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### The Resurrection of the Body in its Significance for Sanctification

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**THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY IN ITS  
SIGNIFICANCE FOR SANCTIFICATION**

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by

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**June 1950**

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In the Apostles' Creed the resurrection of the body is placed into the Third Article and thus is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. This appears somewhat strange since Scripture ascribes the general resurrection of believers and unbelievers to Christ. Jesus Himself specifically states: "...the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, Scripture never asserts that the general resurrection is a work of the Holy Spirit. The only Scripture passage ascribing the resurrection of the body to the Holy Spirit is Romans 8:11: "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." But in this passage only the resurrection of the believers is mentioned, and even this meaning is questioned by some commentators who do not believe this passage refers to the bodily resurrection. Consequently, one would expect the

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<sup>1</sup>John 5:28,29.

resurrection of the body to be included in the Second Article of The Creed. Why, then, is it found in the Third Article?

Luther offers a solution to this problem in his Large Catechism when he states that

the Holy Ghost effects our sanctification by the following parts, namely, by the communion of saints or the Christian Church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting...."<sup>2</sup>

The resurrection is one of the means which the Holy Ghost uses in bringing about the believer's sanctification. It is for this reason that the resurrection is placed into the Third Article of the Creed instead of into the Second Article. The Creed, therefore, in mentioning the resurrection, refers only to the resurrection of the believers. And this paper will also restrict itself to a consideration of the resurrection of the bodies of the believers.

It is the purpose of this paper to consider the import of the placement of the resurrection of the body into the Third Article of the Creed, showing the significance which the resurrection of the body has for sanctification. In order to do this it will be necessary to trace the importance ascribed to the body from the creation of man at the beginning of the world to the final consummation in heaven. It will be shown that the

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<sup>2</sup>"The Large Catechism," Triglot Concordia, edited by F. Bente and W. H. T. Dau, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 687,37.



## CHAPTER II

### THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BODY IN THIS LIFE

From its very beginning the Bible teaches the importance of the body. In the seventh verse of the second chapter of Genesis the detailed account of man's creation is given. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Here at the outset the Bible answers the question regarding the number of parts constituting man. It teaches dichotomy, i.e., that man consists of two component parts, body and soul. God composed him of two elements, "the dust of the ground" and "the breath of life."

This dichotomous teaching is found throughout the Bible. Ecclesiastes states: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."<sup>1</sup> And Jesus Himself teaches dichotomy when he says: "...fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."<sup>2</sup> There are also many other passages describing man as consisting of body and soul.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ecclesiastes 12:7.

<sup>2</sup>Matthew 10:28.

<sup>3</sup>See Job 34:14,15; Psalm 73:26; 84:5; 104:29; Eph. 4:4; I Cor. 7:34; II Cor. 4:16; 7:1; and James 3:26.

In opposition to this teaching there are those who hold man to be trichotomous, consisting of three parts, body, soul, and spirit. Scripture contains four chief passages which appear to teach trichotomy. Although these passages appear to be trichotomous, actually they are not. In the Magnificat, Mary says: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour."<sup>4</sup> And Isaiah asserts: "With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early...."<sup>5</sup> These passages simply display the characteristics of Hebrew poetry, repeating the same thought from a different viewpoint in different words. And when St. Paul writes: "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,"<sup>6</sup> he simply shows how earnestly he desires the salvation of the Thessalonians. The author of the Hebrews states: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit...."<sup>7</sup> Here the different words, soul and spirit, are used for

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<sup>4</sup>Luke 1:46,47.

<sup>5</sup>Isaiah 26:9.

<sup>6</sup>I Thess. 5:23.

<sup>7</sup>Hebrews 4:12.



emphasis, showing how wonderfully sharp and piercing is the Word of God.<sup>8</sup>

Luther is numbered among those who held the trichotomous view. But his definitions of "spirit" and "soul" present an interesting insight into the question whether Holy Scripture teaches dichotomy or trichotomy. He says the spirit

. . . is the highest, deepest, and noblest part of man. By it he is enabled to lay hold on things incomprehensible, invisible, and eternal. It is, in brief, the dwelling-place of faith and the Word of God.<sup>9</sup>

The soul, according to Luther, ". . . is this same spirit, so far as its nature is concerned, but viewed as performing a different function, namely, giving life to the body and working through the body."<sup>10</sup> Thus Luther, in teaching trichotomy, asserts that the spirit and the soul are the same as far as their nature is concerned. He distinguishes between them by viewing the one spirit from two different angles. From this it is easy to see how dichotomy and trichotomy may be harmonized. Actually, as

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<sup>8</sup>R. Jesse, "The Trichotomy (Of Soul, Mind, Body) According to Scripture," unpublished Bachelor's Thesis, St. Louis: Concordia Seminary, n.d.), pp. XXII-XXV.

<sup>9</sup>Martin Luther, "The Magnificat," Works of Martin Luther with Introductions and Notes, translated from the German by A. T. W. Steinhaeuser (Philadelphia: A. J. Holman Company and the Castle Press, c. 1915), III, p. 132.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 132.

O. M. Norlie<sup>11</sup> points out, most everyone holds the teaching of dichotomy, yet often speaks the language of trichotomy. This results from an effort to distinguish between the soul in its ordinary life and in its religious and moral life.

Essentially, however, man is composed of two elements, soul and body. And, as is shown already in the Biblical account of creation, it is these two parts which make man a total person. Both body and soul are needed if man is to be a complete person. Without the soul there would be only lifeless material. If either part is missing, there is no longer a complete person, for both the body and the soul are essential parts of the total man.

L. S. Keyser declares that man

was a new personality, a dual being, not mere body, not mere spirit, but both united in one person. The spirit was so constituted that it would have been imperfect without the body; the body so made that it would have been useless without the rational soul.<sup>12</sup>

Thus it is seen how important the body was in the creation, for it was one of two essential parts constituting the whole man.

At the end of the sixth day of creation, "God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very

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<sup>11</sup>O. M. Norlie, An Elementary Christian Psychology, (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Publishing House, c. 1924), p. 22.

<sup>12</sup>L. S. Keyser, "Ultimate Purpose of Christ's Resurrection," Lutheran Church Review, v. 25 (October, 1906), 641.

good."<sup>13</sup> When God saw "every thing" He had made, He also saw man's body. It, too, is thereby included in His appraisal of all creation, "It was very good." Here is God's own testimony to the fact that the body was created perfect. And since it was flawless, the body was the perfect instrument for the functions of the soul. It was perfectly adapted for carrying out the various activities of the soul.

This fact, that the total person was created perfect, is shown by the creation account of the first chapter of Genesis. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness....So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him...."<sup>14</sup> Man, the total person, was created in God's own image.

Just what is the image of God? It consists in man's being a rational being, in his having a will, and in his being immortal. And this image of God applied to the total person of man. Therefore in the state of integrity man was perfect and righteous, not only in the soul, but also in the body, for man, the total person, was made in the image of God.

This fact, that both body and soul were created in perfection, is clearly set forth in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession.

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<sup>13</sup>Gen. 1:31.

<sup>14</sup>v. 26,27.

Therefore original righteousness was to embrace not only an even temperament of the bodily qualities (perfect health and, in all respects, pure blood, unimpaired powers of the body, as they contend), but also these gifts, namely, a quite certain knowledge of God, fear of God, confidence in God, or certainly the rectitude and power to yield these affections (but the greatest feature in that noble first creature was a bright light in the heart to know God and His work, etc.). And Scripture testifies to this, when it says, Gen. 1:27, that man was fashioned in the image and likeness of God.<sup>15</sup>

Since man was created in the image of God, he was perfect in body and soul, and therefore he was also immortal in body and soul. The Pulpit Commentary states

Man is a complex being; he has body and soul, neither of which is complete without the other. . . . In giving eternal life to man, God gives it to the creature as originally made, not to one portion only of his nature.<sup>16</sup>

Dr. Walther in his Epistelpostille asserts, "God is eternal; this was reflected in man's immortality of body and soul."<sup>17</sup>

The immortality of man's body is also shown by the threat which God attached to His warning not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."<sup>18</sup> If man did not

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<sup>15</sup>"Apology of the Augsburg Confession," Trilog Concordia, edited by F. Bente and W. H. T. Dau, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 109, 17, 18.

<sup>16</sup>A. L. Williams, "Matthew II," Pulpit Commentary, edited by H. D. M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell (New York and Toronto: Funk & Wagnalls Company, n.d.), V. 34, 364.

<sup>17</sup>Quoted in "Sin," by Th. F. A. Nickel, The Abiding Word, edited by Th. Laetsch (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947), II, 148.

<sup>18</sup>Gen. 2:17.

eat of that tree, he would not die. Thus the account of man's creation shows that man, the total person, body and soul, was created for immortality.

In creating the total man for immortality, God's purpose was to have man serve Him in body and soul. That God desired the service of the total person is clear already from the account of Adam and Eve in the first three chapters of Genesis. They were to serve God wholly and completely, and they did just this in the state of integrity. This continued until an act of disobedience interrupted man's total service to God. Nevertheless, even though man's total service was interrupted, the fact remains that God created him, body and soul, to serve Him eternally, and God's desire in this matter did not cease because man sinned.

It is evident from the very beginning in the state of integrity that the body was an important and essential part of man. But the correct appraisal of the worth of the body is not found in all of Christendom. The more important divergences will be noted in the following paragraphs.

In the philosophy of Plato the body was looked upon as the prison of the soul. Therefore he viewed death as an escape from the bondage of matter. This low regard of the body was carried over into Neoplatonism, a philosophy which deserves consideration because of the influence it

has exerted on large sections of the Christian world.

Neoplatonism was developed by Plotinus in the 3rd century. It

. . . maintained that God overflows in emanations, such as Intelligence (*νοῦς*), the World-soul (*ψυχή*), and the final grade, Matter. Being farthest removed from God, Matter, or the world of sense, is evil.<sup>19</sup>

The body was viewed "as a garment which burdened and defiled man or as a prison from which the soul must seek escape."<sup>20</sup> This teaching of Neoplatonism directly contradicts the Biblical account of man in the state of integrity. The Bible presents man in his original state as a harmonious and perfect unit composed of body and soul. Neoplatonism views the body as completely disparate from the soul.

This Neoplatonic conception of the body has influenced the Roman Catholic doctrine of man. They "conceive of man in his original state as constituted of two opposing principles, body and spirit (dualism)."<sup>21</sup> The soul is viewed as spiritual, but the body is entirely different, being materialistic and sensual. As a result of these two totally different natures in man, there is a constant warfare taking place in him. And this warfare is present

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<sup>19</sup>F. E. Mayer, "The Roman Doctrine of the Lord's Supper," Concordia Theological Monthly, X (November, 1939), 801, footnote 1).

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>E. H. Klotz, Christian Symbolics, (Burlington, Iowa: The Lutheran Literary Board, 1929), p. 77.

even before the Fall.<sup>22</sup>

Man's sensuality, or concupiscence, was a natural part of his nature. Consequently, in the state of integrity, man was not in a perfect condition of life. Neither was his body immortal. Just as concupiscence is a result of man's nature, so also death and its accompanying suffering are nothing more than the natural condition of man. "The immortality of the body is a supernatural gift."<sup>23</sup> Without this supernatural gift (donum superadditum), death and sufferings would simply be natural consequences. Without it no man could enter life eternal, for it brings sanctifying grace, exempts man from the evils of concupiscence, and bestows immortality on his body. All these things did not belong to man by nature in the state of integrity, for they are supernatural gifts. Thus the Biblical account of the creation of a perfect and immortal body is contradicted, and in place of man as a harmonious person, man in the state of integrity is torn by two opposing tendencies within himself and must, because of the very nature God gave him in the creation, suffer death.

The Neoplatonic conception of the body as evil is plainly evident in Rome's teaching of man in the state of

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<sup>22</sup>Mayer, op. cit., p. 801.

<sup>23</sup>Klotsche, op. cit., p. 77.

integrity. This same low estimate of the body is likewise found in the teachings of Zwingli and Calvin. Zwingli denies that man's body was made in the image of God. He rejects any such teaching because it would naturally follow from this that God must also have a body.<sup>24</sup> In his De providentia he asserts:

. . . the soul was deposited into the clay of the body; the body was prepared out of clay to be the dwelling place of the soul. But neither part can deny its nature. The spirit loves truth and worships the Godhead; the body likewise is drawn toward its origin, the clay and the flesh, and follows their nature.<sup>25</sup>

The same low estimate which Zwingli places upon man's physical body is found also in the anthropology of Calvin. In his Institutes Calvin states that ". . . extending the image of God promiscuously to the body as well as to the soul, confounds heaven and earth together."<sup>26</sup> He also states that the objection

. . . is quite frivolous, that it is not a part of man, or the soul with its faculties, that is called the image of God, but the whole Adam, who received his name from the earth whence he was taken; it will be deemed frivolous, I say, by every rational reader.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>E. H. Klotsche and J. Th. Mueller, The History of Christian Dogma, (Burlington, Iowa: The Lutheran Literary Board, 1945), p. 188.

<sup>25</sup>Quoted in Klotsche, op. cit. pp. 214, 215.

