Christ" (p. 66). See also Nelson, p. 25; Corley, pp. 31-22.

[1] Bruce states that the Ephesian universalization of the Church is inferred even in 1 Cor 1:3 ("St. Paul in Rome," p. 312).

[2] Schweizer, Church Order, p. 107. [3] Daines, p. 76.

by the recurring statements of salvific participation "in Christ."[1] Unity is applied initially to the Ephesians's individual vertical relationship to Christ and then their resultant horizontal relationship to each other as Jews and Greeks (Eph 2:13-14; 3:6; 4:7,13).[2] For Paul this is the test of the strength of Christ's priority. Christ is above all because in the Church Jew and Gentile are able to dwell together successfully. Because of Christ's solidarity towards mankind, there can be solidarity between Jew and Gentile (Eph 2:15-16).[3]

Finally, the specific development of σῶμα Χριστοῦ is limited to the use of κεφαλή and πλήρωμα in Eph 1:22-23; 4:15; and 5:23. The centrality of these two expressions make them worthy of specific attention. Careful consideration of Paul's use of "head" and "fulness" not only clarifies his essential understanding of σῶμα Χριστοῦ, but, at the same time, provides insights to the other Ephesian developments outlined which lie at the root of the Apostle's application of σῶμα Χριστοῦ.[4]

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[1]See Eph 1:4,7,10,12,13,15 for example. Further, see Richard R. Caemmerer, "Preserve the Unity of the Spirit," Concordia Theological Monthly 41(1970): 387-89; Kirby, pp. 140-45; Polhill, pp. 465-79; Allan, pp. 54-62.

[2]Wansbrough, p. 73.

[3]Stanley points out that in letters where the ideas of Church, Adam, Christ, and solidarity are brought to the fore by Paul, he alludes strongly to the Old Testament scriptures (p. 396). See Andrew T. Lincoln, "The Use of the O.T. in Ephesians," Journal for the Study of the New Testament 14(February, 1982): 16-57; Sampley, pp. 3-4, 161.

[4]For instance, these two terms assist in the appreciation of the meaning of the "in Christ" and the unity themes of Ephesians. See Bruce, "St. Paul in Rome," pp. 303-19.

Kephalē

Paul's use of "head" in Ephesians parallels in a general way the Colossian usage. The first reference to Christ as Head is in the setting of Christ's over-all supremacy and priority, including the Church.[1]

It has long been recognized that Paul introduces his letter to the Ephesians in an attitude of prayer, thanksgiving, and exaltation.[2] Throughout Eph 1:3-3:21 it seems that this "tapestry of prayer" is continued.[3] Commencing in chap. 1:3-14, the writer uses one long sentence as his opening statement of blessing and praise. He utilizes a method similar to the Jewish berākāh and develops the idea of Christ's significance in salvation history.

While the prayer of thanksgiving continues in chap 1:15-23 there is a change of direction from the general to the specific and personal. Paul gives thanks for the faith of the Ephesian congregation, but reveals that he wishes that God would grant them wisdom and knowledge of Him so that they might perceive the "hope" and "riches" of the "inheritance."

Paul begins even in chapter one to fulfil his own desire for the Ephesians to receive this knowledge and perception. At vs. 20 he moves the focus of attention from the believers to

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[1]Since all the major themes of σῶμα Χριστοῦ including "head" and "fulness" are located in Eph 1:22-23, this brief passage is pursued exegetically more rigorously than are the latter passages.

[2]Scott, p. 124.

[3]Corley, p. 26.

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Christ.[1] Paul exalts Christ in vss. 20-23 as the Lord, the one in and through whom "knowledge," "hope," and "inheritance" may be found. As in Col 1:15-17,20, Paul in these later vss. 20-22a of Ephesians underscores the universal uniqueness and priority of Christ. Vss. 22b-23 contain all of Paul's major concepts regarding Christ and the Church. In one and a half verses the Apostle speaks of κεφαλή, ἐκκλεσία, σῶμα, and πλήρωμα. The compression of such meaningful terms indicates that this passage is a paramount summary statement of all that Paul attempts to say in this letter.

In Col 1:18 and 2:10 the Headship of Christ develops from the idea that Christ is first in all the universe. The focus on Christ is cosmic rather than ecclesiological. By comparison, in the initial Ephesian reference to Christ as Head, the emphasis is upon his ecclesiological significance which stems from His redemptive priority (Eph 1:20-22).

Both Eph 4:15-16 and Col 2:9 imply that the proper functioning of the Body is determined by the Head, Christ, who is prior and superior to the Church. The Colossian passage expresses the fact that all are under one Head, therefore, there should be vertical and horizontal unity. At Eph 4:15 the Church rather than the universe is in direct focus. Though Paul makes reference to "every wind of doctrine" in vs. 14, the emphasis is upon Christ the Head as the unifying factor, as the full measure and stature (vs. 13). The Church is to grow into that maturity and completeness prompted by Christ who is the source

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[1]Ibid.

and origin of the unifying growth. There is an experiential note implicitly sounded which is not as clearly discernible in Colossians.

This inference seems to be acceptable because vss. 15-16 are placed as the climax to a longer passage in this overall parenthetic chapter. The chapter has a charismatic theme similar to 1 Cor 12:12-27 and Rom 12:1-21.[1] Vss. 15-16 in this chapter presents the thought that the Church, like the human body, is not static, it is ever-growing. Vs. 12b with its use of οἰκοδομήν confirms this understanding.[2]

Growth and maturity are related to Christ the Head. The double stress upon Head and Body are reminders that any upbuilding of the Church through the Holy Spirit's bestowal of gifts (vs. 11) is possible only because of the priority of Christ. The "growing" is to be taken in the sense of quality of unity and maturity in the Church. By extension, the concept can include quantitative growth.