<sup>26</sup>John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, translated from the Latin by John Allen (London: printed for J. Walker; J. Hatchard; J. Richardson; L. B. Seeley; R. Baldwin; J. Black; Gale, Curtis, and Fenner; and Williams and Son, 1813), I, Book I, Ch. XV, p. 199.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 200.



Calvin could hardly have stated his position more emphatically. He leaves no doubt as to his rejection of the body's being created in the image of God.

In comparing the relation of Neoplatonism to Calvin's teaching of man, it is interesting to note that he refers to the body with the same terminology as did Plotinus, the man who developed Neoplatonism. It was mentioned previously that Plotinus called the body a prison of the soul. Calvin uses this same thought in his Institutes, calling the body the prison of the soul.<sup>28</sup>

Calvin's view of man in the state of integrity is a vastly different one from the Lutheran view. He does not believe the body to have been created perfect. Neither does he view man as a harmonious unity, but rather he agrees with the dualism of Neoplatonism.

Thus the teachings of Rome, Zwingli, and Calvin, in regard to man in the state of integrity, all reflect the Neoplatonic conception of man. They have split man into two opposing parts, putting his body against his soul. The Lutheran dogmaticians, on the other hand, have presented man in his original state as one whole unified person, with no friction existing between body and soul. This, as has been shown, is the Scriptural teaching.

However, Scripture not only teaches the importance

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 198, also V. II, Book III, Chap. IX, p. 187.

of the body in its account of creation, but throughout the entire Bible God is shown dealing with man as a unit, consisting of body and soul. Man is everywhere thought of as a complete person, including his body and not just embracing his soul. The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics states:

In the fulness of his being, man is conceived of not as a purely spiritual entity, but as an embodied spirit. This is the evidence of the Bible from beginning to end - from the story of the Creation in Genesis (27) to the Apocalyptic vision of the sea giving up its dead that they may stand before God to be judged according to their works. (Rev. 20<sup>13</sup>)<sup>29</sup>

The fundamental feature of the Biblical conception of man is ". . . the unity of the human personality."<sup>30</sup> There is no dualistic antithesis between body and soul, but body and soul are presented as constituting one concordant person. The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics clearly calls attention to this. "In the NT a soul ordinarily means an embodied soul, and a living body is always conceived of as an ensouled body."<sup>31</sup> This is true of the whole Scripture, man is always the whole man.

The account of man's creation not only teaches this, but it also shows that God's purpose in creating man was

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<sup>29</sup>J. C. Lambert, "BODY (Christian)," Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), II, 763, col. 1.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 760, col. 1.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

to have man serve Him, body and soul, for eternity. This is likewise the teaching of the entire Bible. In an article on the "Ultimate Purpose of Christ's Resurrection"

L. S. Keyser asserts

. . . when we regard the whole teaching of the Sacred Scripture, we see that God had an eternal, and not merely a temporary, purpose in making man a dual being, physical as well as spiritual.<sup>32</sup>

It will now be necessary to go on and trace man's condition and his relation to God after the state of integrity. The specific teachings to be considered will not only show that the Bible always deals with man as a whole person, but also that God has an eternal purpose for the entire person.

Man's body was important in the state of integrity. It was perfect then. But is it still important now that man is in a fallen state? What role does it play in this state? Man, in the fallen state, is completely sinful. His whole person is corrupt so that all men are ". . . by nature the children of wrath."<sup>33</sup> The Formula of Concord states that

. . . the entire nature of man, which is born in the natural way of father and mother, is entirely and to the farthest extent corrupted and perverted by original sin, in body and soul in all its powers. . . .<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Op. cit., p. 640.

<sup>33</sup>Eph. 2:3.

<sup>34</sup>Triglot Concordia, p. 367, 30.

Since the whole man is corrupt and sinful, man, when he sins, sins with both body and soul. His entire nature is involved in the sins he commits and not just a part of his nature, either the body alone or the soul alone. The whole man sins.

Although it is the entire person who sins, it is the soul which is the seat of sin. The soul is that part of man which thinks and wills. It is the governing agent in man, determining what his thoughts, words, and actions will be. It is here that sin has its seat in man. The body, on the other hand, becomes the instrument through which man carries out his evil deeds. Lutheran dogmaticians have always held this view in regard to man's sinning.

The seat of sin is primarily the soul with its intellect and will, the body sharing therein since it is the organ of the soul, for Jesus says: "Out of the heart" (that is, out of the soul, which is the seat of thought and will) "proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries," etc. (Matt. 15:19).<sup>35</sup>

In the fallen state, then, the body is the organ or instrument for sin, it serves as the agent which carries out the commands of sin. This is what St. Paul means when he tells the Romans that formerly they had yielded their ". . . members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity,"<sup>36</sup> and when he admonishes them not to yield their ". . . members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin."<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Nickel, op. cit., p. 148.

<sup>36</sup>Rom. 7:19.

<sup>37</sup>Rom. 7:13.

Although the sinful thoughts and desires originate in the soul, it is the body which carries out the sinful suggestions. It is the body which can be seen putting these evil desires into action. Thus the body is the tool or instrument of sin. William Dickson states:

The frequent and prominent mention of the body is due, not to its being regarded as the source of sin, but to its being the seat or scene of sin's manifestation, the organ in and through which it shows itself.<sup>38</sup>

Scripture explicitly mentions a number of the members of the body and points them out as being in the service of sin. Peter, describing the ungodly, says they have ". . . eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin."<sup>39</sup> In the third chapter of Romans Paul catalogues a number of bodily members which are employed as instruments for sin.

Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood.<sup>40</sup>

The body is thus presented as the instrument for sin, and its various members are placed into sin's service.

In the fallen state, then, man no longer serves God as he did in the state of integrity. No longer are his body and soul perfect, no longer are they capable of

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<sup>38</sup>William Dickson, St. Paul's Use of the Terms Flesh and Spirit (Glasgow: James Maclehose & Sons, St. Vincent St., Publishers to the University, 1883), p. 313.

<sup>39</sup>II Pet. 2:14.

<sup>40</sup>Vv. 13-15.

rendering the service God desires. Instead the whole man sins, the soul having become the seat of sin and the body having become the instrument for carrying out sin's demands.

Rome disagrees with this teaching of man in the fallen state. As has already been shown, the Romanists conceive of man as constituted of two opposing principles, body and soul. The soul is turned toward God and seeks to return to Him, while the body is turned toward the things of this world, seeking them. Having such a view of man's nature, Rome logically asserts that the body is the seat of sin. "If man were only a spirit he would be free from concupiscence, but he is also flesh and the flesh is the seat of concupiscence."<sup>41</sup> Because the soul and body are totally heterogeneous, man is the site of a constant warfare. The soul seeks to please God in spite of the contrary efforts of the body. Rome, therefore, does not view the body as the instrument for sin, but as the seat of sin.

This teaching of Rome is a result of its Neoplatonic view of man. This same Neoplatonic influence causes Calvin to take a similar view of man in the fallen state. As previously shown, Calvin placed a very low estimate on the body in the creation of man. This low estimate is carried through all of his teachings concerning man. To Calvin the body was sin's dwelling-place. He pictured it

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<sup>41</sup>Klotsche, Christian Symbolics, p. 77.

as a prison, deliverance from which would be an introduction into complete liberty.<sup>42</sup>

Thus Rome brings sin into close connection with the body and views only the soul as striving after God. Calvin, however, holds that, in man's fallen state, not only the body, but also the soul is turned against God. However, in the salvation of man, as soon as the Holy Spirit enters a person, his soul begins to seek after God, while his body continues to pull toward earthly, sinful things. Lutheran dogmaticians, on the other hand, maintain the Biblical teaching that man is sinful in both body and soul, the soul being the seat of sin while the body is the instrument for sin.

This fact that man sins with both body and soul is further evidenced in Scripture by those passages which treat of the punishment which befalls man because of his sins. The punishment put upon man affects both his body and his soul. Both together must suffer the results of sin, not only in this life, but also in the next, for both have been guilty of sin. Genesis 3:16-19 describes the sorrow-filled life which befalls man because of his sin. Hard work, pain, much sorrow, and death, are all listed as punishments for sin. They affect the whole man, body and soul together.

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<sup>42</sup>Calvin, op. cit., II, Book III, Ch. IX, p. 187.

In Romans Paul states several times that death exists because of sin, specifically asserting that ". . . the wages of sin is death."<sup>43</sup> And Jesus Himself admonishes the disciples to ". . . fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."<sup>44</sup> Thus Jesus definitely asserts that the punishment for sins is in both body and soul.

In full agreement with this Biblical teaching, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession states that human nature is punished by being subjected to death, bodily evils, and the kingdom of the devil.<sup>45</sup> Likewise the Formula of Concord declares that

. . . the punishment and penalty of original sin, which God has imposed upon the children of Adam and upon original sin, are death, eternal damnation, and also other bodily and spiritual, temporal and eternal miseries, and the tyranny and dominion of the devil.  
 . . .<sup>46</sup>

In this connection it is interesting to note that the Roman Catholics do not hold temporal death to be a punishment for sin. As previously mentioned, they hold that death and its accompanying sufferings are nothing more than a natural result of man's nature as he was created. The body was mortal from the very beginning. Immortality

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<sup>43</sup> 6:23 - cf. also 5:21; 6:21.

<sup>44</sup> Matt. 10:28.

<sup>45</sup> Triglot Concordia, p. 117, 46.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 863, 13.



of the body is the result of a supernatural gift. Scripture, however, definitely declares death and sufferings here on earth to be the result of sin, for sin is punished in both body and soul.

Thus, also in the fallen state, Scripture ascribes much importance to the body. It is the instrument for sin, and it is included in the punishment pronounced upon man for his sin. Because of man's total corruption in the fallen state, he is completely given over to the service of sin in both body and soul. This is the opposite of the purpose which God has for man. He wants man to serve Him in body and soul. Instead, man, after the Fall, was given over completely to evil desires and evil deeds. This sinful state of man did not change God's desire in any way. He still wanted man, as a complete person, to serve Him. In order to make this complete service possible once again, Christ was sent into the world to perform the work of redemption.

The object of Christ's work was the whole man, body and soul. He did not redeem just a part of man's nature, but he purchased and won the complete person. He redeemed the same person, consisting of body and soul, whom God had created at the beginning of the world. Frank Biggart states that man

. . . is, in his nature, both a material as well as a spiritual being. It is man's whole nature that comes under the redeeming work of Christ. If then

the body were excluded, that redemption would be incomplete.<sup>47</sup>

Here, then, in the redemption of Christ, the body is also ascribed a great deal of importance, for it, too, is included in the redemptive work of Jesus.

That the body comes under Christ's work is shown already by the fact that ". . . the Word was made flesh."<sup>48</sup> When Christ came to earth to redeem the world He took on Him a human body. This assumption of flesh and blood in itself testifies that Christ also intended to redeem the body. Since He was to substitute for man, He had to be the same as any other man.

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death.<sup>49</sup>

On the other hand, if Christ's purpose had not been to redeem man's body, there would have been no necessity for His assumption of a human body. L. S. Keyser expresses this thought when he writes: "Had God intended to redeem only the soul of man, there would have been no vital reason for the Word becoming flesh."<sup>50</sup> The incarnation of the Son of God is a powerful proof that the body

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<sup>47</sup> Frank Biggart, And Then the Judgement (Westminster: Dacre Press, March 1946), p. 103.

<sup>48</sup> John 1:14.

<sup>49</sup> Hebr. 2:14,15.

<sup>50</sup> Keyser, op. cit., p. 641.

also comes under the work of Christ. V. F. Storr contends that

The Christian can no longer with Greek thought regard matter as evil, or the body as the soul's prison house from which it looks forward to be set free by death, for the coming of Christ in the flesh has given to matter a sacramental aspect and has emphasized the sacredness of all life.<sup>51</sup>

The Formula of Concord clearly shows the close connection which exists between Christ's assumption of a human body and His redemption of it.

Moreover, the Son of God has assumed this human nature, however, without sin, and therefore not a foreign, but our own flesh, into the unity of His person, and according to it is become our true Brother . . . . In like manner Christ has also redeemed it as His work. . . .<sup>52</sup>

However, not only Christ's assumption of flesh and blood, but also His physical suffering shows that the body is included in His redemptive work. Christ's life here on earth was filled with a great measure of suffering. Throughout his years of active ministry He met great opposition, open unbelief, and bitter hatred. His life was far from luxurious for He points out that ". . . the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."<sup>53</sup> However, it is especially in the last days of His life that Jesus is shown as the suffering Savior. His physical suffering was tremendous. The

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<sup>51</sup>V. F. Storr, Christianity and Immortality (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1918), p. 55.

<sup>52</sup>Triglot Concordia, p. 781, 5.6.

<sup>53</sup>Matt. 8:20.

scourge, the crown of thorns, the nails in His hands and feet, the hours of hanging on the cross, the torturing thirst - all these caused Him the greatest of physical agony. St. Peter states that Christ ". . . bare our sins in his own body on the tree."<sup>54</sup> This fact that Christ suffered bodily is another proof of the body's being redeemed by Christ. He suffered in His body to redeem man's body.

The object of Christ's work was the total man, body and soul. The inclusion of the body is evident from Christ's assumption of flesh and blood as also from His physical suffering. Since His redemptive work includes the body, it follows from this that the body also shares in the benefits of Christ's work. Now, then, does Christ's saving work affect the body? What benefits does it enjoy?

As shown above, in the fallen state the whole man is under condemnation because of sin. The body, too, shares in this punishment. But "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us . . . ."<sup>55</sup> Christ's redemptive work has freed also man's body from the curse of sin. Some of the punishments of sin still befall man, such as sickness, pain, wearisome labor, and death. However, as far as Christians are concerned, these

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<sup>54</sup>I Peter 2:24.

<sup>55</sup>Gal. 3:13.

things are no longer regarded as punishments, but as God's fatherly chastisements.<sup>56</sup>

The worst punishment of sin is eternal death. But Christ ". . . hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."<sup>57</sup> The purpose of Christ's coming into the world as a true man was ". . . that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."<sup>58</sup> Even Christians must still suffer temporal death, but because eternal death has been abolished for them, death no longer need terrorize them. It has lost its sting.<sup>59</sup> Thus the body of man has been freed from sin's curse and need no longer fear any punishment.

Since the body has been freed from the curse of sin, it is also freed from the dominion of sin. As noted before, by nature man is completely under the rule of sin. The result is that sin uses the body as its instrument in perpetrating its evil deeds. But Christ ". . . died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them . . . ."<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>Hebr. 12:1-11.

<sup>57</sup>II Tim. 1:10.

<sup>58</sup>Hebr. 2:14-15.

<sup>59</sup>I Cor. 15:55-57.

<sup>60</sup>II Cor. 5:15.

In the purpose of Christ's death is seen God's original will in regard to man. God created man with the desire that man, as a total person, should serve Him. The fall into sin made this service impossible, for the total person was corrupt and in the service of sin. Therefore Christ died in order to bring about man's serving God again.

Christ's death destroyed the dominion which sin held over man. "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."<sup>61</sup> No longer is the body the instrument for sin, but it has become the instrument for sanctification. Instead of being in sin's service, it is now in the service of God, to be used as He originally intended. The body is a "purchased possession,"<sup>62</sup> bought by Christ. Whereas the body had been under the reign of sin, Christ purchased it so that it could be under His rule and in His service.

In the sixth chapter of Romans, St. Paul clearly presents the change which has occurred in the use to which the body is given. He writes:

Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as

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<sup>61</sup>Rom. 6:14.

<sup>62</sup>Eph. 1:14.

those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. . . . I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness."<sup>63</sup>

Just as the body was formerly the instrument or tool for sin, now it is the instrument for righteousness. The members of the body are now to be employed in the work of sanctification. Because of Christ's work, the body can once again be used for its original purpose, the service of God. Sin's dominion has been broken, and man can serve God in his whole person, his body being the instrument for the works of sanctification.

Thus the benefits of Christ's redemptive work are far-reaching and greatly affect the body. Sin no longer holds sway over the body. The body has been freed from both the curse and the dominion of sin and has been placed back into the service of God. Once again the total person is able to live for God. Christ's redemptive work has again made it possible for the entire person to serve God.

In order to accomplish this tremendous undertaking, Christ had to be both God and man. Without the divine nature, His redemptive work would have been valueless. Christ indeed suffered as a true man, but, at the same time, He was also true God. And it is this divine nature

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<sup>63</sup>Rom. 6:11-13, 19.

which gave the value to His death. This is stressed by the Lutheran Confessions.

For the human nature alone, without the divine, could neither by obedience nor suffering render satisfaction to eternal almighty God for the sins of all the world. . . .<sup>64</sup>

Christ attained righteousness for man according to both natures, performing His redeeming work as God and man.<sup>65</sup>

It is evident that the Romanists have failed to understand the personal union in Christ. Christ's human nature, according to them, has never been truly united with the Logos. Consequently Christ's human nature is not accorded latria, the divine worship reserved for God, but receives only the hyperdulia which the Virgin Mary receives. Rome distinguishes a higher and lower part of Christ's soul, holding that only the lower part, inferior pars, experienced the sufferings of the Passion.<sup>66</sup> Thus Christ's divine nature recedes from His work of redemption.

This same failure to understand the personal union is found in Calvinistic theology. Zwingli, holding to his proposition, finitum non est capax infiniti, carefully discriminated between Christ's two natures, denying that the natures participated in the life and experience of each

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<sup>64</sup>"Formula of Concord," Triglot Concordia, p. 936, 56.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 917, 4 and p. 936, 55.

<sup>66</sup>Theodore Engelder, W. Arndt, Theodore Graebner, and F. E. Mayer, Popular Symbolics (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1945), p. 159.



other.<sup>67</sup> Zwingli therefore held that it was the human nature of Christ alone which died.<sup>68</sup>

Calvin followed in Zwingli's footsteps and completely separated the Son of God from the suffering and death of Christ's human nature. He refers to Christ's merit as the merit of a mere man. It is valuable only because of the predestination of Christ as Savior. Thus Calvin dissolved the personal union.<sup>69</sup>

Later Reformed Confessions hold to this same viewpoint. The Heidelberg Catechism states that Christ suffered only in His human nature. Accordingly, not the person of Christ, but only His human nature suffered and died.<sup>70</sup> And the Second Helvetic Confession states: "We by no means teach that the divine nature suffered for us. . . ." <sup>71</sup>

This failure of the Romanists and Calvinists to understand the personal union splits the person of Christ and removes the value of His work. For this reason the Lutheran dogmaticians have strenuously opposed this error. Luther, in his book Of the Councils and the Church, strongly opposes

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<sup>67</sup>Klotsche, Christian Symbolics, p. 212.

<sup>68</sup>Franz Pieper, Christian Dogmatics, translated from the German by Walter Albrecht (First Edition; Springfield, Illinois: Concordia Mimeographing Company, 1941), II, 76.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., pp. 77, 82.

<sup>70</sup>Klotsche, Christian Symbolics, p. 212.

<sup>71</sup>Popular Symbolics, p. 212.

the error voiced by Zwingli. He writes:

We Christians must know that if God is not also in the balance, and gives the weight, we sink to the bottom with our scale. By this I mean: If it were not to be said . . . God has died for us, but only a man, we would be lost. But if "God's death" and "God died" lie in the scale of the balance, then He sinks down, and we rise up as a light, empty scale. But indeed He can also rise again or leap out of the scale; yet He could not sit in the scale unless He became a man like us, so that it could be said: "God died," "God's passion," "God's blood," "God's death." For in His nature God cannot die; but now that God and man are united in one person, it is correctly called God's death, when the man dies who is one thing or one person with God.<sup>72</sup>

And the Formula of Concord, besides quoting this passage of Luther to illustrate its position, specifically rejects the teaching that ". . . the more human nature of Christ has suffered for us and redeemed us."<sup>73</sup>

Thus Christ carried out the work of redemption as the God-man. And the result of this redemptive work of Christ is that the total man is once again placed into the service of sanctification. Therefore the Holy Ghost also sanctifies the total man, body and soul. Man as a unit is to serve God, and therefore man as a unit is the object of the Holy Spirit's work. Not just a part of man, but the entire person is sanctified. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless

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<sup>72</sup>"Formula of Concord," Triglot Concordia, pp. 1029, 1031, 44.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 1049, 93.

unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>74</sup> Paul stresses that it is the whole person who is to be sanctified. Thus the body is included in the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

This is shown already in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Baptism, as instituted by Christ, includes an application of water to the body of the person being baptized. The body, then, also shares in the effects of this Sacrament. In the sixth chapter of Romans St. Paul declares: ". . . we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."<sup>75</sup> He then goes on to show that this newness of life consists in service to God, in which the body is the instrument for sanctification. Thus Paul shows that Baptism is for the total person.

In accordance with the Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions expressly point out that Baptism is for the entire man.

Thus we must regard Baptism and make it profitable to ourselves, that when our sins and conscience oppress us, we strengthen ourselves and take comfort and say: Nevertheless I am baptized; but if I am baptized, it is promised me that I shall be saved and have eternal life, both in soul and body. For that is the reason why these two things are done in Baptism, namely,

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<sup>74</sup>I Thess. 5:23.

<sup>75</sup>Rom. 6:4.

that the body, which can apprehend nothing but water, is sprinkled, and, in addition, the word is spoken for the soul to apprehend. Now, since both, the water and the Word, are one Baptism, therefore body and soul must be saved and live forever: the soul through the Word which it believes, but the body because it is united with the soul and also apprehends Baptism as it is able to apprehend it.<sup>76</sup>

That the body is included in the Spirit's sanctifying work is also borne out by the fact that the body is the dwelling-place of the Holy Ghost. Scripture emphatically teaches this, for St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians:

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.<sup>77</sup>

Paul clearly states that Christ's redemptive work has purchased man, body and soul, for God, to serve God. And now that Christ has redeemed the entire man, the Holy Spirit dwells in man's body. And, as Paul distinctly shows in the eighth chapter of Romans, it is the Holy Spirit, dwelling in man's body, who leads man to serve God. Thus the Spirit of God dwells in man's body and sanctifies that same body. The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, in referring to Paul's teaching of the body in First Corinthians six, states:

The body, he said, is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body (v. 13); your bodies are the members of Christ (v. 15); your body is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit

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<sup>76</sup>"The Large Catechism," Triglot Concordia, p. 745.

<sup>77</sup>I Cor. 6:19-20.

(v. 19). In his view, the life of the human spirit, by which we are linked on to Christ Himself and to the Spirit of God, is joined indissolubly to that physical life which finds its manifestation in the bodily members. And so, when the Spirit of God takes up His abode in a man, the body of that man, as well as his spiritual nature, undergoes a process of sanctification. . . ."<sup>78</sup>

The inclusion of the body in sanctification is likewise emphatically taught by another group of Bible passages, i.e., those in which the Christians are admonished to present their bodies unto the Lord. St. Paul expressed this beautifully when he wrote: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."<sup>79</sup> It is nothing unusual or unexpected that the body is to be employed in the service of God. On the contrary, it is the natural and logical thing that the Christians should so use their bodies that their every action is a continual thank-offering to God. And this service requires sanctified bodies which are "holy, acceptable unto God."

Likewise, in the sixth chapter of First Corinthians, Paul declares that ". . . the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body . . . glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>78</sup>Lambert, op. cit., p. 762.

<sup>79</sup>Rom. 12:1.

<sup>80</sup>v. 13, 20.

Here again Paul admonishes Christians to present their bodies to the Lord. Sanctification deals not only with the spirit, but also definitely with the body. The body is to be used for the Lord's glorification and is to be presented unto Him a holy body. "The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit."<sup>81</sup>

In these passages presenting the body as a living, holy sacrifice, used in the service of God, is seen the original desire of God in regard to man. He wanted man to serve Him completely, in body and soul. Now, through the Holy Spirit's sanctification of the total person, this purpose is being carried out.

In contrast to the importance which is thus attached to the body in being presented holy unto God, Romanists and Calvinists overstress the mortification of the body. This, again, is a result of their Neoplatonic views. Neoplatonism ". . . lays stress upon asceticism as a means of liberating the soul from matter and restoring it to the Divinity."<sup>82</sup> Because of the Neoplatonic influence, this same stress is found with the Romanists and Calvinists.

The Romanists, as previously pointed out, hold that

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<sup>81</sup>I Cor. 7:34.

<sup>82</sup>"Neoplatonism," The Concordia Cyclopaedia, edited by Th. Engelder and P. E. Kretzmann (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1927), p. 536.

the union of the rational soul with a totally heterogeneous body results in a continuous inner warfare in man.

This view explains Rome's interest in asceticism and mysticism. The flesh as the seat of concupiscence, i.e., the interest in the world of sense, must be weakened by fasting, watching, celibacy, etc., in order that the soul in the full exercise of its wonderful powers may unite itself with God.<sup>83</sup>

Thus Rome has a negative attitude toward the body, stressing its mortification through many different practices.

Calvin, likewise influenced by Neoplatonic ideas, takes a similar negative view of the body. To him "introduction into complete liberty" is the soul's "liberation from the prison of the body."<sup>84</sup> Calvin, with a low view of man's body, also stresses its mortification rather than its being sanctified as a living sacrifice to God. Thus the Romanists and Calvinists lose the proper emphasis which is to be placed on the sanctification of the total man, body and soul.

In connection with the sanctification of the whole person, it will be necessary to consider briefly St. Paul's use of the terms "flesh" and "spirit." These terms have often been taken to be equivalent to "body" and "soul." It is true that Paul uses them in several senses, but his main use is not as synonyms for "body" and "soul." Dickson,<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup>Mayer, op. cit., pp. 801,802.

<sup>84</sup>Quoted in Klotzsch, Christian Symbolics, p. 214.

<sup>85</sup>Op. cit., p. 310.

in his book on St. Paul's Use of the Terms Flesh and Spirit, shows that Paul did not mean the material body or outward bodily substance of man when he used the word  $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ . In support of this, Stevens<sup>86</sup> points to the fifth chapter of Galatians where Paul sets the works of the flesh in contrast with the fruit of the spirit. Among the list of works of the flesh are sins which are not directly connected with the body, such as enmity, strife, jealousy, envy, etc.<sup>87</sup>

The view that the apostle identifies  $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma$  with  $\xi\nu\nu\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha$  is also false. Dickson calls attention to the expression  $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma$   $\xi\nu\nu\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha$  in Romans 8:3. This use of the two in such a relation precludes their being equivalent, otherwise there would have been no need for the addition of  $\xi\nu\nu\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha$ .<sup>88</sup> This is likewise shown by II Cor. 7:1, where  $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma$  is viewed as the object of sinful defilement. The apostle there exhorts the Christian to discontinue this corruption, and the  $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma$  is to become an object of sanctification.<sup>89</sup>

What, then, is Paul's use of "flesh" and "spirit"? Stevens notes that Paul is commonly supposed to have founded his use upon the Old Testament usage of  $\text{בָּשָׂר}$ .