As well, Paul directs the reader's attention to the idea that the gifts come to the Church as a means to an end, namely, maturity and completeness as it is measured in Christ, the Head. Christ also provides the gifts and the unity. The Church can grow

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[1]D. M. Lloyd-Jones, Christian Unity: An Exposition of Ephesians 4:1 to 16 (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1980), p. 254. For a general comment on spiritual gifts and Paul, see E. E. Ellis "'Spiritual' Gifts in the Pauline Community," New Testament Studies 20(1974): 128-44.

[2]Paul seems here to mix his metaphors. See Lloyd-Jones, p. 258. The K.J.V. rendering of οἰκοδομήν as "edifying" rather than "building" at vss. 12b and 16c reduces the force of Paul's stress on the growth of the Church.

harmoniously towards Christ despite the functional diversity.[1] "God has extended a call which demands a life of unity in Christ and a life of holiness, but both are supplied by God."[2]

The final reference to "head" in Ephesians is in an ethical passage utilizing the marriage relationship.[3] In this hortatory pericope, the ecclesiological transcends the matrimonial. There is no direct parallel to this haustafel in the companion epistle, Colossians.[4] Col 3:18-19 does deal with the aspect of submission of the wife to the husband, and the ἀγάπη type of love the husband should express towards the wife, but there are no ecclesiological overtones. The argument of Eph 5:22-23 is an advancement.[5]

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[1]Here more clearly than in 1 Cor 12 and Rom 12, the connection between the Church's unity and Christ, the source of that unity, is revealed. The Church experientially realizes that it is Christ's Body with Christ as the source, origin, and goal because of the unity in diversity that exists. See Ridderbos, pp. 378-79.

[2]David E. Garland, "A Life Worthy of the Calling: Unity and Holiness Ephesians 4:1-24," Review and Expositor 76(1979): 517-27. See also Caemmerer, p. 408.

[3]Paul's understanding of marriage is not explicitly dealt with in this study. For detailed analysis see D. M. Lloyd-Jones, Life in the Spirit in Marriage, Home and Work: An Exposition of Ephesians 5:18 to 6:9 (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1973), pp. 115-29; M. Barth, Ephesians, pp. 651, 655-99; Sampley, pp. 157-58.

[4]For a discussion of the haustafel concept consult Frank Stagg, "The Domestic Code and Final Appeal: Ephesians 5:21-6:24," Review and Expositor 76(1979): 541-51; Sampley, pp. 6-10.

[5]For a discussion of a related topic see I. A. Muirhead, "The Bride of Christ," Scottish Journal of Theology 5(1952): 175-87.

Vss. 22-23 are located within the larger section of chap. 5:21-22.[1] In this section Paul elaborates on Christ's sovereignty over the Church (vss. 21-24), Christ's love for the Church (vss. 25-27), and Christ's unity with the Church (vss. 28-33).[2] Oneness, unity, and the authority of Christ are the key concepts undergirding the whole passage. Vs. 21 seems to set the direction of the whole segment. The participle ὑποτασσόμενοι, which should be translated as an imperative (cf. the K.J.V. and R.S.V. renderings), links the preceding ideas of the earlier verses to the ideas about to be expressed.[3] The submission that each is to render to the other in the Body grows out of the individual's attitude of submission to Christ the Head.[4] On the other side, Christ's Headship grows out of what he is, namely, the One who is prior to and above the Church; and specifically what He has done for the Church redemptively (vss. 23c and 25c).[5]

The spiritual relationship that exists between Christ and the Church in submission is effectively illustrated by

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[1]Winsome Munro, "Col. 3.18-4.1 and Eph. 5.21-6.9: Evidences of a Late Literary Stratum?" New Testament Studies 18(1971-72): 434-47, believes that the Colossians' passage is dependent upon the Ephesian one. She concludes that both are late additions.

[2]Batey, "ΜΙΑ ΣΑΡΞ," p. 270.

[3]The recurring participles of vss. 19-20 link vs. 21 linguistically with what has been said. For a discussion of the imperatival use of participles, see A. P. Salom, "The Imperatival Use of the Participle in the New Testament," Australian Biblical Review 11(1963): 41-49.

[4]Stagg, pp. 544-545; Sampley, p. 153.

[5]Ridderbos, p. 379.

reference to the husband/wife relationship. Paul believes that the marital situation is a necessary illustration since the Christ/Church relationship, like the husband/wife relationship, is real and yet a great mystery (vs. 32).[1] The unity in both spheres is discernible but difficult to define.[2]

It is also Paul's intention to show that in spite of Christ's Headship, as the source of authority for the submissive, obedient Church, there is real harmonious spiritual unity. But this Christ/Church unity is not to be understood in a complementary way; nor do individuals within the Body lose their distinctiveness.[3] "In marriage and in the body of Christ, human existence is found in the polar tension between the individuality which distinguishes each person from the other and the corporateness which makes them one."[4] Finally, at chap. 5:31 the Apostle calls up Gen 2:24 and applies the "one flesh" theme to reinforce the intimate union of the Head and the Body.[5]

Though metaphorical terminology is present in Eph 5, Paul seems to come closer than ever before to some type of literal

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[1]The relationship can be accepted as a mystery without accepting it as a mystical relationship. See Batey, "Hieros Gamos," pp. 121-27; Thornton, "Body of Christ," p. 81; Nygren, Christ and His Church, p. 96; Cerfaux, p. 280.

[2]Unity in the marriage and ecclesiological environments defies complete definition because both are spiritual unions with visible experiential consequences. This inability to define is compounded by the lack of human vocabulary which can be used to express the nature of the spiritual union.

[3]Stagg, p. 547. [4]Ibid., p. 548.

[5]Batey, "MIA ΣΑΡΞ," pp, 270-71. Batey here suggests that the "one flesh" idea is a fitting illustration to be used as Jew and Greek alike understood the "one flesh" concept of marriage.

understanding of σῶμα Χριστοῦ. Paul elaborates on the kind of Headship Christ provides and the kind of submission the Church is to render. This atmosphere provides the potential for some to assume an ontological and literal interpretation.