<sup>86</sup>George Barker Stevens, The Pauline Theology (Revised edition; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), pp. 141, 142.

<sup>87</sup>Op. Rom. 13:13, 14; I Cor. 3:3; II Cor. 1:12.

<sup>88</sup>Dickson, op. cit., p. 310.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., p. 259.



and Πῆρ.

In the Old Testament the term "flesh" (ἡ ψῆ) is frequently used to denote man's natural creature-life in its moral weakness and sinfulness, while "spirit" (Πῆρ) denotes that God-given element of his personality which is akin to the Divine Spirit. Thus the terms set in contrast two phases of human nature, - its merely natural impulses on the one side, and its affinities with God on the other.<sup>90</sup>

This is also the conclusion at which Dickson arrives. He states that

... πνεῦμα has its paramount place in the teaching of St. Paul as the divine power which originates and sustains the new life distinctive of the Christian, σὰρξ in its most characteristic use denotes the creaturely nature of man, or the creaturely side of his nature, in contrast to the new life which he now receives.<sup>91</sup>

σὰρξ, therefore, is interchangeable with ἀσθενείας.<sup>92</sup>

In his Preface to the Epistle to the Romans Luther states this very clearly.

You must not understand flesh and spirit here as if flesh were concerned only with unchaste desires, and spirit only with the interior of the heart; but flesh with Paul, as with Christ at John iii. 6, means everything that is born of flesh, the whole man, with body and soul, with reason and all thought . . . because everything in him inclines after the flesh.<sup>93</sup>

When St. Paul, then, uses either σὰρξ or πνεῦμα, he is not thinking only of one certain part of man. Rather he is referring to the whole man, with the emphasis either

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<sup>90</sup>Stevens, op. cit., p. 139.

<sup>91</sup>Dickson, op. cit., p. 272.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., p. 427.

<sup>93</sup>Quoted in Dickson, op. cit., p. 11.

on his creaturely nature or on his new spiritual life. Paul viewed the whole man as being sanctified,<sup>94</sup> including the *σῶμα*, as was shown previously. When he refers to man, therefore, he thinks of him as a complete person and writes about him as such.

Thus the Bible constantly deals with man as a total person, and Lutheran dogmaticians have put the proper emphasis on the body as one of two essential parts constituting the whole man. This importance of the body is evident already in the creation of man, for God created him a dichotomous creature who was to serve God in the perfect body and soul with which he had been endowed.

However, this service of man was interrupted by the fall into sin, for man in the fallen state no longer serves God in body and soul. Rather he is corrupt in his whole person, and the body has become the instrument through which sin manifests itself. In order to restore man to His service, God sent Christ to redeem the entire man, body and soul. The result of Christ's work is that man has been freed from the curse and dominion of sin. His body, too, enjoys this freedom, being employed in the service of God once again instead of in the service of sin. Thus the whole man has been restored to the service of God. And for this purpose, the Holy Ghost dwells in the body of

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<sup>94</sup>I Thess. 5:23.

man, sanctifying the entire person, body and soul.

This sanctification of the total man continues throughout life. The Holy Spirit is unceasingly active in leading man to serve God in body and soul. However, sanctification in this life is not the end. God wants the Christian's service throughout eternity. By creating Adam and Eve immortal He showed that He desired their service to be unending. Luther expresses this eternal desire of God in his explanation of the Second Article: ". . . that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness . . . ."95 Since God desires man's service to continue throughout eternity, what happens to man at death? What effect does it have on the total person and on man's service of God?

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95 "The Small Catechism," Triglot Concordia, p. 545,4.

## CHAPTER III

### THE CONDITION OF THE BODY IN THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

Death is the separation of the body and the soul. It is a tearing apart of the two essential elements which constitute man. This is strikingly presented in the story of Elijah's raising of the widow's son, where it is stated that ". . . the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived."<sup>1</sup> And in Ecclesiastes it is specifically said: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."<sup>2</sup> Death is a splitting apart of the two component parts of man. What, then, is the condition of the body and of the soul in the state of death?

Scripture often refers to the dead as being asleep.<sup>3</sup> Some have taken this expression to mean that the total man is in a condition similar to the state of a man sleeping. Thus both soul and body would be inactive, unaware of anything at all. In order to determine whether this is the effect of death on the total person, it will be necessary to consider what the Scripture says of both the soul and the body in the state of death. And since in this life

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<sup>1</sup>I Kings 17:22.

<sup>2</sup>Ecclesiastes 12:1.

<sup>3</sup>Deut. 31:16; II Sam. 7:12; Dan. 12:2; Matt. 27:52; Acts 7:60; I Cor. 15:13; I Cor. 11:30; I Thess. 4:14.

man is limited in his thinking by space, time, cause and effect, etc., this paper will consider the state of death only from the view-point of this life.

While Scripture often speaks of death as a sleep, it never states that the soul is in a state of sleep or unconsciousness from death until the Day of Judgment.<sup>4</sup> On the contrary, Scripture very definitely teaches an active existence of the soul in the intermediate state. Jesus taught this in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, as He presented the rich man, Lazarus, and Abraham as actively existing in eternity before Judgment Day.<sup>5</sup> In the Transfiguration Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus, showing that their souls were not in a state of slumber.<sup>6</sup> And while hanging on the cross, Jesus promised the dying thief: "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."<sup>7</sup> This man did not have to wait until Judgment Day to be with Christ but was with Him in heaven already on Good Friday.

However, this fact that the soul does not sleep in the intermediate state is not only taught by Christ, it

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<sup>4</sup>The Seventh-Day Adventists teach that the soul is in a state of unconsciousness in the intermediate state. For their reasons for this view see Theodore Engelder, W. Arndt, Theodore Graebner, and F. E. Mayer, Popular Symbolics (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1946), p. 356.

<sup>5</sup>Luke 16:19-31.

<sup>6</sup>Mark 9:4.

<sup>7</sup>Luke 23:43.

is also attested by the apostles. St. Paul expressed a desire to die, for when death came he would ". . . be with Christ, which is far better."<sup>8</sup> He looked forward to death with such an intense longing because then he would immediately be in the presence of his Savior. St. Paul expresses the same thought in his second letter to the Corinthians. "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."<sup>9</sup> When the soul separates from the body at death, it is then in the presence of God. Thus, as Geerhardus Vos writes:

. . . we have from Paul explicit statements concerning this 'intermediate state,' which positively exclude its having been to his mind a state of unconsciousness, such as, apart from dreams, physical sleep ordinarily induces.<sup>10</sup>

The Apostle Peter also asserts that the soul continues to exist in a conscious state after death when he writes that Christ ". . . went and preached unto the spirits in prison."<sup>11</sup> The souls of the ungodly enter hell immediately at death, and it was to these "spirits" that Christ triumphantly appeared. On the other hand, the souls of the godly enter heaven immediately upon death. St. John, in his Revelation, testifies that he ". . . saw under the

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<sup>8</sup> Phil. 1:23.

<sup>9</sup> II Cor. 5:8.

<sup>10</sup> Geerhardus Vos, "The Pauline Doctrine of the Resurrection," Princeton Theological Review, XXVII (January, 1929), 9.

<sup>11</sup> I Peter 3:19.

altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God.<sup>12</sup> And these souls cried out unto God.<sup>13</sup>

Thus Scripture clearly teaches that the soul, in the intermediate state, continues to exist in a conscious and active condition. The soul is never said to be inactive or unconscious in the state of death. Therefore when Scripture speaks of death as a sleep, it is evident that it does not mean to say that the soul is in an unconscious state.<sup>14</sup>

Does Scripture, then, when speaking of death in this manner, refer to a sleep of the body? What is its teaching

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<sup>12</sup>Rev. 6:9.

<sup>13</sup>Rev. 6:10.

<sup>14</sup>It is interesting to note Luther's position in this matter. He held that it is impossible to know the exact condition of the soul in the intermediate state (Martin Luther, Luther's Church Postil - Gospels, translated from the German by John Lenker [Minneapolis, Minn.: Lutherans in All Lands Co., 1904], IV, 29.) Nevertheless he definitely maintained that the soul was active, conscious, and in communion with God. "It is divine truth that Abraham (after death) lives with God, serves Him, and also rules with Him. But what sort of a life that is, whether he be asleep or awake, that is another question. How the soul rests, we are not to know; it is certain, however, that it lives." (Franz Pieper, Christian Dogmatics, translated from the German by Walter A. Albrecht, [First Edition; Springfield, Ill.: Concordia Mimeographing Company, 1941], III, 301.) The writer's adviser called his attention to the controversy between Stange, Althaus, and Traub. But due to lack of time and the inability to obtain pertinent literature, a discussion of it is not possible in this paper. Cf. Paul Althaus, Die letzten Dinge, (Guetersloh: C. Bertelmann, 1926,) also Walter Horton, Contemporary Continental Theology, (New York and London: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1938), pp. 140-143.

in regard to the body? The Bible clearly presents the body as remaining in its grave until the day of resurrection. Daniel writes: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake. . . ." <sup>15</sup> The soul is not "in the dust of the earth," but, as was previously shown, is immediately at death in its eternal dwelling-place. The body, however, is placed into the ground. And the Bible speaks of it as sleeping there.

Jesus expresses the same thought when He states: ". . . the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth. . . ." <sup>16</sup> Here again it is not the soul which lies in the grave, but the body. The lifeless body, placed into the grave a few days after death, remains there, motionless and inactive, until the resurrection. The body truly sleeps. It is completely unconscious and inactive, for it has been separated from that part which gives it life and motion, i.e., the soul. The body therefore sleeps, while the soul continues in conscious existence.

In regard to this separate existence of the soul, some have held that God supplies each departed soul with an intermediate body which exists until the resurrection. This was the position of Schleiermacher. He maintained

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<sup>15</sup>Daniel 12:2.

<sup>16</sup>John 5:28,29.



that a human spirit cannot live without a body.<sup>17</sup> This position, however, has no basis in Scripture. The Bible clearly teaches that the human spirit, or soul, exists without the body in the intermediate state. St. Paul plainly states this when he asserts: "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."<sup>18</sup>

Another error in this same connection is the teaching that the new, glorified body is received immediately at death. This belief is based on II Cor. 5:1: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The argument is that Paul here uses the present tense, "we have," thereby implying that a man possesses a new body at the time of his death.

Norbert Becker claims this is a

. . . case of imaginative projection into the world to come. Such a use of the present tense is not uncommon in language today, and it would be foolish to deny Paul the same freedom of expression.<sup>19</sup>

Paul himself rejects any thought of an immediate reception of a new body in the verses following. In the eighth verse he describes the intermediate state as one

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<sup>17</sup>Pieper, op. cit., pp. 302, 303.

<sup>18</sup>II Cor. 5:8.

<sup>19</sup>Norbert Becker, "The Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body as Taught in the Pauline Epistles," unpublished Bachelor's Thesis (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary, 1946), p. 26.

in which a person is "absent from the body." Geerhardus Vos asserts that Paul could hardly have meant that a new body would be received immediately at death, "... for the state in such a new body would hardly be describable as the state of one absent from the body."<sup>20</sup>

Death, therefore, separates the soul from the body; and in the intermediate state the soul is in conscious communion with God, while the body sleeps. What, then, is the effect which death has upon God's desire for the total person to serve Him in perfection? The effect which death has is completely negative. It serves to deliver man from all evil. The sinfulness which clings to him throughout this earthly life is completely removed through death. Luther states that the sins in man's flesh

. . . are not yet entirely conquered and killed, they are still active, but when death comes, they must also die, and then we are perfect Christians and pure, but not before. This is the reason why we must die, namely, that we may be entirely freed from sin and death.<sup>21</sup>

The Apology of the Augsburg Confession likewise declares that "... death itself serves this purpose, namely, to abolish this flesh of sin. . . ."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Geerhardus Vos, "Alleged Development in Paul's Teaching on the Resurrection," Princeton Theological Review, XXVII (April, 1929), pp. 214, 215.

<sup>21</sup>Martin Luther, Luther's Church Postil - Gospels, translated from the German by John Lenker (Minneapolis, Minn.: Lutherans in All Lands Co., 1906), II, 247.

<sup>22</sup>Triglot Concordia, edited by F. Bente and W. H. T. Dau, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 299, 55, 56.

This effect of death, while salutary and necessary, is negative. However, death also has another negative effect. As Scripture presents man, death, by separating the soul and body, prevents the total person from serving God. The soul, purified immediately at death, continues in a conscious and active existence and thus is able to serve God in the intermediate state. But the body is in a state of sleep and is thus incapable of rendering service. Speaking of the state of death the Psalmist asks the questions: ". . . in the grave who shall give thee thanks?"<sup>23</sup> "Shall the dust praise thee?"<sup>24</sup> The implied answer is that the dead are unable to praise God in their bodies. Thus death disrupts the service of the total person.

In commenting on the fifth chapter of Second Corinthians J. A. West writes that Paul ". . . shows that a soul without a body is not in a perfect condition of life."<sup>25</sup> This same thought is expressed in the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics in its comments on this chapter from Second Corinthians. In speaking of the soul in the intermediate state it is said that Paul ". . . thought of it as existing then in a condition of deprivation and incompleteness for which he uses the figure of

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<sup>23</sup>Psalm 6:5.

<sup>24</sup>Psalm 30:9.

<sup>25</sup>J. A. West, What the Bible Teaches About the World Beyond (Burlington, Iowa: The Lutheran Literary Board, 1939), p. 27.

being 'unclothed', . . . .<sup>26</sup>

Man, therefore, in the intermediate state, is no longer a unified, complete person. And the natural result of this is that death prevents the total person from serving God. The soul indeed serves God even in this state, but it does so without the body. This is not the service which God desires. From the time of the creation He wanted the service of man as a total person. When this was disrupted by the Fall, God sent Christ to perform the redemptive work which brought about the restoration of this service. For this purpose He also sends the Holy Spirit to sanctify the whole man.

When death comes, the total person is once again unable to serve God. Death does bring deliverance from sin, but at the same time it prevents the total service which God desires, for God wants the service of the total person to continue throughout eternity. However God not only wants this service to continue, He also desires to perfect it by bringing man's sanctification to its completion. That God desires perfect sanctification is clearly presented by Paul when he writes to the Corinthians: ". . . let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>J. C. Lambert, "BODY (Christian), Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), II, 752, col. 2.

<sup>27</sup>II Cor. 7:1; cf. I Thess. 3:13; 5:23.

In this life, however, sanctification is incomplete. It never reaches the perfection which God desires. This is clearly brought out by St. Paul in the seventh chapter of Romans, where he describes the inward battle against sin which is waged in a Christian throughout his life on earth.

It is God's will, therefore, to have the total person serve him throughout eternity, and it is also His will to perfect the sanctification of the total person. Luther states this very clearly in his explanation of the Second Article of the Apostle's Creed when he states that the purpose of Christ's suffering and death is ". . . that I may be [wholly] His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness. . . ."28 Here Luther mentions both the everlasting service man is to render to God as well as the perfection of this service. God's will is that both of these things be done.

It is true that already in this life the Christian serves God in his whole person. However a Christian is simul justus et peccator. There is a constant tension in him between his new man, which wants to do God's will, and his old man, which seeks after sin. Through the resurrection God removes all remnants of this tension. Thus it is that through the resurrection of the body God achieves

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<sup>28</sup>Triglot Concordia, p. 545,4.

His purposes in regard to man - the service of the total man for eternity and the completion of sanctification. By the resurrection of the body and its reunion with the soul, man is once again able to serve God as a total person. Then it is that he is truly able to serve God as God desires, for man is raised free from all sin and in a state of perfection. He is no longer hampered by the tension between his old man and his new man, for he is then completely new man. This is the significance of placing the resurrection of the body into the Third Article and not into the Second Article of the Creed; for it is the resurrection of the body which brings about God's goal that man, as a total person, should perfectly serve Him for eternity.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE IMPORTANCE ASCRIBED TO THE BODY IN THE RESURRECTION

Scripture speaks a great deal of the resurrection of the body. In this it is unique, for nowhere else is this belief found. Many philosophies and pagan religions hold that the soul is immortal, but the resurrection of the body is a distinctively Christian doctrine. Edward Bounds points this out when he writes:

The deathless nature of the soul has been taught in the philosophies of earth, pagan and Christian, but the resurrection of the body is distinctively a Christian doctrine. It belongs to the revelation of God's Word.<sup>1</sup>

A bodily resurrection is completely foreign to human reason. Consequently men, apart from the Bible, have never held such a belief. The farthest they ever get is a belief that the soul will continue to exist. J. T. Mueller states:

While reason may conceive of an immortal soul, it regards as the acme of folly the doctrine that the dead will be raised. Even the Egyptians, who believed in a possible resuscitation of the body, provided it were preserved from decay, did not teach anything like the Biblical doctrine of the resurrection.<sup>2</sup>

The resurrection of the body is clearly taught throughout the Scriptures. Both the Old Testament and the New

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<sup>1</sup>Edward Bounds, The Ineffable Glory (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1907), p. 17.

<sup>2</sup>J. T. Mueller, "Concerning the Resurrection Body," Concordia Theological Monthly, I (April, 1930), p. 288.

Testament contain passages testifying to the reality of the resurrection. It will now be necessary to examine some of these passages to show how definitely this fact is set forth in Scripture.

The Old Testament contains many references to the resurrection. It is found as early as the third chapter of Genesis, for it is contained in the promise which God gave Adam and Eve after their fall into sin. By their sin they had brought mortality upon themselves. And so the hope held out to them in Gen. 3:15<sup>3</sup> can be nothing else than restoration to the former state where man was free from death in both soul and body. Commenting on this verse Luther says of Adam and Eve:

. . . although their flesh was sentenced to suffer and was compelled to suffer a temporal or momentary taste of death, yet, on account of the promised Son of God, who should crush the head of the devil, they hoped for a resurrection of the flesh and a life eternal after the temporal death of the flesh, which hope we also have.<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps the most famous Old Testament passage speaking of the resurrection of the body is the one recorded in Job 19:25-27:

For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though

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<sup>3</sup>"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

<sup>4</sup>Martin Luther, Luther On The Creation, A Critical and Devotional Commentary on Genesis, edited by John Nicholas Lenker (Minneapolis, Minn.: Lutherans in All Lands Co., 1904), I, 304.



after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another. . . .

While some commentators have questioned the meaning of this passage, it can be shown by sound exegetical procedure to be an emphatic reference to the resurrection of the body.<sup>5</sup>

The Book of Psalms also contains references to the resurrection. In Psalm 17:15 David exclaims: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." The preceding verses speak of the wicked who made David's life miserable. However, the advantage is his, since their happiness is only in this life. The end of David's life will be completely different. Then he will physically see God. Upon awakening, he will experience complete satisfaction which cannot be found in this life. This awakening must be a bodily one, since the soul does not die.<sup>6</sup>

In Psalm 68 David states: "He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death."<sup>7</sup> The word translated "issues" means deliverances or escapings. The plural shows it is used

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<sup>5</sup>For a full discussion of this passage see Allen Schuldheisz, "The Resurrection of the Body in the Old Testament - an Exegetical Study," unpublished Bachelor's Thesis (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary, n.d.), pp. 18-25.

<sup>6</sup>Arthur Neitzel, "The Doctrine of the Resurrection in the Old Testament," unpublished Master's Thesis (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary, 1924), pp. 22, 23.

<sup>7</sup>v. 20.

in a general sense here, therefore it includes the deliverance from death.<sup>8</sup> Thus the Psalmist views God as the One Who restores the dead to life.

The prophetic books of the Old Testament also look forward to the resurrection of the body. In the twenty-fifth chapter of Isaiah are found the words which St. Paul quotes in his great Resurrection Chapter.<sup>9</sup> Isaiah triumphantly prophesies: "He will swallow up death in victory. . . ."<sup>10</sup> In these words Isaiah looked forward to the Day of Resurrection when the bodies will be raised and death banished forever.

In the very next chapter Isaiah has a wonderfully clear statement of the bodily resurrection.

Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.<sup>11</sup>

Isaiah first addresses God, stating that His dead, His children who are in the grave, will rise. In the last part he speaks to the dead, exhorting them to "awake and sing." Thus this passage is an emphatic testimony to the resurrection.

However, Isaiah is not the only prophet who speaks of

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<sup>8</sup>Schuldheisz, op. cit., p. 30.

<sup>9</sup>I Cor. 15:54.

<sup>10</sup>Is. 25:8.

<sup>11</sup>Is. 26:19.

the resurrection. It is prominent in Ezekiel's famous vision of the dry bones.<sup>12</sup> This passage was not intended primarily to teach anything regarding the resurrection. Rather it points to the final gathering together of all of God's people. But this final spiritual restoration is portrayed by the picture of the resurrection.<sup>13</sup> Thus Ezekiel, in an indirect manner, draws a very striking picture of the bodily resurrection.

Daniel, in the last chapter of his book, presents a very simple statement concerning the resurrection. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."<sup>14</sup> This is a clear presentation of the bodily resurrection, for it is the body that sleeps "in the dust of the earth." Thus Daniel refers to the bodily awakening and resurrection.

The prophet Hosea also indicates the final resurrection. He writes:

I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues: O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.<sup>15</sup>

Hosea does not merely mean that God prevents death from

<sup>12</sup>Ezekiel 37:1-14.

<sup>13</sup>Schuldheisz, op. cit., p. 42.

<sup>14</sup>Daniel 12:2.

<sup>15</sup>Hosea 13:14.

striking a person, but he refers to God's raising the dead into life. Arthur Weitzel explains this passage in these words:

To redeem from the hand (i.e. from the grasp, the power) of sheol, of the region of death, that means not merely to preserve from death, to prevent becoming the prey of death, but actually to wrest from death its prey, to restore those who have fallen into the dread power of death again to life, in short, to resurrect the dead.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, as is seen from these passages, the Old Testament directly refers to the resurrection of the body. Throughout the entire Old Testament era, from the Fall of Adam and Eve to the coming of Christ, this fact was attested by God's chosen teachers. However, aside from these direct references to the resurrection, the Old Testament also contains passages which indirectly point to the final resurrection of the body. Some of these will be pointed out briefly.

The Old Testament presents God as the One Who is able to raise from the dead. In the song of Moses it is stated: "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand."<sup>17</sup> And Hannah, in her song of thanksgiving, exclaims: "The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and

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<sup>16</sup>Weitzel, op. cit., p. 46.

<sup>17</sup>Deut. 32:39.

bringeth up."<sup>18</sup> Thus the fact that God had the power to raise the dead was clearly stated and known.

Then, too, the resurrection of the body was illustrated in the translation of Enoch into heaven<sup>19</sup> and the ascension of Elijah.<sup>20</sup> This was also true of the miracles in which God raised the dead through Elijah and Elisha.<sup>21</sup> These showed that God could and did raise up the dead here on earth. Thus it was evident that He could do this also at the end of time.

The Old Testament likewise speaks of the foundation on which the resurrection rests, i.e., the resurrection of Christ. The sixteenth Psalm prophesies His resurrection in the words: ". . . my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."<sup>22</sup>

Thus the Old Testament plainly teaches the resurrection of the body. It is not a doctrine which began with the New Testament era, but rather it is presented throughout the entire Bible. In the New Testament, of course, the resurrection became more prominent through the emphasis given it by Christ's rising. Nevertheless, the New Testament

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<sup>18</sup>I Sam. 2:6.

<sup>19</sup>Gen. 5:24.

<sup>20</sup>II Kings 2:11.

<sup>21</sup>I Kings 17:17-24; II Kings 4:34; 13:21.

<sup>22</sup>Vv. 9, 10.

itself asserts that the resurrection was taught already in the writings of the Old Testament.

The best known of these statements is the one made by Christ Himself. The Sadducees, who denied the resurrection of the dead, came to Christ with their question concerning marriage in the life after resurrection. Jesus, knowing their evil motive and their true belief in the matter, forcefully said: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God."<sup>23</sup> Jesus accused the Sadducees of erring in this matter because of ignorance concerning the Old Testament. If they had known and accepted everything the Old Testament taught, they would have believed in a resurrection, for it was presented there.

But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.<sup>24</sup>

Jesus here states that these words, spoken to Moses at the burning bush,<sup>25</sup> indicated the resurrection of the dead. Thus He not only teaches the resurrection Himself, but points out that it was attested in the Old Testament.

St. Paul similarly refers to the Old Testament as having taught this fact. In his speech before Felix he

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<sup>23</sup> Matt. 22:29.

<sup>24</sup> Matt. 22:31, 32.

<sup>25</sup> Exodus 3:6.

confessed

. . . that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.<sup>26</sup>

The writer of the Hebrews testifies that Abraham's faith in the resurrection of the body is shown by his willingness to sacrifice Isaac. He writes:

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.<sup>27</sup>

Thus the New Testament clearly witnesses to the fact that the resurrection was a definite part of the Old Testament teachings and belief.

The foundation of the New Testament teaching regarding the resurrection is the resurrection of Christ. Very early in His ministry Jesus prophesied that He would rise from the grave. When the Jews asked Him to give them some sign of His authority, He said: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."<sup>28</sup> And St. John tells us "he spake of the temple of his body."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Acts 24:14,15.

<sup>27</sup>Hebrews 11:17-19.

<sup>28</sup>John 2:19.

<sup>29</sup>John 2:21.

The evangelists clearly present the happenings of the first Easter morning. They describe Christ's tomb as containing no trace of His body. St. Luke writes that the women ". . . entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus."<sup>30</sup> After His resurrection, Christ appeared to His disciples at different times. In doing this, He convinced them that He had arisen bodily from the grave. Easter evening Jesus appeared to His disciples and said: "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."<sup>31</sup> And Luke adds: ". . . when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet."<sup>32</sup> Thus Jesus gave indisputable proof that He had risen bodily from the grave.