The importance of kephalē

Paul's inclusion of κεφαλή in Ephesians in proximity to σῶμα clarifies the Apostle's ecclesiological understanding of the latter term. At the same time the appearance of κεφαλή provides insights into his Christology. The Ephesian (and Colossian) use of κεφαλή is not completely new. In 1 Cor 11:3 the Apostle provides a clue to his subsequent use of "head." In this single 1 Corinthian use, the principle of argument advanced by Paul is not so much one of superiority, control, rule, but of a relationship of beginning, which is determinative for the whole of continuing existence.[1]

Secular Greek usage of κεφαλή, before and during the Pauline era, applied κεφαλή as a designation for "what is first, supreme, or extreme."[2] In practice the classical writers applied the term in the sense of "top," "point," "end," or "point of departure."[3] The word also took a more figurative meaning of that which is "prominent," "outstanding,' or "determinative."[4] Κεφαλή was at times used for the "whole man."[5]

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[1]H. Schlier, "κεφαλή, ἀνακεφαλαιόομαι," TDNT, 3:679; Stephen Bedale, "The Meaning of κεφαλή in the Pauline Epistles," Journal of Theological Studies 5(1954): 214; Ridderbos, p. 382.

[2]Schlier, TDNT, 3:673. [3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid., p. 674. [5]Ibid.

Recognized lexiographers concur on the point that κεφαλή in secular Greek usage was not applied in the sense of rule, or authoritative head of a society.[1] Arndt and Gingrich do admit that there are five passages in the New Testament where the idea of "superior rank" could be the applied meaning for κεφαλή.[2] What is the origin of this possible understanding? Some scholars say Judaism, some say Hellenism, and others look to Gnostic influences.[3]

The Hebrew רֹאשׁ has two basic definitions. First, it could be taken in the literal physiological sense of "head." By derivation, the word could connotate the "top" of something, such as a mountain. At times it was used for the "sum" or "total," while at other times the word stood for a part of the whole (see Num 1:2; Judg 5:30). Secondly, the word could refer to "first" in the sense of "beginning" either from a point in time or as the origin.[4] When רֹאשׁ appears in the Old Testament with the idea of "chief," "leader," or "superior rank," this usage is associated with priority in the sense of "beginning" or "first," rather than in the sense of control over a "body" (1 Cor 5:12; 23:8-11).[5]

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[1]William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker, Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 430.

[2]Ibid.

[3]See Bruce, "St. Paul in Rome 3: The Epistle of the Colossians," Bulletin John Rylands Library 48(966): 268-85; Schlier, TDNT, 3:676-68.

[4]Bedale, "The Meaning of Κεφαλή," p. 212.

[5]Ibid., p. 213. For an interesting popular discussion of this issue see Berkeley Michelsen and Alvera Michelsen, "The

At times κεφαλή was used in the LXX to translate רֹאשׁ (though ἀρχή, ἄρχων, or ἀρχηγός seem to dominate).[1] When κεφαλή is used in the LXX the accepted Greek concept seems uppermost. It is applied to the "head" of a man or animal (Gen 28:11); the "top" of a mountain (Gen 8:5), or as an expression of individual responsibility (Ezek 33:4).[2] In spite of the specific variations of the root meaning for the κεφαλή and ἀρχή word groups, there appear to be some instances of a certain flexibility in their use as translation words for רֹאשׁ . For example, Isa 9:14-15 in the LXX uses both κεφαλή and ἀρχή interchangeably.[3]

To this must be added the fact that the ideas of "first" and "chief" in the sense of priority also have at times implicit in them the concepts of leadership, ruling, and authority. "Both the idea of height and elevation and the idea of precedence led to an association between רֹאשׁ and the idea of leadership."[4] Passages in the LXX such as Deut 28:13; Isa 1:4-5, 7:20; and Dan 2:38-39, utilizing κεφαλή, seem to lend themselves to this idea of superiority or determinative quality.

The value of the above discussion is that while there is a certain affinity between κεφαλή and ἄρχη in the LXX, there is no "suggestion that those who are led by this head constitute

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'Head' of the Epistles," Christianity Today, 20 February 1981, pp. 264-67.

[1]See the LXX renderings of Judg 11:11; 2 Sam 22:44; Micah 3:1.

[2]Schlier, TDNT, 3:675.

[3]Ibid., Bedale, "The Meaning of κεφαλή," p. 212.

[4]van Roon, p. 277.

a body appurtenant to this head."[1] If Paul drew on Jewish-Hellenistic categories rather than Gnostic categories for his definition of κεφαλή, then the relationship of κεφαλή to σῶμα requires careful reconsideration. The immediate impression is that in Ephesians and Colossians, the proximity between "head" and "body" is due to a development of the σῶμα terminology. Such a conclusion is readily available in Eph 4:15-16 and Col 2:19 where some kind of organic relationship between Christ and the Church seems at a first reading to be the most possible interpretation.

The alternative view suggests that κεφαλή and σῶμα are located in Ephesians as two separate terminologies.[2] The distinctiveness and independence of these two terms is highlighted by Paul's usage in 1 Cor 12 of σῶμα which includes not only the physical activity of the torso and limbs but also the head.[3] It must be remembered also that the 1 Cor 11:3 reference to κεφαλή is along the lines of the LXX application.[4]

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[1]Ibid., p. 278. See Colin Brown, ed., The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1976), 2:159-63; R. J. McKelvey, "Christ the Cornerstone," New Testament Studies 8(1961-62): 352-59; Hanson, Unity, p. 46; Clowney, pp. 44-45.

[2]M. Bouttier, Christianity According to Paul, Studies in Biblical Theology, no. 49 (London: SCM Press 1966), pp. 103-4; Clowney, p. 45.

[3]Minear, pp. 207-208; Ridderbos, p. 380.