This resurrection of Christ's formed a basic part of the apostolic sermons which are recorded in the book of Acts. On Pentecost Peter referred to the sixteenth Psalm and proclaimed that David ". . . spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Luke 24:3.

<sup>31</sup>Luke 24:38,39.

<sup>32</sup>Luke 24:40.

<sup>33</sup>Acts 2:31,32.



The resurrection of Christ received so much emphasis from the evangelists and the apostles because of its significance for all Christians. Jesus Himself directs attention to this significance when He tells His disciples: "Because I live, ye shall live also."<sup>34</sup> Christ's resurrection, just as His death, is vicarious. St. Paul declares that He ". . . was raised again for our justification."<sup>35</sup> By His resurrection, Christ has made possible the believers' resurrection. They now have ". . . a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,"<sup>36</sup> for Christ has ". . . become the firstfruits of them that slept."<sup>37</sup> Christ's bodily resurrection brings about the Christians' bodily resurrection. L. S. Keyser states: "It is because Christ lives in His glorified body, and only for that reason, that we have hope of the resurrection of our bodies."<sup>38</sup>

The resurrection of the body is further attested in many other New Testament passages. Jesus speaks of it when He says ". . . all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth. . . ."<sup>39</sup> When Jesus refers

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<sup>34</sup>John 14:19.

<sup>35</sup>Rom. 4:25.

<sup>36</sup>I Peter 1:3.

<sup>37</sup>I Cor. 15:20.

<sup>38</sup>L. S. Keyser, "Ultimate Purpose of Christ's Resurrection," Lutheran Church Review, 25 (October, 1906), p. 642.

<sup>39</sup>John 5:28,29.

to that which is "in the graves," He certainly refers to the bodies of men. Pieper remarks on this passage:

"Scripture says that what is 'in the graves' shall rise. This clearly means men's bodies."<sup>40</sup>

St. Paul writes to the Romans:

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.<sup>41</sup>

Some commentators hold that this passage does not refer to the resurrection of the body on the Day of Judgment. However, as Norbert Becker<sup>42</sup> points out, Paul here uses a future tense ( $\xi\omega\sigma\pi\omicron\lambda\acute{\iota}\sigma\epsilon\iota$ ) and applies it to people who are already Christians. They already have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them and sanctifying them. Therefore this future tense must point forward to the bodily resurrection on the last day.

Paul compares Christ to the Christians in this passage. He says that the same Spirit who raised up Christ now dwells in the Christians, therefore this Spirit will also raise up the Christians from the dead. Commenting on this verse, Geerhardus Vos remarks:

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<sup>40</sup>Franz Pieper, Christian Dogmatics, translated from the German by Walter A. Albrecht (First Edition, Springfield, Ill.: Concordia Mimeographing Company, 1941), III, 516.

<sup>41</sup>Rom. 8:11.

<sup>42</sup>Norbert Becker, "The Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body as Taught in the Pauline Epistles," unpublished Bachelor's Thesis (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Seminary, 1946), p. 12.

. . . the argument from the analogy between Jesus and the believer is further strengthened by the observation, that the instrument through whom God effected this in Jesus is already present in the readers.<sup>43</sup>

Later in the same chapter of Romans, Paul writes:

"And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."<sup>44</sup> This "redemption" of the body can only refer to its resurrection on the Last Day. Just as Paul here eagerly awaits the resurrection, so also in his letter to the Philippians he looks forward to the time when Christ ". . . shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. . . ."<sup>45</sup>

The resurrection of the body was an established fact for Paul. To the Corinthians he wrote:

Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.<sup>46</sup>

Here Paul very interestingly inserts a statement about the resurrection between two statements concerning the body.

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<sup>43</sup>Geerhardus Vos, "The Pauline Doctrine of the Resurrection," Princeton Theological Review, XXVII, (January, 1929), p. 28.

<sup>44</sup>Rom. 8:25.

<sup>45</sup>Phil. 3:21.

<sup>46</sup>I Cor. 6:13-15.

And, as Norbert Becker<sup>47</sup> contends, this can only lead to the conclusion that Paul is referring to the resurrection of the body.

In the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians Paul clearly presents the resurrection of the body. Speaking of the body he plainly states: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."<sup>48</sup> And in the second letter to the Corinthians he states: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."<sup>49</sup> There must, naturally, be a resurrection of the body before it can appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

Thus it is seen that St. Paul, along with Christ and the other apostles, taught a resurrection of the body. Some men have held that Paul denies such a resurrection when he writes: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."<sup>50</sup> However, Paul's meaning in this passage is not to deny a bodily resurrection. As is evident from the context, his meaning is that the human body, as it is constituted in this life, is sinful and

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<sup>47</sup>Op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>48</sup>I Cor. 15:44.

<sup>49</sup>II Cor. 5:10.

<sup>50</sup>I Cor. 15:50.

corruptible. In such a condition it is unable to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but it must first be changed. J. A. West comments on this verse: "What Paul meant was, this body, as now constituted of perishable flesh and blood, corruptible and sinful, cannot inherit the Kingdom of God in heaven."<sup>51</sup>

The New Testament, just as the Old, contains examples of people being raised from the dead. Jesus Himself raised Jairus' daughter,<sup>52</sup> the young man of Nain,<sup>53</sup> and Lazarus;<sup>54</sup> Peter raised Dorcas;<sup>55</sup> and Paul restored life to Eutychus.<sup>56</sup> Aside from these, Matthew records that when Christ died ". . . the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."<sup>57</sup> All of these instances served as powerful illustrations of God's ability to raise the dead and pointed forward to the final resurrection on the Last Day.

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<sup>51</sup>J. A. West, What the Bible Teaches About the World Beyond (Burlington, Iowa: The Lutheran Literary Board, 1939), p. 74.

<sup>52</sup>Matt. 9:23-25; Mark 5:35-43; Luke 8:49-56.

<sup>53</sup>Luke 7:11-15.

<sup>54</sup>John 11:1-46.

<sup>55</sup>Acts 9:36-42.

<sup>56</sup>Acts 20:9-12.

<sup>57</sup>Matt. 27:52,53.

Thus the entire Scripture, both the Old Testament and the New Testament, affirms the resurrection of the body. It clearly stresses that the body will rise. By direct statements, by Christ's resurrection, by the restoration of life to individuals in both Testaments, the Bible teaches the resurrection of the body.

Thus the Bible clearly shows that the resurrection restores the total person. The body again lives, and that which gives life to the body is always the soul. Therefore, the resurrection reunites the soul and the body. Once again, then, man will be a total person. Once again he will be able to serve God as a complete person, rendering service to God in both body and soul. But how will this body compare with man's present body? What will be the condition of the resurrected body? It will now be necessary to consider these questions in order to determine with what sort of body man will serve God in eternity.

What relation will exist between the resurrection body and man's present body? Job, living hundreds of years before Christ, gave an answer to this question. He exclaimed: ". . . in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold. . . ." <sup>58</sup> Job asserts that he will rise with the very same body he has on earth. With his same eyes he will see God.

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<sup>58</sup>Job 19:26,27.

Hundreds of years later, St. Paul maintained the same position. Man will rise with the same body which was placed into the grave. The identity of that body will not have changed, but it will be essentially the same. This is Paul's teaching in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians. He writes:

. . . that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.<sup>59</sup>

J. T. Mueller<sup>60</sup> points out that this is a comparison of the difference in appearance of that which is sown and that which is raised. Wheat seed brings forth wheat, barley seed brings forth barley. A seed is sown, a plant is raised, but essentially they are the same. Paul stresses that God gives each kind of seed its own body, preserving its identity. And so in the resurrection everyone will receive the same body he had on earth, preserving its identity.

A few verses later Paul, still speaking of the resurrection body, says:

It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>I Cor. 15:37,38.

<sup>60</sup>Op. cit., pp. 269, 270.

<sup>61</sup>I Cor. 15:42-44.

Here Paul very forcefully states that the body which is sown and the body which is raised are one and the same. The subject, "it," remains the same throughout these statements. Hence it is clear that Paul is speaking of the same body in the entire passage. The body that is placed into the grave is the body that is resurrected. J. T. Mueller comments:

Three times the apostle repeats with emphasis the statement: 'it is sown, . . . it is raised.' The body that is raised is the body that is sown. The two are identical. The resurrection body will not be a new body or a new creation, but the earthly body glorified, strengthened, and rendered incorruptible.<sup>62</sup>

Paul also presents this teaching in other passages. In Philippians he writes that Christ ". . . shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. . . ."<sup>63</sup> Paul does not state that Christ will give the Christian a new body, but he simply affirms that the present body will be changed. The verb used here for "change" is μεταλλάσσει. W. F. Beck<sup>64</sup> points out that this verb is used in three places in the New Testament<sup>65</sup> and that it never implies a change of substance, but always a change of σκῆμα (form, or appearance).

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<sup>62</sup>Op. cit., p. 271.

<sup>63</sup>Phil. 3:21.

<sup>64</sup>W. F. Beck, "I Believe In the Resurrection of the Body," Concordia Theological Monthly, 16 (March, 1945), p. 162.

<sup>65</sup>Phil. 3:21; I Cor. 4:6; and II Cor. 11:13-15.



Essentially the body will be the same, though its qualities and attributes will undergo a change.

Paul also writes: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."<sup>66</sup> The fact that man will be judged according to what he has done "in his body" shows that the same body man has on earth must be resurrected to stand for judgment. As Edward Bounds<sup>67</sup> affirms, a new body would not be accountable for what was done in the earthly body.

Thus Scripture clearly teaches that, in identity, the resurrected body will be the same as the present earthly body. This is the view professed by the Formula of Concord.

In the article of the Resurrection Scripture testifies that precisely the substance of this our flesh, but without sin, will rise again; and that in eternal life we shall have and retain precisely this soul, but without sin.<sup>68</sup>

Although Scripture teaches that in nature and substance the resurrected body will be identical with the earthly body, there have always been those who held

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<sup>66</sup>II Cor. 5:10.

<sup>67</sup>Op. cit., p. 73.

<sup>68</sup>Triglot Concordia, edited by P. Bente and W. H. T. Dau (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 873, 46.

differently. Some of these divergent views will be considered.<sup>69</sup>

An objection frequently raised is that part of men's bodies is assimilated by other bodies, for example, elements of the body after they have turned to dust may become part of another body. Such an objection is answered by the statement Christ made to the Sadducees when they questioned the resurrection. He told them they did not know "the power of God."<sup>70</sup>

On the basis of I Cor. 15 it has been held that the future body will spring forth from an imperishable germ contained in the present earthly body. This belief is known as the "germ-theory." It comes from Paul's comparison of the resurrection to the planting of seed and the plant which results. However, as W. F. Beck<sup>71</sup> points out, in I Cor. 15 Paul wants to say that the risen body will be different from the buried one. That the risen body will come from a germ in the old one or that the same degree of difference will exist between them as between a seed and its fruit is not his intention. These are simply parts

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<sup>69</sup>The peculiar view of the Jehovah's Witnesses on the resurrection of the body does not belong into the present discussion. For a treatment of this view see F. E. Mayer, Jehovah's Witnesses (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c. 1942).

<sup>70</sup>Matt. 22:29.

<sup>71</sup>Op. cit., p. 161.

of the picture.

There are several points which can be cited in refutation of the germ-theory. Edward Bounds<sup>72</sup> stresses that this theory teaches a "creation," not a "resurrection." There would be no resurrection of the body, for the "germ" could not be called "the body." Besides, Paul's words: "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. . . ."<sup>73</sup> are true only of the body itself and would not be true of such an incorruptible and imperishable germ.<sup>74</sup> Thus the germ-theory is untenable, for it is in direct opposition to the Scriptural teaching.

Another view taken is that I Cor. 15:50 is incongruous with a resurrection of the same body possessed on earth. In this passage St. Paul writes: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." The objection raised is that Paul here states that the body is not able to enter heaven. However, it is apparent from the whole context that it is not Paul's meaning to deny the resurrection of the body or its entrance into eternal life. Rather he asserts that the body as it is now constituted of sinful flesh and blood cannot enter heaven. Corruption

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<sup>72</sup>Op. cit., pp. 88, 89.

<sup>73</sup>I Cor. 15:42.

<sup>74</sup>Bounds, op. cit., p. 78.

cannot inherit incorruption, but, as he points out in verse fifty-three: ". . . this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." This sinful body must first be changed before it is fit to enter God's heavenly kingdom. J. A. West states in regard to this passage: "What Paul meant was, this body, as now constituted of perishable flesh and blood, corruptible and sinful, cannot inherit the Kingdom of God in heaven."<sup>75</sup>

Thus it is evident that the resurrected body will be the same body in identity that was possessed on earth. However, as Paul emphasizes in I Cor. 15:50, the earthly body must undergo a change before entering the heavenly life. Scripture teaches this in numerous places, and it will be necessary to examine these changes in order to determine the condition of the resurrected body.

It is not possible to find out all the details regarding the resurrection body, but Scripture does furnish a certain amount of information concerning it. One of the most important and helpful facts given is that the resurrected body will be like Christ's glorified body. St. Paul writes that Jesus ". . . shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body."<sup>76</sup> In I Cor. 15 he similarly states:

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<sup>75</sup>Op. cit., p. 74.