[4]If by the use of κεφαλή in this verse Paul was attempting to define an organic relationship or some downward "chain of command," it would probably necessitate a different ordering of the words with Christ's relation to God commencing the sentence rather than ending it. There needs to be note made also of the fact that most contemporary readers come with a certain a priori understanding of the neurological relation between the head and

To these external considerations the internal evidence of Ephesians must be added. George Howard has noted that in Eph 1:22, κεφαλή can stand with πόδας just as aptly as it does with σωμα. Since the "head"/"feet" thought is clearly reminiscent of Ps 8:6, then it is possible to accept the notion that "Christ is head not because the church is his body, but because all things have been subjected under his feet."[1] Howard also advances that if κεφαλή is taken to mean primarily "ruler" it is difficult to conceive of the Christian growing up into Christ.[2] Should κεφαλή be used in the sense of "first" in respect to the Church, then Christ becomes the ideal true human for Christians to emulate. Christ is the archetypical image of Adam.[3]

A certain disassociation of "head" from "body" also seems to hold true for Eph 5:23.[4] Here Christ is not referred to as Head of the Body but Head of the Church.[5] This haustafel infers

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the body. It is doubtful that Paul was thus informed in spite of Plato, Hippocrates, and Galen. On these ideas see Bedale, "The Meaning of κεφαλή," p. 212; Balchin p. 32; Ridderbos, p. 380 fn 4.

[1]George Howard, "Head/Body Metaphors," p. 353. Compare 1 Cor 15:27 which quotes Ps 8:6 in a context of authority.

[2]Ibid.; Ridderbos, p. 380.

[3]George Howard, "Head/Body Metaphors," p. 354; Bedale, "The Meaning of κεφαλή,"p. 214; Best, One Body, p. 120; Thornton, Common Life, p. 226; Clowney, p. 40. Ridderbos discusses ideas regarding Christ as "first" and standing as Adam (pp. 382-85). Bouttier sees the Church as the new creation in Christ (p. 92).

[4]See also Eph 1:22-23 where Christ is referred to as Head of all rather than directly Head of the Church. Paul does not link κεφαλή and σῶμα in a complete identification where the former idea grows out of the latter. Κεφαλή arises independently and clarifies the identification and the essential nature of the ecclesiological σῶμα.

[5]van Roon, pp. 291-92.

that the rulership and authority of Christ over the Church exists because the Church originates in Christ the saviour of the ecclesiological Body.[1] So here the "whole somatic character of the ecclesia is made dependent on Christ, who is the kephalē and only in relation to him is the ecclesia enabled to be a body."[2]

Paul's use of "head" and "body" in Ephesians and Colossians is an original ecclesiological contribution denoting the Church's source of existence and Christ's priority and supremacy over the Church. The traditional understanding of the "head"/"body" relationship seems to be present only in a secondary way by inference. Consequently, this extended understanding points to the authority of Christ over the Church. The dependence and the participation of the Church with Christ in all spiritual things is underscored."[3]

Plēroma

Any discussion of κεφαλή in Ephesians is not complete without some reference to πλήρωμα and its derivatives.[4] A technical and theological definition of πλήρωμα is problematic. Paul's grammatical and linguistic usage of the word, πλήρωμα,

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[1]Ridderbos, p. 381.

[2]van Roon, pp. 291; see also Thornton, Common Life, p. 296; Bruce, Colossians, p. 201; Nelson, p. 22. Head, as it stands for Christ, cannot be primarily seen as an extension of Body, for to apply the metaphor in this way infers that in reality the existence of Christ depends on the existence of the Church and this is not so.

[3]Brown, p. 162.

[4]Best, One Body, p. 146; Ridderbos, p. 387; Dillistone, p. 64.

particularly at Eph 1:23, has been at the centre of scholarly discussion.

Secular usage of πλήρωμα applied the word as a reference with such meanings as "full contents," "entirety," "what is filled," "the act of filling."[1] Outside the New Testament πλήρωμα, therefore, seems to denote completeness in the sense of "fullness."[2] Utilization of πλήρωμα in the New Testament outside Paul is not highly theological.[3] Even in earlier Pauline literature the literal sense dominates.[4] The theological significance of the term comes to the fore in Colossians and Ephesians.

The grammatical and linguistic problems in the use of πλήρωμα at Eph 1:23 are of importance because the initial usage provides insights into the latter uses of the term at chaps. 3:19 and 4:10,13.[5] Is πλήρωμα syntactically active or passive? How does τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν relate to the term πλήρωμα and the participle πληρουμένου? Behind these syntactical questions lies a larger issue. The answers deduced affect the interpretation of

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[1]G. Delling, "πλήρωμα," TDNT, 6:298-99. M. Barth succinctly states that the word "denotes that which fills or completes. . . or it designates that which is filled up and full . . . the state of being full" (Ephesians, p. 158).

[2]The ancients of the pagan world often conceived of God as "filling" the whole cosmos. The fullness of the High Priest's robe prompted orthodox Jews to suggest that God's propitiation in some way "filled" the cosmos. See Knox, pp. 163-65.

[3]For example, Matt 9:16; Mark 2:21; 6:43; 8:20.

[4]For example, Rom 11:25,26; 1 Cor 10:36. For a list of New Testament uses see Hendriksen, Colossians, pp. 78-79, n. 65.

[5]Eph 1:10 is not included as it is not commenting on the nature of Christ, but on the completion of a designated period of time.

Paul's idea of σῶμα Χριστοῦ. There have been five major interpretations suggested. These five can be reduced to two basic options on the meaning of πλήρωμα.[1]

If πλήρωμα at chap. 1:23 is placed in apposition to σῶμα, the inference is that the Church completes Christ in some way. If the term is in apposition to the αὐτόν of vs. 22, then Paul is commenting upon the status and character of Christ.[2]

The advantage of the interpretation that the Church completes Christ in some way is that it overcomes the grammatical difficulty of associating πλήρωμα with αὐτόν, which is located thirteen words previously. However, the disadvantage of holding to this view is the theological tension regarding the composition of Christ. In what way can it be conceived that the Church "fills up" Christ to full measure or completes Christ?

Those who advocate this view take πλήρωμα as an active noun.[3] Τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν is adverbial. The theological problem is overcome by suggesting that the verse is to be interpreted "in terms of the corporate categories which figure so largely in the writings of Paul. . . . . Christ is seen as the inclusive

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[1]Dependence upon Roy Yates, "A Re-examination of Ephesians 1:23," Expository Times 83(1971-72): 146-51, is acknowledged for the material on πλήρωμα. See also A. R. McGlashan, "Ephesians 1:23," Expository Times 76(1964-65): 132-33; C. L. Mitton, Ephesians, New Century Bible (London: Oliphants, 1976), pp. 77-78.

[2]Yates, "Ephesians 1:23," p. 147; M. Barth, Ephesians, 1:159, 205-10.

[3]Yates, "Ephesians 1:23," p. 148.

personality into which Christians are incorporated by faith in Baptism."[1]

Hendriksen likewise believes that "the church is Christ's complement."[2] He accepts this view by virtue of the analogy of the bride and bridegroom, branches and vine, and sheep and shepherd. He does not believe that such a view detracts from the "absolute majesty or self-sufficiency of Christ."[3] The essence of Christ is complete without the Church, but Christ is completed by the Church in the same way as the bride, branches, and sheep complete the bridegroom, vine, and shepherd.[4]

The alternative view suggests that πλήρωμα is passive and τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν adverbial. Thus "Christ is the fulness or full-representative of God, who fills everything."[5]

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[1]Ibid., pp. 149-50. A. Robinson, Abbott, Barry, Grosheide, Hodge, Lenski, Simpson, and Yates take this view; see Hendriksen, Ephesians, p. 104. The method of incorporation into the Church is an important consideration in any discussion of σῶμα Χριστοῦ. However, the limitations of this present study prevent any study on the eucharist and the rite of Baptism as the means of incorporation. Consult Martin, "An Early Christian Hymn," pp. 198-99; Käsemann, Essays, pp. 149-65; Kirby, pp. 28, 144; Schnackenburg, p. 170; Küng, pp. 203-23; Lohse, p. 216; Ridderbos, pp. 396-428.

[2]Hendriksen, Ephesians, p. 104. [3]Ibid.

[4]Hendriksen, Ephesians, pp. 104-105, also adds five auxiliary reasons for accepting this view. Hanson believes πλήρωμα refers to the fact that Christ "needs" the Church (Unity, p. 37).

[5]Yates, "Ephesians 1;23," p. 149; see also Dillistone, p. 64. Mersch states that "Paul's teaching can be strictly theocentric without being any less Christo-centric: for if Christ is the center of all in man, God is the center of all in Christ" (p. 126). Allan sees "in Christ" in Ephesians as a designation for God's activity through Christ (p. 59). This view supports the "Christ as the church's fullness" concept. See also Schnackenburg, pp. 171-72.

Best considers the first alternative discussed "so startling as to be improbable."[1] His argument is worthy of note. "Christ fills the Church with his life; the Church is his plēroma even as he is the plēroma of God. He who fills the Church is himself 'being filled.'"[2] This view seems to be supported by the whole Christological argument of Colossians.[3] G. B. Caird has written along similar lines which clarify this interpretation further.

> God's purpose is being achieved in three stages: the fulness of his own divine nature has found complete expression in the man Christ Jesus; he has given Christ, the bearer of his fulness as his gift to the church, which is to be the first sharer of that fulness; and through the church he intends his fulness to pervade the rest of creation.[4]

Delling sumarizes his position in one sentence. "Πλήρωμα denotes σῶμα as that which is wholly filled by the mighty working of Christ."[5]

Any conclusion on the matter should probably recognize the following determinative criteria:

1. The whole weight of Pauline evidence in Colossians and Ephesians
2. The influence of Old Testament and Jewish ideas on Paul, particularly in regard to the oneness of God
3. The influence of Hellenistic tendencies upon Paul
4. The effectiveness of reasoning

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[1]Best, One Body, p. 143. [2]Ibid. [3]Ibid., p. 144.

[4]G. B. Caird, Paul's Letters from Prison (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 49; Ridderbos, pp. 389-91.

[5]Delling, TDNT, 6:304. Mitton confesses that the meaning of these verses is quite uncertain and "cannot legitimately be used to support any item of doctrine about Christ or his church" (Ephesians, p. 79).

5. The harmony or otherwise of the various interpretations with other Christological and ecclesiological statements[1]

Having considered the above criteria and the alternative views, it is advanced that πλήρωμα and derivatives are best understood in association with Christ who is the Church's "fullness" and completion, not vice-versa. Because of the "fullness" of Christ, the Church is to become in reality what it is by definition, namely, the Body of Christ. It is through His infilling that the Church can redemptively and experientially possess true unity.

Such a conclusion may be substantiated for the following reasons: First, the argument of Eph 1:22-23 is reminiscent of Col 1:18-19. In Colossians the point of the pericope is to avoid any syncretistic views of Christ. It is difficult to accept that the Apostle would then produce in Ephesians an ecclesiology which gives a syncretistic view of Christ, that is, the Church completing Christ. The Colossian statement at chap. 2:19, stating that in Christ "dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," infers that Christ is complete apart from the Church and prior to the Church. Ecclesiology does not promote unique or novel assertions about Christ's composition or essential nature. Thus any ecclesiological statement which impinges upon an already known Christological statement must be reconsidered. The concept that the Church completes the "full measure" of Christ seems to fall into this category.

Secondly, the argument favouring the completion of Christ by the Church seems to be implicitly influenced by the traditional

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[1]These criteria are taken from M. Barth, Ephesians, p. 159.

argument that κεφαλή and σῶμα, as ecclesiological designations, are complementary. When the idea of a "head" needing a "body" to be whole or complete is abandoned, the argument seems to be weakened.