<sup>76</sup>Phil. 3:21.

The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.<sup>77</sup>

St. John testifies to this same fact in his epistle.

". . . it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."<sup>78</sup> Thus Scripture clearly teaches the similarity which will exist between the resurrected bodies of the believers and the glorified body of Christ. And so, in considering the condition of the resurrection body, it is helpful to note what Scripture relates concerning Christ's resurrected body.

On Easter morning Jesus passed through the stone of the sepulchre, and that same evening He suddenly appeared to the disciples in a room where the doors were closed.<sup>79</sup> After speaking to the disciples on the way to Emmaus, suddenly, as He sat with them, ". . . he vanished out of their sight."<sup>80</sup> When Thomas doubted Christ's resurrection, Jesus pointed to His hands and His side as proof.<sup>81</sup> To convince the disciples that He was really their same Lord

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<sup>77</sup> I Cor. 15:47-49.

<sup>78</sup> I John 3:2.

<sup>79</sup> John 20:19.

<sup>80</sup> Luke 24:31.

<sup>81</sup> John 20:27.

and Master, Christ said: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."<sup>82</sup> And then Christ showed the disciples His hands and feet and also ate food.<sup>83</sup> This He did, not for nourishment, but to prove that He really had risen from the dead.

These Scripture references show that Christ had the same body as before His death. This He made evident to Thomas and the disciples. At the same time it is clear that His body was now in a glorified state. He was now making use of the powers and abilities which had always been His. No longer did He bind His body to the usual earthly limitations. Instead He was now making full and constant use of all the attributes which He had declined to use during His humiliation. The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics states of Christ's appearances to His disciples:

It was the same body they had laid in the tomb which now presented itself to them in living form, so that they could not fail to recognize their Lord (Ac 1<sup>3</sup> 2<sup>32</sup>). And yet it was a different [?] body - freed from the familiar earthly limitations and possessed of new and higher capacities and powers. (Lk 24 31-56. 51., Jn 20 26)<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup>Luke 24:39.

<sup>83</sup>Luke 24:40-43.

<sup>84</sup>J. C. Lambert, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), II, 761.

Since Scripture states that the believer's resurrected body will be like Christ's glorified body, these statements concerning Christ indicate the condition of the resurrection body. However, caution must be exercised in applying statements made concerning Christ's body to the believer's body. All that can be said is that the Christians' bodies will no longer be restricted to the created laws of space, time, etc. However, it is clearly evident that the resurrected body will be endowed with wonderful new qualities. It will be marvelously superior to the earthly body. Geerhardus Vos, speaking of the resurrection body, asserts:

There is not a simple return of what was lost in death; the organism returned is returned endowed and equipped with new powers; it is richer, even apart from the removal of its sin-caused defects. The normal, to be sure, is restored, but to it there are added faculties and qualities which should be regarded supernormal from the standpoint of the present state of existence.<sup>85</sup>

From what Scripture says of Christ's risen body and from what is stated more systematically in I Cor. 15:42-44, it is definite that the resurrection body will be incorruptible, glorious, powerful, and spiritual. The change which the body will undergo will thus be a great one. Paul compares it to the change which occurs when a seed brings forth a plant.<sup>86</sup> The appearance of the seed gives no indication of the final appearance of the plant. Similarly

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<sup>85</sup>Geerhardus Vos, "The Pauline Doctrine of the Resurrection," p. 19.

<sup>86</sup>I Cor. 15:36-38.

the earthly body can give little indication of the appearance of the wondrous resurrection body. Speaking of this, Norbert Becker writes:

Just as little as we would be able to conceive of the appearance of a plant, without previous experience, by simply observing the seed, so little can we comprehend the appearance of our glorified body by looking at our mortal frame.<sup>87</sup>

The change which will occur will be a very glorious one. Paul states this when he says:

There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead.<sup>88</sup>

Just as the celestial bodies differ from the terrestrial, so will the resurrected bodies differ from those that exist in this life. And just as the celestial are more glorious than the terrestrial, so will the resurrected bodies be more glorious than the earthly ones.

In the forty-fourth verse of this chapter Paul calls the resurrection body a "spiritual body" and contrasts it with a "natural body." His words are: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." The Greek expressions are *σῶμα ψυχικόν* and *σῶμα πνευματικόν*.

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<sup>87</sup>Op. cit., p. 43.

<sup>88</sup>1 Cor. 15:40-42.



Just what did Paul mean by these words? Taken in their context they present no serious difficulty. He is simply contrasting the present body with the resurrected one. The present one he terms *σῶμα φυσικόν*, a body suited to the natural, earthly life. On the other hand, the resurrected body will be a *σῶμα πνευματικόν*, a body fitted for the life in eternity. Kenneth Wuest<sup>89</sup> points out that the "spiritual body" will not be an intangible one, but one in which the spiritual life of man will predominate.

Besides these rather general statements concerning the incorruption, glory, power, and spirituality of the resurrection body, Scripture also contains a few more specific facts in regard to it. These are helpful in getting as accurate a conception of the resurrection body as possible.

The resurrected body will differ greatly from the earthly body. Scripture states that there will be no more hunger or thirst,<sup>90</sup> and no more death, sorrow, crying, or pain.<sup>91</sup> The body no longer will be plagued by weaknesses and frailties. Since it will no longer degenerate, it will no longer need to be built up.

Another earthly function which will cease to exist is

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<sup>89</sup>Kenneth Wuest, Golden Nuggets from the Greek New Testament for the English Reader (Third edition; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1941), p. 49.

<sup>90</sup>Rev. 7:16.

<sup>91</sup>Rev. 21:4.

that of marriage. Jesus told the Sadducees: ". . . in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."<sup>92</sup> With the cessation of death, there will be no more need for procreation.

Will Christians recognize one another in heaven?

While there is no direct answer to this question found in Scripture, all indications are that the answer is affirmative. Jesus said: ". . . many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven."<sup>93</sup> Here Jesus specifically mentions Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as individuals whose identity has been preserved in heaven.

St. Paul writes: ". . . then shall I know even as also I am known."<sup>94</sup> This seems to indicate recognition of fellow-Christians. In the parable which Christ told, Lazarus and Abraham knew each other in heaven.<sup>95</sup> In the

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<sup>92</sup>Matt. 22:30. - The Mormons have a peculiar exegesis of this passage. They hold that no one will marry in heaven, but all marriages solemnized in their temples by their officials will remain valid in heaven for eternity. Thus they speak of "celestial marriage." Cf. F. E. Schumann, Is This The Church of Jesus Christ? (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1943), pp. 12,13.

<sup>93</sup>Matt. 8:11.

<sup>94</sup>I Cor. 13:12.

<sup>95</sup>Luke 16:23-31.

Transfiguration the disciples knew Moses and Elijah.<sup>96</sup>

After His resurrection, the disciples knew Christ.<sup>97</sup> Mary

recognized Him by His voice.<sup>98</sup> And in First Thessalonians

Paul comforts the Thessalonians by reminding them that

their loved ones who had died would rise again, and "Then

we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together

with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air . . .

. . ."<sup>99</sup> The consolation was that there would be a reunion

of the dead and the living. All these statements of Scrip-

ture indicate that Christians will recognize each other in

heaven. Since they will rise in their same bodies, their

identity will be preserved, and they will know one another.

Which body will a person have in heaven, the one from his infancy, childhood, youth, middle-age, or old-age?

This is a question which is unanswered in Scripture. W. F.

Beck<sup>100</sup> suggests that since belief or unbelief at the mo-

ment of death determines a man's eternal destiny<sup>101</sup> and

on the basis of Christ's resurrection, it is inferred that

a person will have the body in which he dies. Of course,

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<sup>96</sup>Matt. 17:3,4.

<sup>97</sup>John 20:19,20.

<sup>98</sup>John 20:16.

<sup>99</sup>I Thess. 4:17.

<sup>100</sup>Op. cit., p. 163.

<sup>101</sup>Matt. 24:13: "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

it will be strong and beautiful, but it will be the body which a man possessed at death. This same conclusion seems to be justified by John in his Revelation. He witnesses that ". . . a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great."<sup>102</sup> And in the next chapter he again testifies: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God. . . ."<sup>103</sup> These passages seem to indicate that the body which will be glorified in heaven will have the stature of the one in which a man dies.

Will all Christians be glorified in the same degree? Scripture teaches that there will be a reward of grace for the good works performed by Christians. This reward will consist in a greater degree of glory. Daniel writes: "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."<sup>104</sup> The greater the service rendered to God in this life, the greater will be the glory which God graciously bestows upon a person.

These, then, are the teachings of Scripture in regard to the resurrection body. This resurrected body will not be affected by the frailties and diseases which beset the earthly body. It will not be interested in the things of

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<sup>102</sup>Rev. 19:5.

<sup>103</sup>Rev. 20:12.

<sup>104</sup>Daniel 12:3.

this earthly life, such as eating, drinking, marrying, etc. Rather its interest will be focussed on spiritual matters, and its entire constitution will fit it for this purpose. All the Scripture statements concerning the resurrection body, taken together, present a picture of a strong, marvelous, glorious body, above the cares and troubles of this life, interested solely in the things of God, and its qualities and attributes perfectly fitting it for the heavenly life.

It is this resurrected body which is united with the soul, once again restoring the total person. The whole man is again able to serve God. But this service differs in quality from the service man renders before death. For the resurrected body enables the total person, body and soul, to serve God in perfection. L. S. Keyser writes that man

. . . was created a dual being, [?] and, unless God should change his personality, he never could attain to the highest possibilities of his being without the recovery of his pristine estate - a perfect soul organically connected with a perfect body.<sup>105</sup>

The resurrected body is the perfect instrument for serving God, and therefore the total person is able to carry out God's original purpose in regard to man - perfect service rendered by the entire person.

The resurrected body brings about this ideal condition because it enjoys complete freedom from the threat and

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<sup>105</sup>Op. cit., p. 644.

dominion of sin. In this life the Christian in serving God is continually hampered by the sin which cleaves to him. There is a constant struggle going on in him, and sin constantly does its utmost to hinder his service to God. Immediately at death the soul is completely purified and taken to heaven, but it is only through the resurrection that the body is completely freed from this intervention of sin and able to serve God unmolested. This is clearly expressed in the Formula of Concord.

For the old Adam, as an intractable, refractory ass, is still a part of them, which must be coerced to the obedience of Christ, not only by the teaching, admonition, force, and threatening of the Law, but also oftentimes by the club of punishments and troubles, until the body of sin is entirely put off, and man is perfectly renewed in the resurrection, when he will need neither the preaching of the Law nor its threatenings and punishments, as also the Gospel any longer; for these belong to this mortal and imperfect life.<sup>106</sup>

Already in this life the indwelling of the Holy Spirit gives a Christian power over sin. But man's nature continues to be corrupted by sin. It is only through the resurrection that the final, complete separation of man's nature and sin takes place. The Formula of Concord states:

And we affirm that no one but God alone can separate from one another the nature and this corruption of the nature, which will fully come to pass through death, in the blessed resurrection, where our nature which we now bear will rise and live eternally without original sin and separated and sundered from it. . . .<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>106</sup>Triglot Concordia, pp. 959, 971, 24.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid., 781, 10.

This complete deliverance of the body from sin is highly important, for it is the completion of the work begun in Baptism. In his Small Catechism, Luther states that baptizing with water

. . . signifies that the old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts, and, again, a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.<sup>108</sup>

Baptism, therefore, signifies two main things. One is the putting off of sin. The other is the emerging of a new and righteous person. In the resurrection of the body both of these things are brought to completion.

As already noted, through the resurrection the body is completely freed from sin. Original sin is forever cast away. This completes that which is signified in Baptism by the immersion into water - the drowning of the old Adam. This work is begun in the moment of Baptism, but the full carrying out of this work is not accomplished until the body is resurrected. Viewing this side of Baptism, the death of the old Adam, Luther wrote in his "Treatise on Baptism":

. . . sin never entirely ceases while this body lives, which is so wholly conceived in sin that sin is its very nature, . . . and there is no help for the sinful nature unless it dies and is destroyed with all its sin. So, then, the life of a Christian, from baptism to the grave, is nothing else than the beginning of a blessed death, for at the Last Day God

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p. 551, 12.

will make him altogether new.<sup>109</sup>

However, the resurrection of the body also completes the other phase of Baptism, the emersion of a person perfectly equipped for service to God. The bringing forth of the new man, signified and begun in Baptism, is fully finished through the resurrection. Luther presents this thought clearly when he writes:

In like manner the lifting up out of baptism is quickly done, but the thing it signifies, the spiritual birth, the increase of grace and righteousness, though it begins indeed in baptism, lasts until death, nay, even until the Last Day. Only then will that be finished which the lifting up out of baptism signifies. Then shall we arise from death, from sins and from all evil, pure in body and in soul, and then shall we live forever.<sup>110</sup>

The spiritual birth begun in Baptism has as its goal the perfection of the whole man. This goal is fully reached through the resurrection of the body, for it is then that the body, fully equipped for perfect service and completely free from sin, is united with the purified soul, enabling the total person to render the holy service God desires.