Thirdly, by extension, must the analogy of the bride and bridegroom, branch and vine, sheep and shepherd necessarily be statements concerning the complementary nature of Christ and the Church? Perhaps such New Testament ideas could be viewed viably as references underscoring the origin and source of the Church's life in Christ.

Fourthly, though the grammatical construction of the second view is more difficult, it is not impossible. Paul's grammar elsewhere often seems to be inconsistent.[1] If the ἥτις ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ of vs. 23 is taken in an almost parenthetical sense, the separation of πλήρωμα and αὐτόν is halved.

Fifthly, the supporters of each view may be influenced by a certain bias towards a "high" or "low" ecclesiology. Those who advance a "high" ecclesiology where Christology is at times reduced in influence tend to promote the "Church completes Christ" definition of πλήρωμα in Ephesians. On the other side, those holding a "low" ecclesiology tend to promote the "Christ completes the Church" position. Subjectivism in some way influences many who make a decision regarding the Ephesian application of πλήρωμα.

Finally, Ephesians seems to take the Christological themes of Colossians and apply them to the ecclesiological setting

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[1]For examples see McGlashan, p. 183.

of the latter letter. Unity is the prominent theme of Ephesians. The idea that Christ "fills" the Church in every way gives a more adequate foundation for the unity theme of the epistle as it is expressed by means of the σῶμα Χριστοῦ concept.

Summary and Conclusion

Ephesians and Colossians demonstrate a shift in Paul's ecclesiological application of σῶμα Χριστοῦ from 1 Corinthians and Romans. This shift in emphasis is not to be defined as totally new, but a development of and a climax to Paul's understanding of the essential nature of the Church. The captivity epistles apply σῶμα Χριστοῦ differently, but not in a way inconsistent with earlier usage.[1]

1 Cor 12 and Rom 12 seem to stress the crucified Christ as Paul's organising principle. In Ephesians and Colossians it is the risen, glorified Christ who is central to the argumentation.[2] In addition, Paul formerly considers the ecclesiological σῶμα Χριστοῦ in the context of spiritual gifts. Though there is a diversity of spiritual gifts, congregational unity is possible and required. Because of the differing circumstances at Colossae and Ephesus, as well as in Paul's personal life, σῶμα Χριστοῦ in the latter epistles is developed out of the argument of the all-sufficient, universal supremacy of Christ.[3] Colossians becomes the immediate background for Paul's

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[1]Whiteley, p. 192. [2]Clowney, p. 42; Cerfaux, p. 326.

[3]Clowney, p. 42; Stanley, p. 397; Mersch, p. 122.

development in Ephesians of Christ's supremacy and priority over the Church.[1]

Consequently, in Colossians and, especially, Ephesians, the Apostle links the Christological and ecclesiological more intimately than ever before. This provides evidence for the assertion that the Ephesian use of σῶμα Χριστοῦ is concerned directly with the essential nature of the Church. Ephesians does not view the Church in its functional dimension but in what it is inwardly.[2]

Ephesians utilizes σῶμα Χριστοῦ as a designation for the Church universal.[3] Here the Church takes on cosmic significance. The Church on earth stands as a fitting testimony that Christ is the rightful master of the universe. The reconciliation of all things in the universe is effectively demonstrated by the existence of the Church on the earth. It is appropriate that the earthly Church should be given this role since it was on earth that the act of reconciliation by Christ was effected.

As Paul argues for Christ's supremacy over the Church in every way, he invokes the terms "head" and "fullness." These concepts, in association with σῶμα Χριστοῦ, are designed to teach that Christ is prior to and above the Church. He is the source and origin of the Church's existence.[4] At the same time, Christ is the complete fullness of the Church redemptively, spiritually,

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[1]Best, One Body, p. 155; Küng, p. 231.

[2]Ibid., pp. 157-58. [3]Küng, p. 230.

[4]Mersch, pp. 123-24.

and experientially. The Church's continued existence is sustained by Christ's in-filling. Christ completes the Church and not vice-versa. The supreme universal Christ constitutes the Church--a spiritual reality. God's power, the Holy Spirit, stands in the midst of the Church as a witness to Christ's supremacy over the Church.[1]

Σῶμα Χριστοῦ in Ephesians advances the thought that the Church is not static; it is to grow. Spiritual qualitative growth and visible quantitative growth are not automatic or self-generated. Real growth is dependent upon the Church's proper relation to Christ the Head. Through the Holy Spirit, Christ provides the wherewithal for the Church to grow. Growth comes as the Church is willingly submissive and obedient. Thus the Church must ever maintain Christ as the Head and never as the "feet."[2] If the Church usurps the rightful Headship and prerogatives of Christ, then, while visible numerical growth may be evidenced, true Christ-centred spiritual maturity will be absent. Any growth which may occur under these conditions does so in response to natural human effort rather than in response to the divine activity of the supernatural Christ.

The foil against which these ideas are developed is the Adam/Christ motif.[3] Christ stands at the Head of a new humanity. The many, that is the Church, are constituted in the one--Christ. For Paul this results in the fact that the unity of Christ and

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[1]Ridderbos, p. 372.

[2]Best, One Body, p. 158; Küng, p. 231, 238.