Thus the resurrection of the body brings completion of salvation of the entire person. It is the final act by which the Holy Spirit brings His sanctifying work to conclusion and thereby bestows eternal life. The entire

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<sup>109</sup> Martin Luther, "Treatise on Baptism," Works of Martin Luther with Introductions and Notes, translated from the German by C. M. Jacobs (Philadelphia, Pa.: A. J. Holman Company and the Castle Press, c. 1915), I, 58.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.



work which the Holy Ghost carries on in a person is directed toward that person's full and complete sanctification. But as long as sin clings to man, his sanctification will be incomplete. Therefore the Holy Ghost is able to complete His work only through the resurrection of the body, through which He removes the last vestige of sin from man's body and changes it into a perfect instrument for the soul which has already been perfected. Thus the resurrection is a vital step in the work of the Holy Spirit, for it is one of the means He uses to sanctify a person. Luther, in his Large Catechism, expressed this very clearly:

If you are asked: What do you mean by the words: I believe in the Holy Ghost? you can answer: I believe that the Holy Ghost makes me holy, as His name implies. But whereby does He accomplish this, or what are His method and means to this end? Answer: By the Christian Church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.<sup>111</sup>

It is through the resurrection of the body that the Holy Spirit brings about the completion of salvation. It is the conclusion of all the acts which God does to accomplish man's salvation. Dau states that the resurrection of the dead ". . . is the final act of that plan of redemption which was devised harmoniously in the eternal counsel of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."<sup>112</sup> The

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<sup>111</sup>Triglot Concordia, p. 689,40.41.

<sup>112</sup>Quoted in W. Albrecht, Eschatology (Springfield, Ill.: Concordia Mimeographing Co., n.d.), p. 35.

resurrection of the body is a necessary part of God's plan of salvation. His will is that man should be completely holy, and this condition of entire righteousness is realized only when the body is raised in glory. Then it is that the Holy Ghost permeates man's entire being, causing him to be perfect. This is the consummation of God's plan of salvation. A. J. Gordon remarks:

When the body is glorified, then only will sanctification be consummated, for then only will the whole man, spirit, soul, and body, have come under the Spirit's perfecting power.<sup>113</sup>

God's plan of salvation is a plan to restore man to the condition in which he will be able to serve God perfectly in his whole person. The final act which makes this service possible is the resurrection of the body, for in the resurrection the body is changed so that it is able to render perfect service. In doing this the Holy Spirit finishes His work of preparing man for the heavenly life of holy service to God. George Stevens states that the main stress in St. Paul's eschatology

. . . is laid upon the positive completion of salvation in the bestowment of glorified bodies suited to the new conditions which shall surround the soul in the future life, and in the glorification and perfection of the whole personality after the image of Christ.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>113</sup>A. J. Gordon, The Ministry of the Spirit (New York, Chicago, Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Co., c. 1894), p. 122.

<sup>114</sup>George Stevens, Pauline Theology (Revised Edition; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), p. 340.

The resurrection of the body is the culmination of the Holy Spirit's activity, bringing His sanctifying work to completion in eternal life.

This, then, is the significance which the resurrection of the body has for sanctification. It is the final step in sanctification, bringing this work to perfect completion. And this is the reason that the resurrection of the body is placed into the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed. Its placement there emphasizes that it is one of the means which the Holy Ghost uses in effecting sanctification, in fact, it is His final means for achieving perfect sanctification. The result of this bestowal of a glorious resurrection body is the enabling of the entire person, body and soul, to serve God in perfection.

However, the resurrection of the body is not only significant in that it brings sanctification to completion, it is also significant in its relation to the life of a Christian. It has a practical application to the Christian life. The resurrection of the body is a powerful stimulus for sanctification in this life. Therefore it will be necessary briefly to consider the relevance which the resurrection of the body has in this connection.

## CHAPTER V

### THE RELEVANCE OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY AS A STIMULUS FOR SANCTIFICATION

The knowledge and conviction that the body will rise has several effects on the Christian. One result is that the Christian is moved to treat his body with dignity and respect. He knows that the body he now has will be his for eternity. God will raise the very same body which is laid into the grave. Therefore the body is not to be considered lightly, as something which is solely for this life and which will be discarded at death. The Christian, knowing there will be a bodily resurrection, realizes the importance of his body and thinks very highly of it. Thus the resurrection leads a Christian to a high regard for his body.

This effect of the resurrection on a Christian's life is expressed by Frank Biggart when he writes that the resurrection of the body

. . . emphasizes the importance and indeed the dignity of the body now. Its treatment demands respect not only because there attaches to it a certain imperishable quality, but for other reasons besides. It is in the first place, the handiwork of God; it is part of that creation which God looked upon and saw 'that it was very good.' Secondly it is 'the temple of the Holy Ghost.' Thirdly it is for ever honourable, since the eternal Son of God took upon Him our flesh (and was made man, of the substance of the Virgin Mary His Mother).

Finally, the doctrine of the resurrection of the body witnesses to a real continuity of life here and hereafter. It stands for the recovery through that surrender, which is death, of what has been truly and permanently of value in this earthly life.<sup>1</sup>

The resurrection of the body not only results in the Christian's treating his body with respect, but it also stimulates him to do good works. Knowing that it is God's purpose for him to serve God in his own body throughout eternity, he will be incited to put that body into the fullest possible service of God during his life on earth. His life will be lived in the knowledge that his body is "the temple of the Holy Ghost,"<sup>2</sup> and that in it he is to serve God, not just for the years remaining on earth, but for the eternity of heaven. This knowledge will move him to use his body now as an instrument for good works. The resurrection of the body will be the goal toward which he is striving. This is the viewpoint expressed by Paul when he says he counts everything worthless except those things done for Christ, for he wants to become like Christ and "attain unto the resurrection of the dead."<sup>3</sup>

The Christian's whole life will be lived as a preparation for the resurrection of the body and the ensuing life of service to God. Geerhardus Vos states that

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<sup>1</sup>Frank Biggart, And Then the Judgement (Westminster: Dacre Press, March 1946), pp. 104, 105.

<sup>2</sup>1 Cor. 6:19.

<sup>3</sup>Phil. 3:7-11.

. . . the believer's whole ethico-religious existence, the sum-total of his Christian experience and progress, all that is distinctive of his life and conduct demands being viewed as a preparation for the crowning grace of the resurrection.<sup>4</sup>

With such a view of life the Christian will be stimulated to live a life filled with good works.

Another way in which the resurrection stimulates the Christian to do good works is shown by Paul when he writes:

Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.<sup>5</sup>

The Christian knows he will stand before Christ in his body, to be judged on the basis of what he has done in his body on this earth. The all-important matter is to be found acceptable at that time. The knowledge of this judgment in the body and the tremendous importance of being acceptable is a powerful incentive for a life of devoted service to God, abounding in good works. Edward Bounds comments:

All the events of this life are to have their reference to the resurrection hour! How unselfish and dignified, how full of gravity will a life be that shapes all its actions by the resurrection or judgment day!<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Geerhardus Vos, "The Pauline Doctrine of the Resurrection," Princeton Theological Review, XXVII (January, 1929), 21.

<sup>5</sup>I Cor. 5:9,10.

<sup>6</sup>Edward Bounds, The Ineffable Glory (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1907), p. 41.

Thus the resurrection of the body is a strong stimulus for sanctification in inciting a Christian to do good works.

However, the resurrection of the body also serves as a stimulus for sanctification in another way. It gives hope and joyful anticipation to the Christian. St. Paul expresses the anxiety which the Christian feels as he looks forward to the resurrection. He writes: ". . . even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."<sup>7</sup> The Christian eagerly awaits the resurrection of his body. It is then that his "adoption" by his Heavenly Father will be complete. Thus it is the thing upon which his attention is focussed and toward which he is constantly looking. Commenting on this "adoption," Bernard Wittrock states:

The prime character of this event is the redemption of our bodies. This shows the great stress that Paul laid upon the resurrection, when our vile bodies shall be changed and put into a beautiful glorious estate. This is the end, aim, and object of our waiting in expectation. This is the focal point of the Christian view: deliverance from the body of this death to be fashioned like unto Him.<sup>8</sup>

Through focussing his mind on the resurrection, the Christian receives hope. He has the hope of a glorious, eternal existence after death. And this wonderful hope brings joyful anticipation. The result in the Christian's

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<sup>7</sup>Rom. 8:23.

<sup>8</sup>Bernard Wittrock, "The Pauline Teaching of the Future Life," unpublished Master's Thesis (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary, January 1945), pp. 62, 63.

life is that afflictions and burdens are more easily borne. He realizes the meaning of St. Paul's words: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."<sup>9</sup> The afflictions of this life become lighter when a person's heart is focussed on the resurrection of the body and the life thereafter. He realizes that all suffering is temporal, and that he has eternal happiness toward which to look. His body may suffer now, but in the resurrection it will be raised above all suffering and pain.

The resurrection, in giving the Christian such a viewpoint, also helps him to elevate his mind to ". . . seek those things which are above. . . ." <sup>10</sup> Realizing the transitory nature of this life and the infinite glory of the resurrection, he will realize that the things of this world are minor and unimportant. The all-important things are those concerning Christ, who is risen in glory and like whom the Christian will be raised in glory.

Thus the resurrection of the body is highly relevant for sanctification. It leads the Christian to treat his body with dignity and respect, it stimulates him to do good works, and it gives him hope and joyful anticipation, helping him to bear afflictions and to focus his mind on the things of God.

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<sup>9</sup>Rom. 8:18.

<sup>10</sup>Col. 3:1.



## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY

It has been shown that the body plays an essential role in man's relation to God and in all His acts concerning man. This is evident in the entire history of man, from his creation to the final consummation in heaven. God created man a dichotomous being, consisting of body and soul. Both these parts are essential for man to be a complete person. In the state of integrity both body and soul were perfect, for man was created in the image of God. And God's desire was that the total person should serve Him in perfection. But in the fallen state, this perfection no longer exists. Instead the entire person of man is corrupted by sin, the soul being the seat of sin and the body the instrument for sin. Thus man is no longer able to serve God, but instead the whole person is in the service of sin.

The purpose of Christ's redemptive work was the restoration of the entire person into the service of God. In order to achieve this, Christ, the God-man, redeemed the whole person. The body, therefore, also shares in the benefits of Christ's work, being freed from the curse and dominion of sin and becoming the instrument for sanctification. In order to continue the work of restoring the

total person to perfect service of God, the Holy Spirit dwells in man's body. This sanctification of the whole man continues throughout life.

Death, however, separates body and soul. While the soul continues to serve God, the body sleeps in the grave. Thus, from the premise accepted by this paper, the service of the total person is interrupted.<sup>1</sup> But through the resurrection of the body the Holy Spirit completes His sanctifying work. He raises the body entirely free from sin and transformed into a condition ideal for the perfect service of God. Thus the entire person is restored and is able to carry out God's desire of perfect service for eternity.

W. F. Beck clearly summarizes the essential part

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<sup>1</sup>The spiritual viewpoint of a high faith is well demonstrated by Stoeckhardt in one of his sermons: "Ja, unsere Toten leben vor Gott, in Gott. Die Seele lebt bei Gott. Die ist in Gottes Hand und Schoss wohl verwahrt. Aber nur die Seele? Nein, auch der Leib der Christen lebt, ob er auch im Grab liegt und Staub und Asche wird, lebt vor Gott, in Gottes Augen . . . . Unser nichtiger Leib wird auferstehen . . . . Das ist die Hoffnung der Christen. Was wir hoffen, ist aber vor Gottes Augen schon gegenwaertig. Gott sind tausend Jahre wie ein Tag. Bei Gott gibts keinen Unterschied der Zeiten. Die Ewigkeit ist Zeit ohne Zeit. Vor Gottes Augen schwindet der Zwischenraum zwischen unserm Todestag und unserm Auferstehungstag in nichts zusammen. Gott sieht Staub und Asche in den Graebnern gar nicht an. Tod und Verwesung gilt nichts in den Augen des lebendigen. Seine Toten leben." Quoted in W. Albrecht, Eschatology (Springfield, Illinois: Concordia Mimeographing Company, n.d.), p. 10.

which the body plays in God's plans and purpose.

There is something essentially incomplete about the soul until it is united with the body. Adam and Eve had both body and soul; death was injected into both; Jesus redeemed both. To complete God's plan of salvation, it is necessary for the body to be raised and to be established with the soul in glory. That is why 'even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body' (Rom. 8,23). Not only the spirit of man, that 'vital spark of heavenly flame,' is to shine in heaven, but the censer, too, from which there rises the incense of worship, is holy to the Lord and to be preserved forever.<sup>2</sup>

Thus the importance of the body is plainly discernible in all of God's acts toward man. And therefore the resurrection of the body is highly significant for sanctification; for it is through this resurrection that the Holy Spirit completes His work of sanctification, enabling the Christian to serve God as a total person. It is because of this vital relation to sanctification that the resurrection of the body is placed into the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed and thus ascribed to the Holy Ghost. At the same time the resurrection of the body has a practical significance for the life of the Christian as a stimulus for sanctification. Therefore the resurrection of the body is properly placed into the Third Article of the Creed, emphasizing the essential part it plays in the Holy Spirit's work of sanctification.

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<sup>2</sup>W. F. Beck, "I Believe In The Resurrection of the Body," Concordia Theological Monthly, 16(March, 1945), 162.

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