[3]Bruce, "St. Paul in Rome 4," pp. 311-12; Stanley, p. 397; Ridderbos, p. 387.

the Church is intimate, personal, and ultimately a mystery (but not mystical).[1] Unity as expressed by the use of σῶμα Χριστοῦ is not intended to suggest any loss of distinctiveness in either Christ or the Church.[2]

Christ's unity with the Church provides the source of experiential unity between Jew and Gentile. This unity, like Christ's unity with the Church, is ultimately a mystery.[3] For Paul, the harmonious existence together of Jew and Gentile in the Church is his dynamic witness to the power of the gospel and Christ's unity to the Church.[4] Because the Church's vertical and horizontal unity is constituted in Christ, the visible unity of the earthly Church transcends the social unity of all fellowship and organisations of human origin.[5]

Ephesians applies the "in Christ" term instrumentally. Christ is God's instrument as well as man's representative, who brings salvation and the corporate experience of the Church to the individual. Thus in Ephesians the "in Christ" motif is not devoid of certain experiential perspectives. To be "in Christ" includes, by definition, complete participation in the life of the Church. Participation extends to membership in the

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[1]Bruce, "St. Paul in Rome 4," pp. 321-22.

[2]Schnackenburg, p. 173.

[3]See Eph 2:16; 3:9-11. Also consult Corley, pp. 32-33; Schnackenburg, p. 174.

[4]Best, One Body, p. 156; Nygren, Christ and His Church, p. 96; Bruce, "St. Paul in Rome 4," pp. 313-15; Küng, pp. 231-32.

[5]Metzger, p. 379.

ecclesiological Body of Christ, the visible, earthly Church. To be in Christ redemptively as an individual automatically paves the way for participation in the Church. The former involves the latter. The Church is the arena in which individual salvation is experientially worked out in a corporate manner. The individual in participation with others in the Church provides witness to the legitimacy of the claim that Christ is universally supreme.

Like 1 Cor 12 and Rom 12, Paul's use of σῶμα Χριστοῦ in the captivity epistles is metaphorical. Ephesians applies σῶμα and σῶμα Χριστοῦ more technically than 1 Corinthians and Romans. These two terms are used as appellations for the Church without necessarily being tightly defined. Because of the prominence of ecclesiology in the letter to the Ephesians, Paul assumes that his readers will readily understand what he is referring to when he simply uses the term Body or Body of Christ.

In a limited sense, σῶμα Χριστοῦ is more than mere metaphor or analogy. Paul applies this language as a human attempt at defining and exposing the true nature of the Church. The "strong" metaphor σῶμα Χριστοῦ stands in Ephesians as a designation for a real, living, spiritual existence between Christ and those who participate "in Him."

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Introduction

Two concluding issues require brief but close consideration. First, what is the significance and function of metaphorical language?[1] Secondly, what is Paul saying in summary concerning the essential nature of the Church when he describes it as τὸ σῶμα Χριστοῦ?

Metaphorical Language

All thought, oral, and written communication is bound up with words which symbolize concrete and abstract realities. Words are the vehicle which give expression to meaning. The limitation of meaning is determined largely by the availability of appropriate language. Meaning is also limited by the personal experience of the one who transmits the language and the one who recieves the language. When words are used to categorize a concrete reality the meaning is usually not difficult to determine. For instance, the word "house" is readily meaningful

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[1]See G. B. Caird, The Language and Imagery of the Bible (London: Duckworth, 1980); F. P. Cotterell, "Language, Imagery, and Meaning," Vox Evangelica 13(1983): 85-92; Jan de Waard, "Biblical Metaphors and Their Translation," Bible Translator 25(1974): 107-16; Hans-Ruedi Weber, "Interpreting Biblical Images," Ecumenical Review 34(1982): 210-20; James A. Fischer, "Pauline Literary Forms and Thought Patterns," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 39(1977): 209-23; Park, pp. 37-40; Dulles, pp. 13-30.

because the symbol is associated with something which is physically experienced. A house can be seen, touched, and lived in. While the word "house" may not answer secondary concerns such as the size of the house, the colour, or the number of rooms, an objective concrete reality is basically understood by the application of a particular symbol to describe something which is familiar to all.

On the other side, it is more difficult to communicate symbolically through words categories which are abstract, conceptual, or which have never been experienced by the individual. Here the task of communication is to locate and apply familiar symbols to the unfamiliar. In working from the known to the unknown abstract reality, metaphor is often applied. Because metaphor communicates unfamiliar meaning by way of familiar language and experience, the perception of the metaphor and the intended meaning is open to interpretation. Those who read metaphorical language may perceive different meanings because of their personal bias and experience, as well as their inability to communicate directly with the one who originally wrote the particular metaphorical expression. Therefore, there is often no foolproof way of determining the author's intention. This problem is compounded when the author belongs to another era and culture.

Great responsibility is placed upon the reader to understand as best he can the context of the material in which the metaphor is located, and the nuance that the author and his first readers placed upon that metaphor. This responsibility

can be summed up in the question--"What is the author's intention?" Adherence to this question and its solution reduces the possibility of polysemy, which would otherwise permit the reader to perceive the meaning according to his own interests rather than in harmony with the author's intentions.

Of all metaphorical language, the most difficult rightly to perceive in harmony with the author's intention is that which revolves around the things of God. Here, as nowhere else in life, the finiteness of language comes against the infiniteness of God and His realm of existence. This is true of the Pauline term σῶμα Χριστοῦ as a designation for the Church.

Σῶμα Χριστοῦ is a metaphorical statement. There is little doubt that the Apostle knew in all probability of the existence and function of metaphor.[1] The question is not so much whether Paul used metaphor as what Paul's intention was in using σῶμα Χριστοῦ metaphorically? Even those who view the term realistically or corporeally, rather than metaphorically, have great difficulty in explaining how the Church is literally Christ's body without also applying σῶμα Χριστοῦ in some practical way as a metaphor. The point of scholarly divergence is how closely Paul intends the metaphor to be identified with its object, the Church. Some have perhaps read too much into Paul's use of σῶμα Χριστοῦ, while others too little.

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[1]Several Greek philosophers acknowledge the existence and value of metaphor. For example, see Isocrates 9.9; Aristotle, Poetica 1457^{b}6, Rhetorica 1410^{b}36; Epicurus Philosophus, De rerum natura 29.5.

From research advanced in earlier chapters it seems apparent that Paul intends his readers to catch a glimpse of the uniqueness of the Church. The Church, because of its relationship to Christ, transcends temporal organisations. It is a spiritual community in spite of its visibility. Paul uses metaphor to communicate an abstract spiritual reality to his readers. More importantly, he wishes to promote an atmosphere of relational existence between Christ and the individual, and the individual in co-operation with others. This second concern is foremost because the finiteness of human intellect precludes complete theoretical appreciation of what it means for the Church to be σῶμα Χριστοῦ. Paul is, after all, practical. When the human mind searches the intellectual or theological significance of σῶμα Χριστοῦ as far as limited comprehension permits, then the individual can return to the metaphor and consider its experiential and relational significance. A. Berkeley Michelsen aptly writes that "by the vehicle of metaphorical or analogous language we transcend our limitations. We not only discover reality; we have a vital relationship with it."[1]

In spite of any interpretative problems, σῶμα Χριστοῦ is a positive statement. The idea is unusual, which makes it memorable. It is paradoxical. Opposites such as "many" being "one" are placed in juxtaposition by means of this image. Σῶμα Χριστοῦ is convincing and impressive, allowing for the ready

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[1]A. Berkeley Michelsen, "The Metaphorical Language of Theology: Its Experiential Base--Biblical and Contemporary," in Current Issues in Biblical and Patristic Interpretation, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1975), pp. 353-54.

recall, in the space of one brief compact idea, of complex abstract conceptions regarding the Church. The image is aesthetically and emotionally appealing as it is drawn from the real world where the physical body is generally revered as a thing of beauty and intimacy. This metaphor permits a cogitation upon the literary style which precipitated is usage. It is also possible to understand more fully the life, times, and theology of Paul, the churchman.

Ecclesiological Considerations

In biblical research σῶμα Χριστοῦ is variously interpreted as a designation for the Church.[1] The interpretative positions are basically threefold--existential, corporeal, and metaphorical. Paul draws on Hellenistic Judaism as his source for this terminology.

The major epistles underscore the unity in diversity theme at the local church level. Participation with Christ produces unity between members. Salvation is expressed best in community. Subsequently, in the captivity epistles σῶμα Χριστοῦ is applied more fully. The Church universal rather than the Church local is in focus. Functional aspects of the Church are subsumed. These later epistles underscore the proximity between Christ and His Church. Christ fills the Church redemptively, spiritually, and experientially. On earth, the Church stands as

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[1]Apart from those works already cited, see also--A. T. Hanson and R. P. C. Hanson, Reasonable Belief: A Survey of the Christian Faith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980, pp. 215-33; Emil Brunner, Dogmatics, vol. 3: The Christian Doctrine

a perpetual witness to the universe that Christ is rightful Lord of all.

Σῶμα Χριστοῦ is a mot crochet. It provides the idea around which Paul's ecclesiological notions revolve. This terminology does not fully expound Paul's doctrine of the Church. However, without the presence of σῶμα Χριστοῦ it would be difficult to establish any adequate Pauline ecclesiology. Further, Paul's Christology would be somewhat weakened without the impressions afforded by the σῶμα Χριστοῦ concept.

This central Pauline image suggests that the Church is a spiritual reality. Specifically, this infers several general truths regarding the nature of the Church. For Paul the Church is spiritual in the sense that its origin and continued existence is derived from a dimension of reality which is not physical or earthly. As a spiritual entity, the Church is living, growing, and maturing as does the physical body. Thus the Church is dynamic and its self-appreciation will ever be progressive.

The Church is also a mystery. All spiritual realities are inevitably defined as mysteries because they move in directions beyond human comprehension. Though this is the situation, the Church should not be shunned because it is not completely understood. At the same time, neither should the Church be reduced to such simplistic terms that it is diluted to the level

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of the Church, Faith, and the Consummation (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), pp. 19-52; Jürgen Moltmann, The Church in the Power of the Spirit (London: SCM Press, 1977), pp. 1-18; J. Peter Schineller, "Christ and the Church: A Spectrum of Views," Theological Studies 37(1976): 545-66; Edmund Schlink, "Christ and the Church," Scottish Journal of Theology 10(1957): 1-23.

of a human organisation. Personal and corporate faith encourages the acceptance of certain spiritual realities which may evade complete definition.

The Church is central to the Christian's expression of his faith. The individual's attitude toward the Church reflects the regard that he has for Christ and other Christians. Belonging to the Church is no optional extra to be taken up or discarded at will. Protestantism must ever be mindful of the corporate aspects of participation in Christ.

Σῶμα Χριστοῦ includes no intimation that the Church is anything but one Church. Concepts of the visible and invisible Church are seemingly absent. From God's perspective the genuinely faithful and the superficially faithful exist together as do the "wheat and the tares" or "sheep and goats."

Because the Christian Church is Christ's, and clearly so, it is indestructible. Christ's connection with the Church, in spite of its frequent human foibles and frailties, guarantees the ultimate immortalization of the Church. Due to the proximity of Christ with the Church, it will eventually become the Church triumphant and glorious (Matt 16:18; Rev 21:9).

In the meantime, the Church as σῶμα Χριστοῦ is one in the sense of vertical and horizontal unity. Holiness is an attribute of the Church in that it is a spiritual community set apart and rooted in Christ. The Church is catholic. Each local church is not fully the Church, but each fully represents the universal Church. In a sense the Church is apostolic. Just as the apostles witnessed and proclaimed the resurrection of Christ, so the

Church's existence is a living expression declaring the resurrection of Christ.

In conclusion the reminder may be repeated that Paul's appropriation of the Body image as a metaphorical designation for the Church is rich in meaning. There is no other semantic construction which so ably expresses the essential nature and function of the Church. The words of Aristotle fittingly apply to Paul's thorough and thoughtful consideration of the Church in this way: "The greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor. It is the one thing that cannot be learned from others. It is the mark of genius."[1]

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[1] Poetica, 1459.

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